Labour Relations in Zimbabwe, 1980-1987

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Statement

This thesis is the result of my independent research.

Mark A. Shadur
Acknowledgements

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Finally, I wish to thank Zenzele and her country. I love them both.
This study examines labour relations in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 1987, and finds that the government had a major impact on reforming labour relations. This interpretation differs from accounts presented in literature. Most writers assume employers are exploitative, and depict the government as acting on behalf of capital to control workers and ensure peaceful capitalist accumulation. It is argued that this view is one-sided, and a more balanced view of labour relations is provided by examining national labour policy and labour relations in three prominent organisations. This account suggests that government labour policy was to promote workers' interests while taking into consideration the need for national economic growth to enable employment and welfare services to be expanded. In an effort to balance workers' and national interests, the government pursued a corporatist strategy which involved the monopolisation of trade union representation, and control over unions to enforce government labour policy. A disaggregated view of "capital" is required which recognises that different management or organisational cultures exist. Thus, while some employers in Zimbabwe are exploitative and maintain racist management practices, others have gradually reformed their labour practices and have advanced black employees. In some cases this reform process has proceeded quite rapidly. The government's policies to protect and promote workers' interests provided the major stimulus for this reform of labour relations within enterprises.
The time is past for guns and killings and massacres. We have to be cunning like the business people, there's more money in it and it's better for our children and our grandchildren.

- Don Corleone

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Abbreviations

AAC  Anglo American Corporation
AMA  Agricultural Marketing Authority
AMWZ  Associated Mine Workers' of Zimbabwe
ATUC  African Trade Union Congress
BNC  Bindura Nickel Corporation Limited
BSR  BSR Limited
BWTU  Building Workers' Trade Union
CEO  Chief Executive Officer
CIO  Central Intelligence Organisation
CSO  Central Statistical Office
CWUZ  Commercial Workers' Union of Zimbabwe
CZI  Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries
Dairibord or DMB  Dairy Marketing Board
DIWU  Dairy Industry Workers' Union
EMCOZ  Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe
FOEIWU  Food Oil and Edibles Industry Workers' Union
GAPWUZ  General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe
GEMWU  General Engineering Metal Workers' Union
GIL  General Industries Limited
ICA  Industrial Conciliation Act
ICFTU  International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICU  Industrial Commercial Workers' Union
ILO  International Labour Organisation
IRO  Industrial Relations Officer
LRA  Labour Relations Act
LRO  Labour Relations Officer
NATUC  National African Trade Union Congress
NIC  National Industrial Council
NLC  Nigeria Labour Congress
NTUS  National Trade Unions Survey
NUCI  National Union of the Clothing Industry
NUR  National Union of Railwaymen
RAWU  Railways Associated Workers' Union
RF  Rhodesian Front
RRAEA  Rhodesia Railways African Employees' Association
S.I.  Statutory Instrument
Transport & GWU  Transport and General Workers' Union
Trojan/BSR  Trojan Nickel Mine and BSR Limited
TUCR  Trades Union Congress of Rhodesia
UANC  United African National Council
UFAWU  United Food and Allied Workers' Union
UTUZ  United Trade Unions of Zimbabwe
UTWU  United Textile Workers' Union
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<td>ZANU(PF)</td>
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<tr>
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*Zimbabwe African Congress of Unions*

*Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army*

*Zimbabwe African National Union (before the 1963 split)*

*Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) (led by Robert Mugabe after the 1963 split)*

*Zimbabwe African National Union (led by Ndabaningi Sithole after the 1963 split)*

*Zimbabwe African People's Union*

*Zimbabwe Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union*

*Zimbabwe Catering and Hotel Workers' Union*

*Zimbabwe Clothing Industry Workers' Union*

*Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions*

*Zimbabwe Explosives and Chemicals Workers’ Union*

*Zimbabwe Federation of Labour*

*Zimbabwe Mining and Smelting Company*

*Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army*

*Zimbabwe Motor Industry Workers’ Union*

*Zimbabwe Posts and Telecommunications Workers’ Union*

*Zimbabwe Society of Bank Officials*

*Zimbabwe Trade Union Congress*
| **Glossary** |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| A luta continua  | The struggle continues           |
| babamunini      | "small brother"; male cousin      |
| chimbadzo       | usury                            |
| ganger          | section boss                     |
| hippo           | armoured personnel carrier        |
| lasher          | miner who loads ore with hand held tools |
| mainini         | "small mother"; aunt             |
| nzou            | elephant; concave corrugated-iron house, which resembles an elephant in appearance |
| pole-and-dagga hut | traditional dwelling made from timber, mud and thatch |
| povo            | "the masses"; black workers, peasants, informal sector workers and the unemployed |
| sadza           | cooked maize-meal (staple food)   |
| tsotsi          | rogue                            |
| vatengesi       | sell-outs                        |
Names and Units

In 1982 many places, towns and cities in Zimbabwe were renamed, for example:

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Fort Victoria</td>
<td>Masvingo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatooma</td>
<td>Kadoma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gwelo</td>
<td>Gweru</td>
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<tr>
<td>Que Que</td>
<td>Kwekwe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salisbury</td>
<td>Harare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Umtali</td>
<td>Mutare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wankie</td>
<td>Hwange</td>
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The name in use at the time is used.

In 1984 the Ministry of Labour and Social Services was expanded and renamed the Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare.

The Department of Industrial Relations within the Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare was renamed the Department of Labour Relations following the promulgation of the Labour Relations Act in 1985.

The Department of Industrial (or Labour) Relations was almost never referred to in common usage; instead "Ministry of Labour" was used, and this usage is adopted in this study.

The exchange rates for the Zimbabwe dollar and US dollar were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>US $</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>0.90</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>0.61</td>
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Introduction

In March 1980 the Mugabe Government was elected to office in Zimbabwe amidst jubilation and optimism on the part of many black workers and peasants, and shock and loathing on the part of many employers and members of the white community. Prime Minister-elect Robert Gabriel Mugabe announced that the time for fighting was over, and his government would adopt a policy of reconciliation between blacks and whites. During the liberation war Mugabe's party, the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) (ZANU(PF)), had pledged to overthrow capitalism and pursue "revolutionary socialism". At independence the new government's policies toward private enterprise were unclear, but wholesale nationalisation of industry was ruled out by Mugabe. The government's stance in relation to capitalism has never been made clear, but it emerged that Zimbabwe would seek a middle way between capitalist expansion as in Singapore and South Korea, and socialist revolution, as in Angola and Mozambique. A gradual transition to socialism was envisaged. Within such a strategy, the Government argued, two main goals could be pursued simultaneously: rapid economic expansion and the social development of the disadvantaged black population. These two objectives were embodied in the government's first major economic policy statement after independence entitled Growth With Equity.

Government labour relations policy in Zimbabwe since independence has been underpinned by the search for a balance between these goals of growth and equity. Workers' interests have been promoted in the context of achieving government's national development objectives. Government sought to benefit workers by ending discrimination, increasing low incomes and reducing the differential between low and high income-earners. However, the implementation of these policies was moderated in accordance with government's broader development goals of increasing economic growth.
in order to generate employment and expand health, education and welfare services for the overwhelmingly poor black population. In pursuing these policies government has had a major impact on the conduct of national labour relations, and analysis of the effect of government policy on national labour relations is the central concern in this study. Government labour policy has also influenced labour relations at organisation level, and this impact is also examined in detail.

The Mugabe Government presented itself as the champion of workers' interests. In 1977, ZANU(PF) adopted the "Marxist-Leninist line" as its guiding ideology, and the party resolved to bring about "the victory of socialism over capitalism" (ZANU(PF) Election Manifesto 1985: 7). The liberation struggle was primarily peasant - not proletarian - based; nonetheless, there was a commitment to forging a worker and peasant alliance and improving the position of workers. Following independence the government pledged to benefit workers through policies which were intended to end discrimination in the workplace, raise workers' living standards, narrow the income gap between low and high income-earners, and generate employment growth (Republic of Zimbabwe, Growth With Equity, 1981). In order to implement these policies the Mugabe Government removed discriminatory legislation (e.g., via the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act of 1981) and decreed that the promotion of blacks in the public service would be accelerated. In media reports government also stated that it expected private enterprise to end discrimination and promote blacks "to managerial levels" (Herald 13/9/80, reporting a speech by Prime Minister Robert Mugabe). Minimum wage legislation was introduced in order to increase workers' living standards, and government controlled income increases in an effort to reduce the income gap.

The realisation of a need to weigh workers' interests against government's national goals became evident in the government's reaction to widespread
strikes that occurred in 1980 and 1981. At first the government sympathised with black workers' demands and pent-up frustrations, but appealed to strikers to return to work so that goods and services could be provided to the country. When strikes continued, and national production was hampered, government reaction became stronger and strikers were ordered to desist. Eventually strikes were broken by police using force to arrest strikers. The government explained its opposition to the strikes in terms of the harm they caused to economic development. It further argued that chaos in the economy would retard national recovery after the civil war, and jeopardise the security of the majority rule government. If the majority rule government was rendered incapable of governing, then this would in turn jeopardise the attainment of goals for which the independence war had been fought, such as land reform, employment generation and an end to racial discrimination. Workers' claims had therefore to be considered in the light of these broader national interests.

Balancing workers' interests and government's national development goals became a constant feature underlying state labour policy from independence until today. In this respect Zimbabwe is strikingly similar to countries such as Zambia, Tanzania, Ghana and, to a lesser extent, Kenya. Government labour policy in Zambia, for example, included a heavy emphasis on worker discipline to achieve rapid economic development, together with elements of "social justice" to end racial discrimination in relation to wage disparities, black advancement and the use of facilities (Bates 1971: 27ff; Gertzel 1975). This similarity is of some moment since Zimbabwe had a very different experience in obtaining independence. By comparison with the aforementioned countries Zimbabwe's independence was gained after a much more bitter and protracted violent conflict, and the nationalist movement became increasingly radical and revolutionary. At independence the government seriously considered radical change in many spheres of life, and one option was to nationalise substantial parts of the economy such as
the mining industry (Herbst 1987: 38). In other cases where protracted violent struggles for independence were experienced, such as Angola and Mozambique, extensive nationalisation of industry was effected after independence. But the Mugabe Government adopted a gradual, transitional road to socialism, and this meant labour policy was formulated and implemented in tandem with managing a capitalist economy. Economic growth was needed to finance social development policies such as expanded education, health and welfare services, as well as employment growth. State sector employment and spending expanded rapidly after independence, but this did not bring about a major increase in overall employment and economic activity (Hawkins 1987). Indeed, after the mini-boom of 1980-81, real per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined by 2.3% in 1981-82, and averaged only 1.1% real growth in the period 1981-84 (Ministry of Finance 1986: 14). In part this stagnation was the result of severe drought and international recession; however, the government’s economic policies (e.g., large wage increases; restrictions on foreign investment) did not encourage investment (Hawkins 1987). Gradually, policies were adopted in an attempt to create a favourable investment climate so that the private sector would play a role in economic growth and employment creation. An economic climate to encourage investment entailed the containment of wage increases and limitation of strikes.

The Mugabe government’s attempt to balance workers’ interests with its national development goals can be identified as a corporatist strategy of structuring (corporatising) interest representation into single, officially recognised bodies that play a role in enforcing public policy (Schmitter 1974; Crouch 1984, 1985; Cawson 1986). In Western democracies monopoly interest groups, such as a central trade union congress, play an important role in formulating, implementing and enforcing public policy. For example, the union congress might negotiate a tripartite national wage increase, assist
in interpreting the agreement, and enforce the agreement by rejecting industrial action and pressuring their membership into complying with the agreement. Chapter 3 shows that the Mugabe government's first step to regulate labour relations was to curtail industrial action and insist that disputes be settled within an institutional framework. The government ordered that trade union and employer organisations be organised into monopoly representative bodies, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ). In the case of trade unions, the government and ZANU(PF) ensured that the ZCTU leadership was supportive of government policy.

In this respect Zimbabwe differs from Western democracies in which "societal" corporatism is based on pre-existing strong union movements which enforce negotiated agreements (Schmitter 1974). Zimbabwe's trade unions were comparatively weak, and government played a more decisive role in formulating and enforcing public policy, for example, by virtually prohibiting strikes. The ZCTU played an auxiliary role by refraining from recommending strike action and by urging workers to support government labour policies. This auxiliary enforcement role was nonetheless important, for without ZCTU support for government policy the government would have had much greater difficulty in presenting itself as the champion of workers' interests. Characterising the Mugabe Government's labour strategy as corporatist does not imply a coherent and deliberate policy; in practice, labour policy was developed in an ad hoc manner as government reacted to the changing circumstances and endeavoured to find a balance between workers' interests and national development goals.

To date, writing on labour relations in Zimbabwe has been patchwork and many contributions have been polemical criticisms of government policy. Government repression of the post-independence strikes has received some attention (Callinicos 1981; Astrow 1983; Sachikonye 1986; Mitchell 1987),
and trade unions have been examined by Wood (1987, 1988). Aspects of government labour policy such as the role of the Ministry of Labour (Nangati 1984a and 1984b; Mitchell 1987) have received brief critiques. Only one detailed case study of labour relations in an organisation has been published (Cheater 1986). Very little attention has been given to important features of labour relations such as the Labour Relations Act (Sachikonye 1986) and workers' committees (Nangati 1984a; Cheater 1986). Moreover, these disparate writings provide a one-sided view of labour relations since they are presented from a radical perspective in which capital is presented as monolithic in the sense that all employers, usually including the state as an employer, are exploitative of workers. Similarly, the state is portrayed as an instrument that serves the interests of capital to subjugate workers. Thus Astrow asserts that:

The ZANU(PF) Government recognised that the African working class, during the so-called national democratic revolution, represented one of the biggest potential threats to capitalist stability. Mugabe soon indicated the role he intended this class to play:

In the private sector there is little we can do for now. We don't want to disrupt the economy. But of course we are interested in the role of the worker, in his being organised so that he becomes more effective as a producer.

The ZANU(PF) Government is interested in organising the working class only as a means of increasing efficiency of industry and the profitability of capitalism (1983: 175, quoting Mugabe in the Sunday Times 13/4/80).

This caricatures rather than characterises government labour policy.

A detailed study of the practice of labour relations at both national and organisational levels produces a very different view. Firstly, state labour policy is found to be formulated and implemented with the aim of balancing the interests of labour and the government's national development goals (Chapters 3 and 4). Secondly, a disaggregated view of employment practices finds substantial variation among organisations; while some companies have persisted with racist and authoritarian management
practices, others have embarked upon reform programmes to advance black employees and create a more cooperative relationship with black workers (Chapters 5 to 7).

Chapter 1 provides a discussion of approaches to the study of labour relations and labour in organisations at the general level, and in relation to developing countries, especially in Africa. In this chapter the conceptual framework employed in this study is identified. For analysis of national labour relations in Zimbabwe key features of corporatism are identified as the monopolisation of interest representation, and the fusion of interest representation and enforcement of public policy. As ideal-types corporatism and pluralism differ in that the latter involves a plurality, not a state-licensed monopoly, of representative bodies, and while pluralism involves inputs into policy formulation it does not involve the policing of public policy, as does corporatism (Crouch 1985; Cawson 1986). One valid criticism of Schmitter’s (1983) attempt to operationalise corporatism is that he is preoccupied with institutional factors (e.g., the degree of unionisation), and neglects dynamic features (e.g., relations between unions and government) (Almond 1983). This problem is avoided here by focusing in detail on relations between trade unions and the state.

Some commentators have suggested that corporatist analysis can be applied to African countries (Shaw 1982; Higgott 1985), but these contributions are at a very general level and little empirical evidence is provided to justify the designation of African countries as "corporatist". Some liberal analysts of labour relations in developing countries are aware of the attempt by governments to restructure and control the union movement so that unions play a "productionist" role to promote worker discipline and exercise wage restraint in order to further economic development (Bates 1971; Friedland 1974). However, these analyses do not present empirical material so as to
identify coherently the monopolisation and fusion features of a corporatist labour strategy.

For analysis of labour relations in organisations a perspective is adopted which sees workers and management as having fundamental conflicts of interests. This conflict perspective is modified to take into account the effects of management culture, leaders' values and internal differentiation within the management of organisations. It is argued that management culture can have a powerful impact on the conduct of labour relations, but that fundamental conflicts remain between management and workers.

Chapter 2 provides the backdrop to labour relations in Zimbabwe by briefly examining periods in labour history, and the situation with regard to trade unions, employers and government at independence. Government's corporatist strategy is shown in areas other than labour relations, such as the concentration of interest representation with respect to political parties, women and youth. Interpretations of labour relations in Zimbabwe that have appeared in the literature are then reviewed.

The evolution of national labour relations is charted in Chapters 3 and 4. This begins with the 1980 to 1982 wildcat strikes and government's reaction to curtail industrial action. As in most other independent African states the Zimbabwe government and ruling party, ZANU(PF), brought the union movement under the control of government and party to a substantial extent. The government corporatised the divided union movement into a single congress (the ZCTU) and, together with party supporters in the union movement, neutralised non-ZANU(PF) union leaders by removing them or creating rival "splinter" unions. The result was a trade union leadership that was sycophantic, willingly playing the corporatist role of supporting and enforcing government policy. This union leadership was corrupt and became discredited. It was replaced in 1985 by a leadership that was more willing
to criticise government policy; however, strike action remained effectively prohibited, and government supervision of trade union affairs ensured that union criticisms did not develop into an organised campaign against government labour policy (Chapter 3).

In Chapter 4 government attempts to benefit workers are examined in relation to increasing real incomes and narrowing the income gap, generating employment, establishing labour relations machinery to protect workers and prevent industrial action, and involving workers and their representatives in decision-making on labour issues. The government endeavoured to improve workers' wages and work conditions, but it did not achieve the goals it set for itself. With respect to wages, for instance, despite the introduction of statutory minima, real minimum wages generally were not appreciably higher in 1987 than in 1980. This was primarily due to government's need to balance workers' interests against policies to prevent retrenchments and stimulate investment for economic growth. Government labour policy was ostensibly to strengthen trade unions and to promote workers' interests. But by attempting to regulate wages and have Ministry of Labour officials protect workers from unfair labour practices, government policy had the effect of perpetuating the historical weakness of trade unions, since little role was left for trade unions. Continuing union weakness reinforced the government's position that it, and not the union movement, should play the leading role in protecting and enhancing workers' interests. So the corporatist strategy that involved the subordination of unions to government was reinforced as government assumed functions that trade unions commonly undertake on behalf of workers, such as wage negotiations and protecting workers with respect to unfair dismissal.

The case studies show that management employment practices in Zimbabwe are characterised by considerable diversity rather than the uniformity assumed by Astrow (1983), Nangati (1984a, 1984b, 1987) and Sachikonye
(1987). The three organisations analysed were specifically chosen to exemplify this diversity. Chapter 5 on General Industries (a pseudonym) shows that racist and authoritarian management practices persist in some large companies in Zimbabwe. In this company management opposed workers' demands for the advancement of black employees and the reform of personnel and labour relations procedures and practices (e.g., discipline, job evaluation, selection, promotion, training). Contrary to Marxist views which focus on structural factors (e.g., class formation, market competition) to explain labour relations (e.g., Burawoy 1974, 1985), it is argued that management obstinacy was in large part a result of the management culture at General Industries, which was characterised by white Rhodesian values of racial superiority. Anglo American Corporation (Chapter 6) is an example of companies that have gradually reformed personnel procedures and promoted black employees. Anglo companies sought to place relations with black workers on a negotiated rather than confrontational basis. In part this was due to the needs of complex organisations to secure the cooperation of employees and not to rely on coercion. However, management culture also played a role in terms of the values that were fostered in the corporation by its founder, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, which included a commitment to equal opportunity. Yet there was a clash of cultures within Anglo management with many white managers holding racist attitudes. In a parastatal organisation, the Dairy Marketing Board (Chapter 7), black advancement and the reform of personnel practices proceeded more rapidly than at Anglo American, and by 1985 most managers with racist attitudes had left the enterprise. The organisation faced severe external constraints, such as a lack of funds and government controls over terms of employment, but within these constraints management generally endeavoured to build a cooperative relationship with black workers.

Links between national and organisational labour relations remain undeveloped in the literature. Studies generally focus on either the
organisational or extra-organisational level. Empirically, however, organisations are influenced by external features such as labour laws, the institutional labour relations framework (e.g., collective bargaining and dispute settlement mechanisms), and government policy. Industry and national level arrangements might be influenced by common organisational forces (e.g., in response to employers retrenching workers, government introduced restrictions on termination of employment). While the links between levels are indicated in the empirical chapters, the literature consists of two virtually separate bodies. Reconciling these two bodies of literature would involve a substantial theoretical project (see Woodiwiss 1987a and 1987b), which is beyond the scope of this study.

White workers are not specifically dealt with in this study. By the mid-1980s most white unions had either dissolved or were being amalgamated into black unions. A few white union leaders were still active in union affairs, notably in the railways, air transport and engineering industries, but in general black workers and their unions occupied the centre of the labour relations stage. There were no white members of the workers’ committees in the three organisations studied. In general white workers showed little interest in workers’ committees, and perceived them with some disdain as bodies concerned with black workers only.

A core period of full-time research was undertaken in Zimbabwe from August 1984 until July 1985. Further part-time fieldwork was carried out in Zimbabwe in the period May 1986 to April 1988, while the writer served as lecturer in the Department of Business Studies, University of Zimbabwe. The research for Chapters 3 and 4 on national labour relations involved a survey of Herald newspaper reports from 1980 to 1987. Over 200 interviews were conducted with government, employer and trade union representatives. Observation of meetings and proceedings included trade union meetings and congresses, employer and worker negotiating bodies.
(employment boards and councils), tripartite meetings and conferences, and the hearing of cases by Ministry of Labour officials. Access was obtained to some records held by trade unions, employers' associations and the Ministry of Labour. For Chapters 5, 6 and 7 countless interviews were conducted with managers, workers and their representatives. Management and workers' meetings were attended, including disciplinary hearings and meetings of employment boards, works councils, workers' committees and managers' meetings. Company documents were examined including disciplinary and wage records. Throughout the core research period I spent many days and sometimes weeks in the three organisations with general freedom to interview organisational members, observe the work process, the operation of the personnel departments and meetings between management and workers. In general information sought was made available, although the Ministry of Labour refused to provide information relating to the number of cases handled by the Ministry, staffing levels of labour relations officers, and data on wage levels for employment boards and councils after 1985.

The names of many informants in the empirical chapters are not provided in order to comply with the wishes of individuals to remain anonymous. The three enterprises requested that individuals not be identified. The past tense is used in the empirical chapters in recognition that labour relations are dynamic and that the situation may have changed. In many respects, however, the scene described remains much the same in 1989.
Chapter 1 Approaches to Labour Relations

Introduction

In this chapter I identify a general conceptual framework for the analysis of corporatist labour relations strategy. This framework has two key features which characterise corporatist arrangements, namely, concentration of interest representation, and fusion of representative bodies with state policy implementation and enforcement. Under pluralism specific interests can be represented by a multiplicity of bodies, while under corporatist arrangements representation is concentrated to give a single organisation monopoly representation of specific interests. Similarly, pluralism involves interest organisations providing inputs into public policy, while under corporatism interest organisations are fused with the state in the sense that they also implement and enforce compliance with public policy within their membership (Crouch 1984, 1985; Cawson 1986). After setting out these general features of corporatism, corporatist strategies in developing countries are examined. I argue that while formulations of corporatism in Africa to date have been weak, the approach I have adopted, following Crouch (1984, 1985) and Cawson (1986), shows greater promise. The discussion then turns to organisations, and a conflict and control perspective is used as a starting point. This perspective sees conflict between management and workers as endemic within organisations. However, relations between workers and management are also influenced by management style and culture, and the policies and procedures administered by the personnel department. The conflict perspective therefore requires supplementation by concepts from conventional approaches to the study of organisations, namely, organisation culture, leadership style and departmental differentiation. I then show that this modified conflict view has relevance in African countries, since studies which rely on structural factors (e.g., class conflict, market competition) to explain labour relations (e.g., Burawoy 1974, 1985), overlook the important influences of organisational culture and management style in labour
relations. The structural conditions of organisations need to be appreciated, but careful analysis also calls for culture and leadership to be recognised.

1.1 Labour Relations at the National Level

Labour relations at both the national and organisational levels are examined in this thesis. Most other studies focus primarily on only one level. My purpose in this section is to identify a general conceptual framework that is suitable for analysis of national labour relations in Zimbabwe. The framework adopted is derived from Schmitter, Cawson and Crouch who elucidate structures and processes they see as corporatist, such as the concentration of interest representation into state-sanctioned groups which participate in policy implementation and enforcement. I also aim to show that neither mainstream nor Marxist approaches are suitable alternatives for present purposes.

Analysis of labour relations can be undertaken at various levels such as workplace, organisation, industry, national or international. For convenience these levels are frequently dichotomised as organisational and extra-organisational levels. Some mainstream perspectives (e.g., Dunlop 1958; Margerison 1969; Kochan, McKersie and Cappelli 1984; Poole 1986) provide for analysis at various levels, and a central tenet of Marxist approaches is to see work relations within the broader context of the social relations of production and state intervention (Allen 1971; Hyman 1975). While some presentations examine structures and processes at differing levels (Clegg 1970, 1979), the traditional approach (e.g., Flanders and Clegg eds 1954; Flanders 1965) is "heavily oriented towards" analysis of institutional arrangements either within industries or nationally (Margerison 1969: 275). Dunlop, for example, states that the systems approach can be applied to various levels (1958: 23). In practice, he is mostly concerned with industry and national levels, and where the organisational level is addressed, the
focus is on rules rather than processes (1958: 18-23, 129-97). Many others almost exclusively focus on either organisational (Walker and Guest 1952; Whyte 1961; Stogdill 1965; Nichols and Beynon 1977; Harris 1987) or extra-organisational levels (Chamberlain 1951; Flanders and Clegg 1954; Weber 1961; Flanders 1965,1968; Levinson 1966; Herman, Kuhn and Seeber 1987), making only passing reference to other levels. An examination of articles in prominent journals such as the British Journal of Industrial Relations, Industrial Relations and Human Relations supports this argument.

In the current study emphasis is given to both organisational and national level labour relations. Following the approach taken by Schmitter (1974) and Cawson (1986), who see corporatism as a system of interest representation, I argue that national labour relations in Zimbabwe are characterised by a corporatist strategy. Various formulations of corporatism have been proposed which, for instance, see corporatism as a mode of production (see Panitch 1980: 159) or, as Winkler has it, "an economic system of private ownership and state control" guided by the principles of "unity, order, nationalism and success" (1976: 109, 103). These conceptions have been cogently criticised for presenting as an economic system what are more properly seen as political forms of interest representation, depicting the state as detached from class and the economy, and failing to distinguish corporatism from capitalism (Westergaard 1977; Panitch 1977, 1980).

Schmitter's celebrated definition of corporatism provides a useful starting point.

Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest intermediation in which the constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports (1977: 9).
Corporatism differs from pluralism in which interest associations operate as "an unspecified number of multiple, voluntary, competitive, nonhierarchically ordered and self-determined ... categories" that are not controlled by the state (Schmitter 1974: 96). Schmitter distinguishes between "societal" and "state" corporatism which Lehmbruch (1977) refers to as "liberal" and "authoritarian" corporatism. As an ideal-type, liberal corporatism implies that groups show a "high degree of cooperation" and they strongly influence the state (Lehmbruch 1979: 54), while authoritarian corporatism implies the state is unfettered by such influences and imposes a semblance of unity.

Schmitter has been criticised for failing adequately to distinguish between societal corporatism and pluralism (Nedelmann and Meier 1977; Almond 1983; Martin 1983), for neglecting analysis of class and the state (Panitch 1980, 1981), and for problems in operationalising variables (Almond 1983; McBride 1985). Crouch (1983) and Cawson (1986), following Schmitter, largely overcome the first of these criticisms. Crouch argues that the key distinguishing characteristic of corporatism is the "discipline and control" which interest groups impose on their membership in the implementation of agreements, a feature absent in pluralism (1983: 454). For Crouch discipline and representation vary inversely and this relation provides the independent variable for the continuum of ideal-types ranging from authoritarian corporatism (all discipline), liberal or bargained corporatism (discipline and representation), pluralism (representation with voluntary restraint), and contestation (representation without compromise) (1983: 457-8). Martin is only partially correct in arguing that the elevation of the "policing" role (Crouch 1983: 458) to be the exclusive defining element is too "restrictive" (1983b: 462). While Crouch emphasises discipline he also includes the representational role, as seen in the above definitions. Moreover, Martin's own defining elements are by the same token too general (e.g., "inter-group cooperation" 1983a: 89), and it is preferable to employ Schmitter's and Cawson's explication.
Cawson identifies three features that distinguish corporatism from pluralism as ideal-types, namely, "(1) the extent of competition in the group process; (2) the nature of the groups; and (3) their relationship to public authorities" (1986: 27). As ideal-types pluralism involves "a large number" (p.28) of competing groups while corporatism entails the monopolisation of representation. Pluralist groups are "voluntary associations of individuals" (p.29) whereas corporatism involves interest representation through compulsory groups. These two elements follow Schmitter's approach; however, Cawson more clearly argues that pluralism assumes an independent state (p.28) and a separation between interest representation (civil society) and policy implementation (the state) (p.29). In contrast, corporatism entails a "fusion" (p.39) between interest representation and the implementation of policies, since groups take on the role of enforcing policies. Thus Cawson proposes the following definition:

Corporatism is a specific socio-political process in which organisations representing monopolistic functional interests engage in political exchange with state agencies over public policy outputs which involves those organisations in a role which combines interest representation and policy implementation through delegated self-enforcement (1986: 38).

Cawson, unlike Crouch, retains and develops Schmitter's notion of the monopolisation of interest representation as a fundamental component of corporatism, and encapsulates this in his major independent variable - "the degree of concentration in the structure of interest groups" (1986: 32). Like Crouch, he helps to clarify the control function of interest groups. Thus there are two important features, concentration and enforcement. Cawson and Crouch also improve Schmitter's framework by seeing corporatism as a "process" (Cawson 1986: 38) or "strategy" (Crouch 1977: 33), rather than as a "system" (Schmitter 1974: 93). Their approach has the benefit of stressing the dynamic and relational features in corporatism.
Crouch presents corporatism as "a strategy of domination" (1977: 33) which is "pursued by capitalism when it cannot adequately subordinate labour by preventing its combination and allowing market processes to work" (1979: 19). Class is clearly portrayed as a key feature since the strategy involves capital's attempt to subordinate labour. Crouch's view that this strategy is pursued "by capitalism", however, needs qualification. Crouch himself argues that labour can benefit from corporatist arrangements, and concludes that bargained corporatism offers the "most attractive opportunities" for labour in Britain (1982b: 221). The point can be better made that, depending on the strength of classes and the degree of state corporatism, the strategy might be pursued as much by the state, or by labour as by capital. Cawson, for whom "[c]orporate groups in production represent class interests" (1986: 37), adopts a similar view of classes and the state:

By contrast [with pluralism] the stress within corporatist writing has been on the growing interpenetration of the public and the private spheres. The crucial concept is that of public policy as the outcome of a bargaining process between state agencies and those organised interests whose power in the political marketplace means that their cooperation is indispensable if agreed policies are to be implemented. The state is not sufficiently powerful for officials to dictate policies and impose them unilaterally, but at the same time it is sufficiently powerful to resist capture by those interests (Cawson 1986: 35, cf. Cawson and Saunders 1983: 16).

It needs to be remembered that this describes societal corporatism, and the state is more powerful in cases closer to state corporatism where the state can capture groups and dictate policy (as in Zimbabwe). In all cases there is a dialectical relationship between the state and civil society. The state attempts to control to a greater or lesser extent the activities and affairs of both capital and labour, through representational structures, and through incomes, monetary and fiscal policies. At the same time, the extent of these controls is limited by pressures from capital and labour, so that the efficacy of the representational structures might be questioned by constituents and controls mediated, though usually more strongly by capital than by labour. Furthermore, the state should be seen in disaggregated form so that internal divergences can be recognised, particularly along functional lines. A
relevant example is the potential for conflict between labour and social welfare agencies on the one hand, and finance ministries on the other.

Almond correctly, though inelegantly, points out that "Schmitter has not really properly operationalised his ... variables" (1983: 259). Schmitter (1981) used the degree of unionisation and the centralisation and unity of the union movement as a measure of corporatism. That is, higher union density, centralisation and unity indicate a greater degree of corporatism. Almond notes that to be in keeping with Schmitter's own approach Schmitter should have endeavoured to indicate the "kind of relationship and bargaining process" between unions and other interest groups and the state (1983: 260). In the present study an attempt is made to avoid this problem by paying close attention to these relations. In this respect, Crouch's view of corporatism as a strategy is helpful in highlighting the dynamic features of corporatist arrangements.

Corporatist notions are directly relevant to labour relations; as Cawson explains "the theory of corporatism has developed around studies of economic-corporate groups" (1986: 32) since their interactions with the state are a major feature of the polity. Crouch and others (Streeck 1981, 1982) have specifically focused on corporatist labour relations in Western European countries. In focusing on British industrial relations Crouch develops the notion of "bargained corporatism", between the ideal-types of voluntarist (societal) and statist corporatism (1977: 262). He argues that while British unions resisted pressures toward incorporation, there were "signs" that they "took advantage of the openings afforded by corporatism" (1977: 262). For example, unions might have accepted increased "involvement" between workers and capital as evidenced in the shift by some unions to support workers' participation, but unions "have completely and successfully resisted attempts to make them creatures of the state" (1977: 262-3).
Some scholars argue that corporatist analysis does not provide a useful framework for analysing labour relations. Dabscheck (1983), for example, perceives a number of difficulties in Crouch's formulation of bargained corporatism. Crouch inadequately defines "bargained corporatism" since he omits the role of employers from his definition (Dabscheck 1983: 501 note 56; Crouch 1977: 262-3, 1982b: 212-3). Moreover, in his early and major work on industrial relations Crouch (1977) broadly followed Winkler's approach which has been soundly criticised (Panitch 1980). Another problem with Crouch's analysis is his search for corporatism in Britain where, even before the Thatcher Government's reversal of 1970's trends, there was relatively little corporatism (Schmitter's "[c]ombined ranking" places Britain 14th out of 15 liberal democracies 1983: 294). After summarising the partial trends towards corporatism Crouch himself states "it would be highly misleading to describe these developments as the successful triumph of corporatism" (1977: 257).

Nonetheless, there are grounds for examining corporatist labour relations in Western democracies, especially in, for example, Austria. The chambers of trade unions and employers in Austria "are entitled to give their opinion on all government bills before they are submitted to parliament" (Lehmbruch 1979: 57). There were occasions when the chambers drafted bills which would then be legislated by Parliament. The cartels law, for example, was "ratified without any change by the government and parliament" (1979: 57, cf. 1977: 115-20). Given this extent of participation in policy formation, it is inconceivable that these state-sanctioned groups were not deeply involved in policy implementation and supervision. Furthermore, careful analyses have revealed that corporatist arrangements might be stronger in some countries than the ostensibly pluralist structures would suggest. Streeck (1981, 1982) provides evidence that works councils in West Germany, which are generally perceived to facilitate pluralism, have commonly operated in close conjunction with trade unions. (It will be seen that Zimbabwe's workers'
committees do little to provide a pluralist alternative to corporatist arrangements.) While corporatist strategies are weakly developed in some countries (e.g., the US, see Salisbury 1979), where such strategies are well developed corporatist analysis constitutes a productive research programme.

Alternative frameworks from liberal and Marxist perspectives do not provide a satisfactory account of corporatist labour relations strategy. Substantial divergences exist within orthodox approaches, and Farnham and Pimlott (1979, 1986) clearly portray these in their typology of unitary, industrial conflict (i.e. pluralist), systems, and social action approaches (cf. Blain and Gennard 1970; Schienstock 1981; Dabscheck 1983; Thomason 1984; Bamber and Lansbury 1987). In a unitary perspective conflict between employers and workers is considered to be illegitimate, since both parties are viewed as having basically shared goals of organisational effectiveness for survival and reward for its members. Unions are to be avoided since, as Knox’s (1955) crude systems model has it, they disrupt relations between workers and management. A unitary perspective is a common management "frame of reference" and usually takes the form of either an authoritarian or paternalistic approach (see Fox 1966, 1973; Purcell 1983; Keenoy 1985). This approach is frequently discredited by writers on labour relations; however, some analysts, notably those from the US, suggest that certain enterprises have surpassed paternalism and have established harmonious employee relations as a result of careful attention to employees’ requirements, thus obviating the need for trade unions (Foulkes 1980, 1981; Levering, Moskowitz and Katz 1984).

The unitary view is rejected by pluralists who argue that conflict in labour relations is normal, indeed healthy, allowing parties to pursue their distinct interests (Fox 1966; Flanders 1970; Flanders ed. 1969; Clegg 1975; Barbash 1984). Trade unions are an integral part of work relations, and collective bargaining and other agreed-upon institutional arrangements for rule-setting
are advocated. Contrary to Marxists, theorists such as Dahrendorf (1959) hold that sufficient reforms have occurred within capitalism, such as increased social mobility and mechanisms for negotiation and reform, to negate the need for revolutionary change. Critics such as Fox (1973, 1974a, 1974b), who recanted his earlier attachment to pluralism, and others (e.g., Goldthorpe 1974) argue that this view is based on mistaken assumptions that (notwithstanding Clegg's (1975) claim to the contrary) there is an approximate balance of power among the actors, and that conflicts are not so severe as to threaten system survival. Fox (1973) argues that capital has predominant power over labour and, since bargaining agreements can be seen by workers to have been reached "under duress" (p.221), it is to be expected that workers will reject the legitimacy of the labour relations system.

Systems theory is similar to pluralism in abjuring both unitary and radical perspectives. Dunlop's (1958) model represents labour relations as essentially a system of rule-setting which is characterised by three actors, employers, employees and government; three contexts, technological conditions, budgetary constraints and power relations; and an ideology sufficiently shared to enable system cohesion. This model, and Flanders' (1965) similar conception, has been criticised for presenting a static view as a result of a preoccupation with structure, conflict resolution and formal relations, to the neglect of processes, conflict generation and informal relations (Margerison 1969; Hyman 1975). Bain and Clegg (1974) and other scholars (e.g., Blain and Gennard 1970) have proposed modifications to the basic model to take account of these criticisms, but "most industrial relations research" remains confined to the formal rule-setting model (Winchester 1983: 101).

Rather than focusing on structures, as in systems theory, social action theorists stress the behavioural characteristics in labour negotiations and
examine the potential for parties to achieve their objectives within the institutional framework (Schienstock 1981). This gives rise to a preoccupation with the conduct of actors in collective bargaining, as seen in the work of Walton and McKersie (1965), and the choices taken by actors with reference to the meanings they attach to phenomena (Silverman 1970). Hyman argues this neglects structural forces since the actors themselves might be unconscious of the influence of structures, meanings are to an extent "socially generated", and objective conditions might prevent the realisation of actors' goals (1979: 72).

From a radical perspective all these formulations are preoccupied with explaining, and in large part defending, the status quo. Marxist analyses (Allen 1971, 1975; Hyman 1972, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1980) hold that these views neglect both the underlying conflict between labour and capital, which is characterised by unequal power relations, and the interventionist role of the state. Hyman argues that this broad traditional approach has three basic assumptions: (1) actors are multiplicities of individuals, (2) there is an "empiricist conception of power", and (3) there is a narrow view of workers' interests, usually confined to economistic collective bargaining. These assumptions lead to a conservative view that the proper function in industrial relations is to chaperone peaceful capitalist production (1980: 40).

While a Marxist theory of industrial relations has not been clearly articulated, the problematic is based on the notion of contradictions between capital and labour and this class conflict "underlies everything that occurs in industrial relations" (Hyman 1975: 23). Hyman notes that there are two essential tenets.

The first is that capitalist social relations of production reflect and reproduce a structured antagonism of interests between capital and labour. The second is that capitalism simultaneously organises workers collectively ... and hence generates the material basis for effective resistance to capital .... What is conventionally studied as industrial relations may thus be conceived as a fetishised presentation of the class struggle and the various forms in which it is
A major omission here is that the role of the state is not specified. Dabscheck states that unlike systems and pluralist approaches, Marxism "has a well developed stance with respect to the state" (1983: 498) and he presents this as being the "committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (Marx and Engels 1948: 43). Dabscheck cogently criticises this notion, suggesting that the state does provide "concessions" to labour which amount to gradual social change, and that "capital is not homogeneous" and that fractions of capital are in competition for the concessions from the state (1983: 499). Yet as Hyman points out "[t]he relationship between state power and capitalist production is one of the most contentious issues in contemporary Marxist controversy" (1980: 49), and many Marxist formulations other than the Communist Manifesto view have been developed (see e.g., Miliband 1969; Poulantzas 1973, 1975; Offe 1975; Jessop 1977, 1982; Block 1980; Therborn 1980).

The difficulty in using a Marxist approach is not that the heterogeneity of capital is not taken into account, as Dabscheck states. The major problem is in the conception of the state. O'Connor (1973), for example, specifically differentiates developed capitalism into the capitalist state sector and monopoly sector where relatively high unionisation and wage levels prevail, and the competitive sector of usually smaller organisations where unionisation and wage levels are relatively low. The residual sector of migrant labour, welfare recipients, housewives and so on provides an unorganised secondary labour market (Edwards et al 1975; Gordon et al 1982; see Clegg and Dunkerley 1980: 542-9). These approaches are directly related to developed capitalist countries, and they might not prove germane for analysis of Zimbabwe where the government came into power following a war of liberation and professes to be ushering in a transition to socialism. When a Marxist conception is used exclusively then the exercise
becomes one of arguments as to whether or not particular state interventions should be seen as pro-labour or serving the long-term interests of capital, then weighing the perceived pro-labour state interventions against the perceived pro-capitalist interventions to reach an overall assessment as to whether a capitalist or socialist path is being taken. Marxists could argue that this question is not answered at the level of outcomes, but rather from a class analysis of society and the state (Swainson 1980). Yet again this involves unproductive debate over *inter alia* the role of the middle-class in the class struggle (e.g., Mallet 1975; Poulantzas 1975, 1977; Abercrombie and Urry 1983; Wright 1984, 1985). Moreover, as Hyman (1980: 50, 59 notes 59 and 60) acknowledges, the relationships among labour, capital and the state have not been satisfactorily conceptualised and "the detailed elucidation of the multi-faceted relationship between state and 'industrial relations', receive only the most limited guidance from a generalised commitment to Marxist theory" (1980: 50). The approach adopted here, as noted above, is to see the state as an interventionist force in the conflict between capital and labour, and not as a neutral arbiter, nor dogmatically as a class-aligned actor.

**Summary**

This study, unlike many others, provides an examination of labour relations at organisational and national levels. With respect to the national level, a perspective is adopted that identifies corporatist strategies involving the concentration of interest representation into state-sanctioned groups, which are expected to implement and enforce agreements through their membership. The state is neither a neutral arbiter nor merely a captive of class forces; instead, its interventions are influenced by both capital and labour, and by its own internal divergences. The critics correctly note that Schmitter's attempt to operationalise corporatism has not adequately portrayed relations among interest groups and the state; however, this problem can be overcome by paying closer attention to the dynamic features
of corporatist arrangements. Against the critics it is argued that corporatism can be distinguished from pluralism, and that class is not a neglected concept. Mainstream industrial relations perspectives are criticised for a weak conception of the state and for focusing on rules and conflict resolution to the neglect of underlying causes of conflict. While it is invalid to reject Marxist conceptions for postulating a homogeneous capital, despite neo-Marxist refinements, the role of the state remains highly problematic in Marxism with interminable and, for present purposes, fruitless debates over the class nature of the state. Attention now turns to discussions of labour relations within developing countries.

1.2 Labour Relations in Developing Countries

Considerable attention has been paid to corporatist strategies in Latin America, and analysis of corporatism has been carried out in other developing countries (e.g., Singapore). Some writers suggest that corporatist analysis can be applied to African countries (Shaw 1982; Higgott 1985). These treatments have a weak conception of corporatism, and they do not elucidate the structures and processes involved in corporatist arrangements. These problems can be overcome by adopting a coherent conception of corporatism, following Crouch (1984) and Cawson (1986), and applying this to detailed empirical analysis, as I do in this study.

Many scholars from both liberal and radical perspectives provide evidence of corporatist labour strategies in Africa, including the restructuring of union movements and the establishment of government control over unions. But these writers do not order their material into a framework which sees the monopolisation of representation and the fusion of interest representation with the enforcement of government policy as characteristic of corporatist strategy. In addition, many liberal approaches understate the repressive role of the state and capital in labour relations. Marxist formulations, on the
other hand, over-emphasise class forces, leaving little room for factors such as ethnicity, and unrealistically assess reform of labour relations in terms of socialist transformation.

An extensive literature exists which examines corporatist strategies in Third World countries, particularly in Latin America (e.g., Malloy ed. 1977; Stepan ed. 1973; Stepan 1978; Epstein 1979; Purcell 1981; see Cawson and Ballard 1984). Malloy (1977: 4) follows Schmitter's (1974) definition of corporatism and characterises countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru as having had strong, relatively autonomous states which have attempted to restrict interest articulation to vertically organised groups recognised by the state. O'Donnell (1977) links corporatist political structures to the economy and argues that under import-substituting industrialisation, populism was a common strategy for mobilising sectors of civil society for accumulation; consequently there was partial inclusion of groups within state structures and provision of certain benefits such as employment security and, in principle, the right to strike. The state sought to activate groups politically in a controlled direction, and supervised the recognition of unions, their finances and the selection of leaders. As the import-substitution stage matured and the economy experienced stagnation, balance of payments and foreign debt problems, populism proved inadequate to cope with the intensity of exploitation needed to reorient industry for the competitive export market. This created pressures for bureaucratic-authoritarian corporatism in which the state sought to ensure order for accumulation by excluding groups, atomising, depoliticising and even "destroying ... class organisations" through open repression (O'Donnell 1977: 69; Stepan 1978: 73-81; Collier 1979: 23-30; but see also Hirschman 1979; Serra 1979).

This approach has been applied to other developing countries. Deyo (1981), for instance, concludes that Singapore's drive to enter export markets
entailed a state corporatist strategy to control the labour movement. A single national union centre was "created" by the government (p.42), and government and unions maintained a "very close relationship" (p.21). In the early 1970s, for example, seven government members of parliament were central committee members of the congress (pp.42-4). Wages and industrial action were held down to encourage foreign investment and growth but, as economic prosperity increased, there were pressures for concessions to labour to provide a motivated rather than coerced workforce. Wage increases averaged 20 percent in 1979-80 (Schregle 1982: 35) and inclusionary strategies for greater welfare provisions and participation were pursued. Deyo describes this as a "paternalistic mode ... of authoritarian corporatism" since while there was attention to the welfare of labour, close supervision of unions was maintained to facilitate smooth capital accumulation (Deyo 1981: 95).

Shaw (1982) argues that corporatism has been adopted by African countries which are in early or middle stages of import-substitution. Table 1.1 presents Shaw's categorisation of corporatism in Africa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political economy:</th>
<th>State capitalist</th>
<th>State socialist</th>
<th>Socialist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variety of corporatism:</td>
<td>Bureaucratic-authoritarian</td>
<td>Populist</td>
<td>Collectivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy:</td>
<td>Capitalist</td>
<td>Non-capitalist</td>
<td>Socialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social base:</td>
<td>National bourgeoisie</td>
<td>Bureaucratic bourgeoisie</td>
<td>Proletariat and peasantry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases:</td>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shaw (1982: 258 Table 1).

Here Shaw, following Collier (1979: 396-7), correctly steps outside O'Donnell's and Stepan's treatments, since they base their analyses on the transition from import substitution to export oriented industrialisation, which is at present not applicable to many African countries (e.g., Mozambique,
Somalia and Tanzania). However, Shaw does not explain the reasons for categorising the countries he lists apart from outlining the major features of the subtypes developed by O'Donnell and others on Latin America. Nor does he provide a rationale for his distinction between socialist and state-socialist political economies to enable an assessment of, for example, his classification of Tanzania as state-socialist and Mozambique as socialist.

Similar problems of substantiation mar Higgott's (1985) approach. Higgott plausibly suggests that

the emergence of the kinds of centralised control typical of [state?] 'corporatism' are [sic] in many ways the logical outcome of the inability of post-independence governments to satisfy the demands and expectations generated by the rhetoric of the decolonisation process. The inherited post-colonial state, with its pluralist structures was essentially incapable of dealing with the competing tendencies of populist legitimation on the one hand and the necessity for production and growth on the other. It is, therefore, not surprising that the imperatives of order and regime maintenance triumphed over the demands of the 'revolution of rising expectations' (1985: 28).

The problem is that the discussion remains at a very general level. The "centralised control" measures and "pluralist structures" are not specified, and there is a tendency to sweeping statements:

It does not seem unreasonable on the basis of the evidence available to expect the growth of, or perhaps more appropriately, the continuance in growth of a form of state-corporatism in which there is a strong tendency to overcontrol at the political level and undercontrol (in a relative sense) at the economic level (Higgott 1985: 26).

These propositions may be correct, but Higgott provides little evidence in support. Similarly, he cautiously suggests that O'Donnell's formulation of corporatism could be applied to "the contemporary African situation" (p.29), but detailed evidence or argument to substantiate this view is not provided. Instead military governments are discussed as partial exceptions, with the implicit assumption that corporatism applies elsewhere. In part this problem arises from discussing Africa in general, but Higgott's basic conception of corporatism is also questionable. He notes that corporatism is a framework
for political analysis and then says "[c]orporatism is also essentially an economic system" (p.26). Panitch (1980) has cogently criticised Winkler's (1976) notion that corporatism is an economic system.

What is needed, in order to go beyond the superficial level provided by Shaw and Higgott, is close analysis of the structures and processes of African countries to justify their designation as corporatist. This would indicate to which subtype the country approximates, and specify the control measures and structures that have been introduced. Such an examination is provided in this work with respect to labour relations in Zimbabwe.

The discussion now turns to a consideration of alternative approaches to labour relations in developing countries and indicate why these are not adequate.

Without explicitly using the term "corporatism" many analysts, both liberal and Marxist, provide evidence of the two defining characteristics of corporatism, namely, concentration of interest representation and the implementation and supervision of policy by the incorporated groups. In many developing countries the populism associated with independence and the "revolution of rising expectations" was shortlived, and governments took steps to control trade unions and other groups such as opposition parties capable of mobilising support for alternatives to government policies. Common measures were to confer monopoly representation on a single trade union congress, and attempt to incorporate this body to accept, implement and assist in enforcing government policy. In countries tending toward the state corporatist model, however, enforcement was engineered more by the state than by self-enforcement. It is important to examine the experiences in other African countries since Zimbabwe has followed a very similar path.
From a liberal viewpoint, Lofchie and Rosberg indicate three broad categories of state control over unions: "relative autonomy", where a considerable "associational freedom" exists (e.g., Nigeria, Sierra Leone); "semi-control", where the state intervenes in union affairs such as choice of leadership and international affiliation (e.g., Kenya, Ivory Coast, Zambia); and "control", where unions are integrated into party or state machinery (e.g., Ghana, Mali, Tanzania) (1968: 10-13). Friedland (1968: 21) discusses unions that have been "captured" by African governments, and Gertzel (1979) provides detailed analysis of attempts by the state in Zambia to incorporate trade unions. The government and party took steps to unify the union movement by coopting leaders into government (Gertzel 1979: 321, 326). Militant unionists were detained (p.348), and labour laws consistently "increased governmental control of trade union activity" (p.321). Despite these measures, the union movement in Zambia has remained one of the most autonomous in Africa (Friedland 1974: 580; Gertzel 1979).

Many liberal critiques place incorporation strategies in the context of the widespread discussion of the developmental versus representational role of Third World trade unions. Zack, for instance, notes that after independence nationalist political leaders expected unions to transcend "mere representation" of workers and play a role in "national development" policy formation and implementation (1968: 95-6). According to liberal views this call for increased commitment to production was a result of politicians' primary concern with improving economic development and political stability (Lofchie and Rosberg 1968; Friedland 1968; Davies 1966; Huntington 1968). National leaders expected labour to forego industrial disruption such as strikes and "accept some austerity and sacrifice ... [in] the broad public interest" (Lofchie and Rosberg 1968: 7). Political leaders demanded restraint from workers, pointing out that wage earners commonly comprise what amounts to a relatively privileged five to ten percent of the economically active population (Zack 1968; Bean 1985), and that
government has responsibilities to the community as a whole. Consequently, numerous independent governments adopted strong measures to control the union movements. In Ghana under Nkrumah (Lynd 1968; Damachi 1974; Kraus 1979) and in Tanzania (Friedland 1968; Miho 1979), despite some resistance, the union movements virtually became wings of the ruling parties, with only one central congress permitted, strikes practically prohibited, and close controls over union policy, finances, and appointment of personnel. At one stage the Tanzanian Minister of Labour, Michael Kamaliza, was simultaneously leader of the central union congress (Lynd 1968), while in Ghana a key objective in the 1958 constitution of the central congress was "to uphold the aims and aspirations of the Convention People’s Party" (quoted in Ananaba 1979: 10).

Radical writers have recorded similar features.

In the post-colonial era the state has increasingly intervened to regulate relations between capital and labour: to enforce compulsory arbitration, outlaw strikes, detain leaders, monitor union organisation, impose wage freezes (Burawoy 1982: 124).

The case of Nigeria is instructive, since for some years following independence in 1960 corporatist strategies were not strongly pursued. Many African countries opted for centralised statutory wage regulation, but in federal Nigeria "voluntarist principles" of collective bargaining prevailed, and the unions were not incorporated into government (R. Cohen 1974: 180). Indeed, from the 1940s the labour movement "has nearly always been divided into mutually hostile groupings" (p.70) with very diverse attitudes to and relations with government (pp. 103, 151-8). More recently van Hear (1988) provides evidence of strong and partially successful state corporatist pressures, especially from military governments. In 1976 attempts by the four rival union federations to merge were "stifled by the military government" which then created a single congress, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), in an effort to "tame" the labour movement (van Hear 1988: 146). The government reduced the several hundred fragmented
unions and associations to forty-two industry unions, interfered in their elections, and banned all but two international labour bodies. Nonetheless, largely as a result of their history of independence, trade unions elected Alhaji Sunmonu, a "communist", as president of the NLC and continued to challenge government pressures toward compliance, for example, by staging a general strike in 1981 which achieved considerable wage rises (van Hear 1988: 146-7). As the recession and falling oil revenues took effect in the 1980s, and the union movement did not fulfil the role of controlling its members, the state used force to break strikes in an effort to obtain compliance. In an ironic episode, which lends support to Crouch's view that corporatist arrangements may benefit labour, the government tried to promote a more compliant union faction by attempting, unsuccessfully, to repeal the laws which gave the NLC monopoly status (van Hear 1988: 148).

Alongside controls independent governments frequently granted certain benefits to unions such as the closed shop, compulsory check-off arrangements and the right to organise and bargain collectively (e.g., on Zambia see Gertzel 1979). In part these were "trade-offs" (Bean 1985: 221) in an attempt to gain the support of unions to fulfil the corporatist enforcement role. Partly also, as harbingers of independence the political leaders portrayed themselves as the true representatives of popular interests. The concentration of union representation was claimed to be in the interests of strengthening the labour movement, and the concessions provided evidence to support these claims. However, the closed shop and check-off system also provided greater potential for unions to perform the corporatist roles of implementation and enforcement of policy.

While evidence of incorporation strategies can be gleaned from alternative perspectives, the latter are not embraced in this study. In order to explain why this is so it is helpful to examine the key underlying question or problem addressed by writers. For present purposes three alternative
approaches are identified, namely, orthodox, liberal and radical views. These can be depicted on a continuum from orthodoxy to liberal to radical. The corporatist approach adopted in this study lies between liberal and radical perspectives. As ideal-types the orthodox perspectives focus on order, and analyse phenomena in relation to system maintenance and stable capitalist accumulation. Liberals address the plurality of interests of actors and seek a path which combines growth and equity - desiderata that are frequently seen as being in mutual tension (e.g., Bienefeld 1975: 239). Thus Galenson, in recognition of this issue, writes "All of us who have worked on this book ... are convinced that independent trade unionism and satisfactory economic development are by no means antithetical" (1963: 10). Radical views, on the other hand, look to fundamental, if not revolutionary, social change to benefit workers and other exploited groups.

The views underlying these perspectives can be seen in the treatment of worker protest. Conventional analyses by, for example, Kerr et al see protest as "a persistent problem" (1960: 208). Many early treatments included the word "problem" in the title - hence Tinley's (1942) *The Native Labour Problem of South Africa*. Initially the major problem was the supply of able and obedient labour (Orde Brown 1933). Now that proletarianisation processes have generally delivered sufficient supplies of unskilled labour (Arrighi 1970; Munslow and Finch eds 1984) strikes are treated as a key problem in the pursuit of stable capital accumulation. Thus Jackson, after charting the "disappearance of strikes" in independent Tanzania by government's "imposing obligations on organised labour" (e.g., restricting strikes and union organisation) and "creating new rights for workers" (e.g., minimum wages, industrial democracy) (1979: 250), reports:

Naturally, these may have been accepted with various degrees of willingness, and there is bound always to be some grumbling about any such policy. But, overall, Tanzania appears remarkably free of the tension and conflict in industrial relations which beset so many other countries (1979: 251).
Liberal views are more inclined to see protest as an understandable though regrettable outcome of a plurality of interests. They do not celebrate strikes as a desirable challenge to capitalism; rather strikes are seen as a legitimate expression of workers' interests, and the ultimate weapon in collective bargaining. Consequently, much emphasis is placed on the independence of trade unions from government and party, so that workers' interests per se can be pursued. It is in this light that the immense literature on union relations with government should be viewed (Galenson ed. 1959, 1963; Davies 1966; Beling ed. 1968; Ananaba 1979; see Friedland 1974). Hence Galenson, while close to orthodoxy in his anti-communist stance (1959: 13), puts more emphasis in his later volume (1963) on the need for independent unions with the right to strike:

It is quite understandable for government leaders who are concentrating on the achievement of economic goals in the face of what must sometimes appear to be impossible odds to be impatient with intractable, "irresponsible" representatives of workers. There is an ever-present temptation to silence them and to substitute paternalism for bargaining and conflict. But the price may be very high indeed: the loss to the nation of the creative energies of free men who feel themselves masters of their own fates rather than cogs in a vast, impersonal machine (1963: 10).

Radical writers enthusiastically welcome strikes and protest under capitalism. Waterman espouses the need to see

strikes as a creative act, as an assertion of the desires and interests of one section of the masses against the 'logic of industrialisation' and over the 'industrialising elites' (Kerr et al, 1973) who usually dominate and control them (1976: 337).

Many writers look to worker protest as signs of and as spurs to the development of "working class consciousness" (Gutkind 1974: 28ff), and the "political potential" of workers (Gutkind 1975; Sandbrook 1977; Sandbrook and Cohen 1975a). Frequently radical writers argue that "development strategies relying on foreign private investment will at best produce 'growth without development'" (Bienefeld 1975: 239), and insist upon a "socialist
alternative" (p.240) for "the political and social liberation of the African working class" (Cohen, Copans and Gutkind 1978: 26).

Each of these perspectives (orthodox, liberal and radical) is rejected in this study. Orthodox approaches understate the extent of coercion involved in labour relations, and present state action in basically neutral terms. Too often, however, conventional views have been dismissed without reasonable justification. In criticising the argument of Kerr et al (1960) that industrial conflict declines as institutionalisation proceeds, Hyman quotes from them at length but omits their argument that the "industrialising elite develops its strategies and means of controlling, limiting, or directing worker protest" (Kerr et al 1960: 209 cf. Hyman 1979: 325-6). Similarly, Freund (1984, 1988) suggests that many studies of labour relations in Africa emanated from Cold War proselytisers. Freund cites many works from the 1960s and states "this literature took the continued institutionalisation of trade unions very much for granted and had a second, perhaps more significant, function: that of theorising and regulating the relationship of state to trade union in the new Africa" (1984: 7). While this has some credence (see Friedland 1974: 578-81), what Freund does not say is that the contributors to one volume he cites (Beling ed. 1968, e.g., Friedland, Lofchie and Rosberg, Zack), and related works (e.g., Galenson 1959, 1963; Friedland 1974) were at pains to question the incorporation of trade unions into government and party structures.

A protracted example of this form of critique is seen in Hess’s (1986) work which is marred by overstatement and selective quotation. He alleges that for Kerr et al "development was an inevitable, 'invincible' and beneficial process, to which newly independent nations would enthusiastically submit under the guiding hand of an 'industrialising elite'" (Hess 1986: 228 citing
Kerr et al 1962: 2,18,300,38). Further, orthodoxy "often neglects the manner in which these [industrial relations] systems actually operate" (p.225), and Hess adopts the concept of mode of production (see Foster-Carter 1978) to show that features of traditional society are resilient and these are "a principal determinant of ... local workplace attitudes and behaviour" (1986: 233).

Kerr and his colleagues (Dunlop et al 1975; Kerr 1983) have already revised their views on the rate and extent of change:

[We were] wrong in suggesting that the industrial mode of production would so quickly and so completely conquer the world and so overwhelmingly impose its own cultural patterns on preexisting cultures; industrialism does conquer and it does impose, but less rapidly and less totally than we implied (Kerr 1983: 27-28).

In addition, Kerr et al were aware that industrialisation has not always been "enthusiastically" embraced by workers:

Industrialisation has in several cases been less harsh than a century ago, but where it has been raw and cruel the instruments of control or even repression over the work force by management or government have been more efficient and have constrained most of the outward signs of protest. Industrialising elites and enterprise managers have more experience on which to rely and are more skilled in the control of protest (1960: 195).

[The surface may be quiet by virtue of strong controls .... But beneath the exterior is always latent protest, seething and simmering, to erupt in violence or to overflow in indolence in times of crisis or tension (1960: 202).

Hess (1986) correctly points out that industrialisation is characterised by a mixture of incorporation, control and repression, but he goes too far in suggesting that Kerr et al are unaware of these phenomena. It is more accurate to state that despite reference to control the overall position of Kerr et al is to see industrialisation as a neutral and beneficial process, and to

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1Hess' page references to the 1962 printing are inaccurate e.g., "industrialising elites" are mentioned on pp.11,12,15 and discussed at length in pp.47-76, but are not mentioned on p.38; "inevitability" is not mentioned on p.2; p.300 is part of a background appendix. The 1960 and 1962 paginations are identical apart from the appendix.
argue that worker protest "tends to decline as workers become more accustomed to industrialisation" (p.30 emphasis added MAS). As Waterman (1976) and Hyman (1979) note, important strikes have continued to occur. Moreover, Kerr et al. understate the importance of state coercion. They make only passing references to state control and overwhelmingly stress the seemingly neutral "logic of industrialisation", involving the web of rules and acceptance of modern values (1960: 33-46, 197-202, passim).

Hess's treatment of Schregle (1982) is singularly cavalier. According to Hess, Schregle refers to "development ... [being] aimed at achieving the goals of the Asian people, at fulfilling their hopes and aspirations" (Hess 1986: 227 quoting Schregle 1982: 2). For Hess, this is a "gross simplification" and "breathtaking assumption" (p.227), and he declares that "Schregle has so little interest in identifying sources of divergent attitudes that he even manages to overlook the most visible differences between various Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist communities of the region" (p.227). Yet Schregle is at pains to draw attention to such diversity:

> the resistance of the old Asian religions to Western-imported secularisation is strong and impressive. In a profound and richly documented comparative study of the religions of the world, Alfred Braunthal reaches the important conclusion that "in Islamic, Hinduist, and Buddhist societies the secularisation process appears to have strengthened rather than weakened the religious faiths" (1982: 59).

There is ample evidence to show that writers such as Schregle adopt an uncritical view of state policy and the development of labour relations. In relation to Singapore early this century Schregle notes that individual employment contracts operated and, oblivious to the coercive nature of proletarianisation, he says "[i]n the circumstances no significant labour problems arose that would have led to major labour unrest" (1982: 33). He goes on to say that the government-aligned congress "obtained majority support" in 1964 (p.33). As Deyo makes clear this was virtually a government creation as the People's Action Party "set out to demobilise ...
leftist trade unions through political detention of leaders, union deregistration, and harassment" (1979: 37). Had Hess simply and persuasively developed this line of argument his critique would have been cogent. Instead his argument is weakened by his reliance on a caricature of mainstream works as being oblivious to, for example, ethnic divergences and the persistence of traditional social forms.

A major failing with liberal analyses is that, although they frequently deal with countries which have corporatist strategies, they do not order their empirical material into a conceptual framework that clearly identifies these patterns. Instead their work requires, if not, as Friedland puts it in relation to semi-official works, "Aesopian skills" (1974: 578), then certainly careful sifting and organising. As was argued in the opening section, a corporatist framework has the advantage over a pluralist or liberal approach, since the former specifically recognises the monopolisation and policing role of interest groups and does not assume a plurality of interest representation. One further criticism is that liberal authors sometimes claim their ideological stance is attenuated by "our conscious effort to be impartial" (Damachi et al 1979: 14). Presenting a balanced account which shows sensitivity to the arguments of various actors is a justifiable position, yet that need not impel authors to adopt a cloak of impartiality. Despite this veil ideological positions remain, necessitating a symptomatic reading if the stance is to be discerned.

Marxist formulations tend to present overly mechanistic views of labour relations, in which other social features such as ethnicity are neglected and the state is seen as a class product. At the broad level recent contributions, following Poulantzas (1973, 1975) on the state's relative autonomy, seek to avoid presenting a position in which base determines superstructure, and the state is simply the instrument of the ruling class (Saul 1974, 1976; Davies et al 1976; von Freyhold 1977). It is debatable whether this endeavour has
been achieved as the insistence on the primacy of class over ethnic cleavages (Johnstone 1976) and the view of the state as fundamentally capitalist (Beckman 1980, 1981, 1982) often result in stultified analysis (cf. Young 1986; Bozzoli 1978; Innes and Plaut 1978). Marxists provide condign criticisms of colonial and liberal accounts which either seek to explain variations in labour strategies in Africa by reference to the culture of the colonial power (Damachi et al 1979: 4-6), or see exploitation solely in racial and not class terms (see Johnstone 1976: 204-5). In doing so, however, they in turn frequently understate the importance of ethnicity (both race and tribe). Thus for Cohen et al "the problem is not whether a working class exists, but its size; not its internal divisions (be they ethnic, linguistic, religious, or cultural), but its homogeneity when called upon to express itself" (1978: 16-7, see also p.9). Even with respect to South Africa ethnicity is relegated to very much a secondary and derivative role:

This study proceeds in terms of an alternative approach, a Marxist structuralist approach, which sees and explains the system of racial domination as a product of the system of production of which it formed a part, and as determined in its specific forms, functions and nature by this system (Johnstone 1976: 2).

My aim is not to advance debates in the immense literature on class and ethnicity in Africa (cf. Marenin 1976; Posel 1983; Young 1986); rather it is to note that the relationship is extremely complex and that neither ethnicity nor class "can be reduced, without banalisation, to a simple derivative of the other" (Young 1986: 470).

Apthorpe correctly points out that to a considerable extent colonialism "administratively created tribes as we think of them today" (1968: 18). Whatever its origins, in the present predicament ethnicity is a significant feature of labour relations in some African countries (on Uganda see Scott

As Johnstone (p.204) notes, Hutt implausibly asserts: "The inescapable conclusion ... is that private enterprise in mining and industry (and the same is true even of ... farming ...) has tended to work wholly for the material advancement (and indirectly the social benefit) of the African people" (Hutt 1964: 99).
1968), and this is certainly the case with regard to race in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In his analytical discussion cited above Cohen calls for the primacy of class. It is noteworthy, though, that in his earlier empirical work on Nigerian labour he recognises the powerful influence of ethnic conflicts: "[t]he post-1966 history of Nigeria is essentially that of the inter-ethnic tensions in the political class" (1974: 33). In circumstances of high inter-ethnic conflict class was manifested as a less potent force, so that Cohen can express the class role no more strongly than: "[t]hat a degree of working-class solidarity survived despite these pressures can be explained by reference to the structural position of workers" (1974: 34). This is not to suggest that ethnicity predominates over class. As Cohen remarks "class and ethnicity must be considered together, as a group of intersecting and interrelated matrices" (1974: 33). In doing so, however, Cohen breaks with the common Marxist call to see ethnicity as subordinate to class.

Finally, Marxism sets unrealistic yardsticks with which to analyse labour relations. If workers, unions, parties and governments have not achieved that rarely defined "socialist" society, then the verdict is commonly either one of failure, or of living in hope that the revolution will someday prevail. Marxists and related critics themselves go to extraordinary lengths to document the overwhelming structural and political obstacles to socialist transformation, including the disunity and lack of consciousness among the nascent working class in Africa, the resistance of local and foreign capital, market forces and the capitalist labour process, state coercion and corruption, and the weakness of developing countries in the capitalist world economy (e.g., Bienefeld 1975, 1979; Bernstein ed. 1973; Bolton 1978, 1985; Oxaal et al eds 1975; Sandbrook 1975). Yet they still expect radical social change to be achieved - and assess success or failure against this unrealistic measure. A common conclusion is to see in "glorious failures" and "occasional successes" inspiration for future struggles: "even the conservatively-led Kenya Federation of Labour gained some brief moments
of political glory" (Sandbrook and Cohen 1975b: 19). The work of Bienefeld is illustrative here. In 1975, after examining the quest for a "socialist alternative" (p.240) in Tanzania, Bienefeld concluded:

The workers' struggle will be long and difficult, but in Tanzania they do have important allies in the government. Thus, after the spate of strikes that followed Mwongozo, causing much disquiet, the chairman of the Permanent Labour Tribunal announced that 'practically in all strikes investigated by us, most of the workers' grievances were found to be true'. Where else could one read that? (1975: 256).

Four years later, after detailing the "failure" (p.592) of government, party, unions and workers committees to build a socialist alternative, Bienefeld reflected:

At the present juncture, further advances along the path to socialism can only come from the workers themselves. They must find ways of exerting effective pressure on the Party, on NUTA, and on their employers (1979: 593).

Workers could be forgiven for being bemused and wondering what else they can do after attempts to mobilise were circumscribed and strike action prevented by the sympathetic government - particularly when a prominent intellectual socialist can offer no advice. Similarly, workers cannot be expected to live on some brief moments of "political glory". Success for workers should not be measured in terms of the elusive political and social "liberation" of the working class, but in terms of the realisable gains that can be achieved. The question, in short, is not so much "What is to be done?"; it is "What can be done?"

Summary

There are suggestions that corporatist analyses be imported into Africa from Latin America. To date, however, these have been "airfreighted" and have barely touched ground in Africa. Detailed analysis is required of corporatist strategies in specific countries. Alternative treatments of labour relations in independent African countries are useful for providing empirical evidence of government attempts to control unions; however, there are problems with
these approaches. Orthodox views have been frequently caricatured though they can be criticised validly for understating the role of coercion in labour relations. Liberal approaches do not provide a framework for conceptualising corporatist strategies. Radical approaches tend to present state action and ethnic cleavages as derivative of class forces, and unrealistically measure social change in relation to socialist transformation.

1.3 Labour Relations at the Organisation Level

A critical organisation perspective is adopted here which views organisations as arenas of struggle, primarily between workers and management who have fundamentally opposed interests. Relations between workers and management in organisations, however, are also influenced by culture, leadership style and personnel policies and procedures. Consequently, critical organisation theory needs to be modified in order to take into account phenomena identified in orthodox organisation theory; namely, management culture, leadership, and differentiation within management. Some writers argue that concepts should not be borrowed from different perspectives, and others claim that radical organisation theory concepts can be subsumed within orthodox organisation theory. I differ with both these views, and argue that a conflict perspective can be modified by concepts from conventional organisation theory to improve analysis of labour relations in organisations. I reject superficial approaches which see organisations as having a unitary and malleable culture. My view is that management cultures are frequently rejected by workers, and that culture is extremely difficult to manipulate. While the literature refers to "organisational" or "corporate" culture, it is preferable to employ the term "management culture" in order to avoid the suggestion that the culture is shared by all organisational members.
1.3.1 Conflict and Control Approaches

Critical organisation theorists conceive organisations as sites of conflict. Their view contrasts with that of orthodox organisation theory, which presents organisations in ostensibly value-neutral terms as coordinated goal-directed activity commonly based upon cooperation (Barnard 1938; Selznick 1948; Parsons 1956; see Dunkerley 1972). According to Burrell and Morgan, radical organisation theorists draw upon Marx and Weber and give primacy to four "core concepts": totality (organisations are inextricably embedded in broader social relations); structure (analysis of units larger than individuals); contradiction (structural conflict); and crisis (there are pressures for radical social change) (1979: 358-9, 365-92). In addition to these distinguishing concepts, notions of control and class warrant specific mention since these are integral to the problematic of most radical organisation theorists. Salaman, for example, develops the idea that "[o]rganisations are structures of control" (1981: 143ff). For Salaman (1981: 190-230) and Therborn (1980: 37-42) class plays a central role and control mechanisms are tools of management to be used against subordinates.

Storey (1983, 1985) has identified management control as a central issue in recent organisation studies, after decades of neglect even by Marxists, who tended to be preoccupied with "more historically 'significant' questions relating to the wider fate of capitalism" (1985: 271). Braverman's (1974) work, and the debate that followed (e.g., Coombs 1978; Littler 1982; Littler and Salaman 1984; Wood ed. 1982; Thompson 1983), investigated the deskilling of workers and the consequent enhancement of managerial control in the capitalist labour process, and stimulated a resurgence of interest in workplace control. In consequence, organisation theorists Clegg and Dunkerley posited "organisation as control of the labour process" (1980: 6).

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3 Though as Wood (1982: 12-13) indicates continental writers also had been engaged in debates on skill, and Marglin's (1974) paper was presented in 1971, see Kouzmin (1980: 152 note 3).
Salaman (1979: 215) and, more recently, Clegg have espoused a sociology of organisations premised on the view that:

Organisations are ... arenas of struggle and coordination, resistance and control, dissonances and community, structure and agency (Clegg 1986: 34)

Further:

organisations are arenas of struggle and locii [sic] of calculation in which social relations of and in production are worked out with a degree of indeterminacy. Such work occurs in a space enscribed [sic] by the triangulation between state, economy and civil society, constituting limits of citizenship, class and status as pressures on individual identities available for assemblage within organisational forms (Clegg 1988: 11).

In these formulations the centrality of conflict and control is manifest, as is the link with broader societal forces of the state and the class structure. Organisations therefore are seen as being embedded in broader social relations (Burrell and Morgan's totality) and cannot be studied as if in isolation, as many orthodox theorists attempted to do (e.g., Barnard 1938; Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939; McGregor 1960).

Other radical analysts have seen organisations in similar terms as sites of conflict and, not surprisingly given their Marxist antecedents, the fundamental conflict in capitalist organisations is identified as that between labour and capital (e.g., Allen 1975; Nichols and Beynon 1977; Burawoy 1979). Notions of class and control are applied in examinations of other types of organisation, including public enterprises (Carchedi 1977; Heydebrand 1977) and organisations in socialist states (Trotsky 1972; Burawoy 1985). In the main, even where non-capitalist organisations are examined, radical analysts conceive the fundamental conflict as being between two main classes or categories which approximate to labour and capital, often designated as a worker-management cleavage (Kouzmin 1980; Salaman 1981; Littler and
Salaman 1984). Other cleavages are recognised, such as gender (Wolpe 1977; Hearn and Parkin 1983; Ferguson 1984) and ethnicity (Burawoy 1972, 1974). Nevertheless, the overriding conflict is generally seen to emanate from the worker-management divide. While this cleavage is of greatest moment, I will argue that it requires modification for adequate organisational analysis.

The worker-management conflict has deep-seated origins, viz (1) structurally based contradictory class interests (Burawoy 1985; Clegg and Dunkerley 1980: 134; Allen 1975: 204); (2) the imposition of class-based power and rules to control workers (Clegg 1979; Boreham and Dow 1980; Kouzmin 1980; Salaman 1981; Storey 1983, 1985); and (3) basic inequalities with regard to income, work conditions and content, and life chances (Littler and Salaman 1984: 14-28). Without a recognition of worker-management conflict as a starting point, analysis has too often been an exercise in glossing which misses imperative elements of organisations.

Conventional organisation analyses from the Hawthorne Studies (Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939; Mayo 1946) on have glossed over conflict and mechanisms of control (Mouzelis 1975: 112-18; Salaman 1981: 148-50). Krupp has presented this case forcefully, arguing that the human relations movement and works of this genre (e.g., Maslow 1954; Argyris 1957, 1964; McGregor 1960; Likert 1961, 1967; Blake and Mouton 1964) prescribe more subtle forms of control over workers than did scientific management:

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4Kouzmin (1980: 153 note 7), following Bendix (1956: xxi-xxii), treats entrepreneurs, managers and bureaucrats as one cleavage by virtue of their position in authority relations.

5Taylor (1911) saw workers' resistance as invalid and his mental revolution called for worker-management cooperation, but unlike human relations writing, Taylor was much concerned with industrial conflict and control (see Braverman 1974; Merkle 1980).
The strategic feature of these traditions - Taylorism, human-relations-in-industry, organisation theory - was the subordination of the work force to the needs and rules of the plant. Coordination of the worker and the machine in Taylor became for Mayo a subordination of the worker to the structure. The constraints of machine, structure, or organisation provided internal imperatives for the wage-seeking worker of Taylor, or the group-seeking worker of Mayo. Satisfaction and efficiency were joint products of the worker's adjustment (i.e. his acceptance of managerial authority) (Krupp 1961: 14).

Management is entreated to consider informal organisation processes to see workers' perceptions of the situation, and consequently organisational problems are frequently diagnosed as "communication problems", the solutions to which are sought in techniques such as sensitivity training (Lakin 1972; Lieberman et al 1973). Clegg and Dunkerley correctly declare in response:

It is from this requirement that the vast and overwhelmingly ideological literature on leadership, supervisory style, group dynamics, planned change in organisations, communications problems, motivation and similar topics has emerged. Much of [this] ... is now regarded as ideological and unscientific ....

[M]any problems of organisation are in fact only problems of and for management, and ... these problems cannot be spirited away through a change of supervisory style or the learning of social skills (1980: 133-4).

This is so as a result of the structural contradictions between workers and management. In addition to this list of orthodox organisation techniques which radical analysts reject are job enrichment (Herzberg 1966; Paul and Robertson 1970; Timperley and Ondrack eds 1982), quality of working life programmes (Davis and Cherns eds 1975a and 1975b; O'Toole 1981; Stein and Kanter 1980), worker participation in decision making (Blumberg 1968; Horner 1974), and the advocacy of effective organisation cultures (e.g., Pascale and Athos 1981; Ouchi 1981).

Radical scholars have rejected these proposals along the following lines. Job enrichment and other forms of work humanisation are rejected as they do not challenge existing work arrangements; they yield only piecemeal
changes to placate workers and provide a semblance of progressive management, which in reality is only a pretence at rectifying the negative effects of exploitative arrangements (Zimbalist 1975; Drago and McDonough 1984; Clegg and Dunkerley 1980: 512-14). Industrial democracy schemes are discounted for similar reasons (Clarke 1977), and Ramsay (1977) contends that increased interest is given to participation when there are perceived threats to management authority; participation is thus simply seen as another process of control. For Mandel (1975) and others (Coates and Topham 1968; Clarke 1977; Panitch 1978) forms of participation are inadequate; only worker control is acceptable, and this can only be obtained with the extirpation of capitalist ownership and the market. As discussed below, organisation culture has received similar radical criticism.

These criticisms have a certain validity since tinkering with surface-level phenomena will not eradicate underlying conflict (Nord 1974), and adjustments can therefore be seen as adaptive control measures. However, there are three problems with this approach. Firstly, despite protestations that workers do offer resistance (Beynon 1975; Brown 1977; Dubois 1979; Salaman 1979) the approach comes dangerously close to radical functionalism which sees everything as a control mechanism. Secondly, changes tend to be seen in zero-sum terms, yet it seems plausible to consider the possibility that workers might also gain from such adjustments. Thirdly, the conflict and control perspective, preoccupied with the worker-management cleavage, tends to be a blunt instrument for analysing organisations. The conflict and control problematic requires supplementation with conventional notions of organisation culture, leadership and interdepartmental conflict.

Such an approach needs to be justified since eclecticism is frequently criticised and Burrell and Morgan explicitly argue "for paradigmatic closure" (1979: 397-8). Donaldson characterises Burrell and Morgan's argument as
being that "no merging is possible" (1985: 37) between paradigms, and he warns against such "separate development" (p.46). Reed puts it more bluntly as "intellectual apartheid" (1988: 43). This is a misperception of Burrell and Morgan's argument since they note that "fusion and incorporation" (p.396) has taken place, and their primary point is that each perspective should be developed more fully, in keeping with its own philosophical traditions. Despite their argument benefits can be obtained from eclecticism. Donaldson (1985: 40-4) argues that structural-functionalism and radical structuralism are compatible by showing that Rex's (1961: 129-30) summary statement of radical structuralism can be deduced from the archetypical view of functionalism from Radcliffe-Brown (1952: 180). The result is that, for Donaldson, Marxism should be subsumed within structural-functionalism; however the major obstacle to "assimilation" (p.131) is the difference in levels of analysis. For Donaldson, Marxism is singularly a "societal and world-historical" approach (p.123) unsuited to organisational-level studies (p.124), and Marxism's novel contributions to organisation theory are alleged to be "mainly semantic" (p.124).

Donaldson's counter to the exaggerated divergences between Marxism and orthodoxy is partially constructive. It is correct to record that organisation theory can include analysis of conflict, control, power and political processes (e.g., Pondy 1967; Etzioni 1975; Pfeffer 1981; Pettigrew 1973). However, differences between Marxism and orthodox organisation theory are not merely semantic, as Donaldson alleges. Donaldson (pp.40-2), following Merton (1976), argues that radical concepts have analogues in orthodoxy, for instance, "contradictions" and "dysfunctions". Donaldson also suggests that the radical usage of "control" is compatible with conventional formulations which recognise the need for "integration [and] pattern-maintenance .... Thus the management attain control through ensuring adequate coordination" (p.131). Yet the radical notion of "control" is distinct from system needs of integration and pattern-maintenance for control
through coordination. Marxist use of the term "control" implies conflict and exploitation while the structural-functionalist notions connote equilibrium, even harmony. Furthermore, while power and control concepts are present in some conventional studies, such issues are neglected and at times entirely absent from much of this literature (see Burrell and Morgan 1979). For Marxists this could never occur. These concepts are invariably central in Marxist analyses since they are premised on the assumption that organisations are arenas of conflict.

To reject Marxism as being unsuited to organisational analysis in the way that Donaldson does is mistaken. Clegg dismisses this by declaring that "[i]f one were almost wholly ignorant of Marx's analysis of the labour process and its subsequent development, then one might make such a statement" (1988: 10). Clegg's central point is understandable; authentically Marxist analysis can be applied at organisational level as seen in the work of Marx and his followers (e.g., Marx 1978; Braverman 1974; Burawoy 1979). Clegg correctly rejects the level of analysis argument as formulated by Donaldson (pp.123-34) in his chapter on Marxist theory but, taking Donaldson's argument as a whole, Clegg's dismissal is insufficient. While Marxism is ideally suited to highlighting conflict between workers and management, it has difficulties in explaining other organisational phenomena. For Donaldson this primarily relates to the design of organisational structures; in the current study, the problem areas are interdepartmental differentiation, leadership and culture.

In summary, Donaldson goes too far in arguing that (1) Marxism can be subsumed within functionalism; (2) differences between the two approaches are mainly semantic; and (3) Marxism is unsuited to organisational analysis. However, he is correct to point out that Marxism misses important aspects of organisations and that an eclectic approach seems a "sensible" strategy (p.35). Donaldson himself does little to utilise different perspectives, and his
programme is largely restricted to contingency theory in organisation design. The present study utilises concepts from differing paradigms in order to cover weaknesses in each, but no attempt is made to synthesise these frameworks. This position is not adopted a priori, but derives from an initial attempt to view the organisations under study from a conflict perspective, and the discovery that this required modification to provide greater explanatory power.

1.3.2 A Modified Conflict and Control Approach

In explicating labour relations and organisational change in this study, certain concepts from conventional organisational theory are found useful as supplements to a conflict and control approach. These are the notions of culture, leadership and interdepartmental conflict. Organisational culture serves a control function but is not easily manipulated by management since it is a negotiated phenomenon. Leadership styles are important influences on cultural evolution. Distinguishing departmental roles, rather than seeing management as monolithic, allows the distinct position of personnel management to be appreciated.

The early 1980s saw a spate of publications focusing on organisational culture, many of which were aimed more toward managers than academics (Business Week 1980; Peters 1980; Ouchi 1981; Pascale and Athos 1981; Peters and Waterman 1982; Utal 1983; Peters and Austin 1985). For these writers corporate culture refers to the beliefs and values held in common by organisation members which are manifested in "artefacts", such as physical features, stories, rituals and myths (Pettigrew 1979; Martin et al 1983; Trice and Beyer 1984), and value statements of "the way we do things around here" (Deal and Kennedy 1982: 4). Peters and Waterman (1982) stress the core values of corporations, for example, customer service at IBM or product innovation at the 3M Company.
Many writers suggest that an organisation's culture can be changed or "managed" in order to produce a "strong" (Deal and Kennedy 1982) or "efficient" (Wilkins and Ouchi 1983) culture to improve organisational effectiveness (Kilmann et al eds 1985). Indeed much of this work (Ouchi and Price 1978; Vogel 1979, 1982; Pascale and Athos 1981; Takeuchi 1981; Schonberger 1982; Wilkins and Ouchi 1983; Kanter 1985) emanated from the US and was concerned, as the subtitle to Ouchi's (1981) *Theory Z* puts it, to show *How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge* which many writers attributed in part to the success of Japanese management style (Drucker 1971, 1981; Pascale 1978; Tung 1984). Some of these and related popular management books (Blanchard and Johnson 1983; Naisbitt 1982) are best-sellers (Freeman 1985), but none more so than Peters and Waterman's (1982) *In Search of Excellence* selling over five million copies by 1985 (Peters and Austin 1985).

These works, especially Peters and Waterman (1982), have been criticised from within management literature for empirical failings (*Business Week* 1984) and their lack of academic rigour (Carroll 1983; Schein 1985), but have been defended for the appeal of their substantive content (Soeters 1986; Hitt and Ireland 1987). Ray presents a more fundamental critique which argues that the manipulation of organisation culture is "possibly [the] most powerful form of control" (1986: 291). For Ray, "humanistic control" (e.g., quality of working life programmes) does not possess the capabilities to generate sentiment or emotion .... [Whereas the] latest strategy of control implies that the top management team aims to have individuals possess direct ties to the values and goals of the dominant *elites* in order to activate the emotion and sentiment which might lead to devotion, loyalty and commitment to the company (1986: 294).

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6For critical views on the perceived success of Japanese management style see, e.g., Oh 1976; Shimada 1982; Odiorne 1984.
Ray suggests that managers assume the role of "an evangelist, a shaman, a statesperson" (p.289), and that corporate culture might provide the force for social cohesion which Durkheim (1933) saw as lacking following the weakening of social bonds previously provided by church, community and family. Ray also posits the possibility that if workers embrace the corporate culture this would involve "a heightened sense of collectivity; it implies commitment to the firm" which might unite workers and lead to greater "activism" (p.295).

Aside from the point that Ray wants to have it both ways - culture manipulation leads to either hegemonic control or increased activism - her approach entails difficulties. If organisational culture can be manipulated by management then this would be a potent control mechanism, and Ray's critique of popular works would be largely, although not totally, cogent. However, it is argued here that more rigorous treatments of culture partly avoid criticisms applicable to the popular works (propositions of a unitary and malleable culture) and, once again, radical organisation theorists mistakenly see phenomena in zero-sum terms.

While popular management works reach a wide audience, organisation culture is not simply what is presented in these contributions. The concept has antecedents in the notions of "organisation spirit" (Drucker 1955) and "organisation climate" (Payne and Pugh 1976; Steele and Jenks 1977), and is a logical extension of the concern within the organisation development school to transform entire organisations (Beckhard 1969; Bennis 1969; French and Bell 1973; Beckhard and Harris 1977; Levy and Merry 1987; Burke 1987). Hofstede (1986: 253) briefly notes that the concern with culture marks a resurgence of interest in organisations as a whole shown earlier by Barnard (1938), Bakke (1950) and, notably, Jaques' The Changing Culture of a Factory (1951). Crozier's (1964) classic study is also deeply concerned with culture in the workplace. In more detail, Allaire and Firsirotu
(1984) and Smircich (1983) link the use of culture and related management concepts with more theoretically grounded uses in anthropology and social science. In contrast to simplistic formulations, Louis (1985) and van Maanen and Barley (1985) do not postulate a unitary organisational culture, as popular formulations suggest; instead they argue that subcultures exist and identify factors which promote their development, such as "the type of job or hierarchical level" (Louis 1985: 79), segmentation by function and ideological differentiation (van Maanen and Barley 1985: 38-47). Indeed, they conceive of countercultures which endorse "behaviour that is explicitly forbidden or viewed as improper" (van Maanen and Barley 1985: 45; cf. Salaman 1979: 184). It would be more accurate to refer to management culture rather than organisational culture if this is a feature of management only, and not the general workforce (Louis 1985). This usage is adopted in this study.

Schein (1981, 1983, 1985) presents similar views and has refined analysis of culture in organisations. He argues that reference to norms, dominant values and climate does not reach the essence of culture (1985: 6-7); for him this lies in deeper shared assumptions and he defines "culture" as

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\text{a pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems} \quad \text{(Schein 1985: 9).}
\]

In addition, assumptions over time become taken for granted and culture formation is generally an unconscious process. Consequently Schein treats as problematic the notion that a culture can be manipulated by managers:

If we take the concept of culture seriously, we may have to face the possibility that cultural assumptions are virtually impossible to change, or at least we should develop a dynamic theory of change that does justice to the tenacity often exhibited by such assumptions (Schein 1985: 45 see also 1981).

He suggests that while it might be possible to change culture this is a complex and difficult process as the assumptions are deeply embedded
understandings and are not easily discerned, let alone manipulated. Schein concluded, after a three-year major change project for which he was a consultant, that "the cultural paradigm of the company has not essentially changed" (1985: 266); indeed, the organisational changes that did occur had to be based on extant assumptions for any chance of success.

Ray acknowledges that "there is no persuasive evidence ... that the manipulation of U.S. corporations' cultures really functions as a form of control" (1986: 295). Indeed, it can be argued that attempts to manipulate are as likely as not to fail (van Maanen and Barley 1985: 48). Assuming that workers can be manipulated by an evangelising management is a dubious proposition. Suggesting that workers will simply imbibe what managers disseminate is questionable, as is seen in the lack of endorsement by workers of countless management proposals such as job enrichment (Nichols 1975; Nichols and Beynon 1977) and worker-directors (Brannen et al 1976). Cultures can be destroyed, though this is also a difficult process involving the purging of key bearers of the culture and revolutionary upheaval. Yet the management of culture calls for an immensely more sophisticated manipulation of culture, and it is debatable that the techniques currently exist for this to be carried out in a controlled manner in everyday organisations, as distinct from total institutions (Goffman 1962).

Some relatively careful analyses do present the possibility that cultures can be changed or managed (Cool and Lengnick-Hall 1985; Lundberg 1985; Nord 1985; Schein 1985; Siehl 1985). In the main, though, these change efforts are directed to senior employees (who might have more commitment to organisational goals). Yet even if it is assumed that cultural management can include lower-level employees, it could be argued that if workers can reject an attempt by management to change culture, equally they might decide to accept a cultural change effort. Indeed, in most cases it would
seem participants' active cooperation is required for change to have any hope of success (Schein 1985), and this point is also stressed by enthusiastic advocates of cultural management (e.g., Deal and Kennedy 1982; Davis 1984). To refer to this as hegemonic control, then, is contentious. It is more appropriate to treat culture as a negotiated phenomenon. This does not require that an orthodox problematic based on concepts of order be adopted. A conflict and control framework can be supplemented by analysis of emergent, negotiated cultural phenomena. As such, the eradication of basic conflicts between workers and management by cultural manipulation is not presumed; rather the distinct nature of the conflict relations between workers and management can be assessed empirically. Management culture is thus viewed as having a control function (Salaman 1979: 183-97), but is not easily manipulated and is best seen as a negotiated phenomenon.

The more rigorous formulations of culture in organisations (Schein 1985; van Maanen and Barley 1985) do not stand by themselves. These approaches view organisations as sites of order in which conflict occurs but is of secondary importance.

Indeed, most organisational subcultures develop collective understandings that by and large accept the group's organisational position and do not conflict overtly with the organisation's presumed mission. While subcultures imply an internal political economy, subcultural disputes are usually played out over particular issues so that no single subculture is likely to be overwhelmingly at odds with the remainder of the organisation (van Maanen and Barley 1985: 45).

These writers do not identify the worker-management cleavage as the pre-eminent source of conflict. Schein (1985: 7, 39), for instance, perceives the worker-management conflict on the same basis as conflicts based on geographic proximity or functional cleavages. Consequently, the approach taken by these writers is not accepted; rather insights from their formulations are used to supplement a conflict and control perspective.
In relation to leadership, radical organisation theorists often suggest that the concept of leadership style is primarily one of obfuscation (Clegg and Dunkerley 1980; Burawoy 1985). In making this argument, radical theorists often go too far and allow virtually no space for the effects of leadership style on internal labour relations. My argument is that even if change in leadership style alone cannot eradicate conflict within organisations, it can have an impact upon important organisational phenomena such as culture and labour relations.

A vast orthodox literature has been produced arguing that leadership has a major impact on organisations. Reviews of this literature are available elsewhere (Stogdill 1974; Vroom 1976; Bryman 1986). Here it is briefly indicated that leadership style can affect the conduct of labour relations (as shown in Chapter 5). This finds common expression in analyses involving two dimensions of leadership, broadly along the lines of concern for production and concern for relationships (Fiedler 1967; Likert 1961, 1967; Blake and Mouton 1964). Schein argues that "organisational" culture and leadership are inseparable phenomena (1985: 2, 4, 171), and he raises the possibility that "the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" (p.2). This might be an exaggeration, since other important functions include the gathering and sharing of information (Mintzberg 1973, 1975). Nevertheless, leaders, especially organisation founders, do have a powerful effect on the formation of culture (Martin, Sitkin and Boehm 1985; Schein 1983). Schein provides a good example of this. In one company, individual creativity and responsibility were highly prized, and "a high level of interpersonal confrontation, argumentativeness, and conflict" was present (1985: 9). Yet simultaneously consensus in decision making was demanded. Schein points out that the founder "believed that good ideas could come from anyone, regardless of rank or background" (p.217), hence an emphasis on individuals. But he also held "that neither he nor any other individual was smart enough to determine
whether a given idea was correct", and so intense conflict at meetings was valued in order to reach decisions "tested in the intellectual marketplace" (p.217).

While radical organisation theorists, and in particular those following Marx, tend to present management in monolithic terms, analysis benefits from using a disaggregated model to appreciate the distinct role of personnel management. Much of orthodox organisation theory assumes a disaggregated view and focuses on interdepartmental conflict (Dearborn and Simon 1958; March and Simon 1958; Dalton 1959; Dutton and Walton 1966; Lawrence and Lorsch 1967; Walton and Dutton 1969; Pettigrew 1973). Numerous factors have been posited as antecedents to interdepartmental conflict, such as personal traits (Dalton 1950; March and Simon 1958), mutual task dependence and organisational differentiation (Walton and Dutton 1969). In a study of six plastics companies, Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) found that greater emphasis was placed on social relations in the sales department, while task-orientation was stressed in research and production. Departmentalisation was also associated with differing goal orientations since, for example, production typically preferred stable standardised output, while sales valued specialised customer service.

Similarly, personnel can be differentiated from other departments, especially those of line management (Myers and Turnbull 1956; Dalton 1959). Three major factors are identified here: ideology or personal characteristics, structure and environmental pressures. Firstly, the characteristics of personnel specialists frequently differ from those of line managers; for example, they might be more familiar with arguments for cooperative alternatives (human relations, Theory Y) to autocratic management. Purcell notes that in Britain "[m]any industrial relations specialists may be pluralist in their views, but the vast bulk of managers are more likely to incline to the unitary position" (1983: 11). Secondly, an important function of personnel is
to manage conflict between workers and management. At times this involves a balancing role (contra Pratt and Bennett 1985: 13) and generates structural tendencies for personnel specialists, more than line managers, to see disputes at least in part arising from management practices. Thirdly, personnel officers might be more familiar with environmental pressures such as those from government and trade unions, which seek to protect or enhance workers' interests (Miner and Miner 1985: 654).

Personnel is a function of management and should not be seen as playing a neutral role. Further, the personnel function is justly criticised for a preoccupation with the minutia of techniques for greater efficiency, selection, appraisal, ergonomics, job evaluation (Tyson 1983: 148). Nonetheless, in some respects it occupies a contradictory position; beholden to and of management, yet tasked with the role of reconciling worker and management interests. For many radical writers this amounts to a more subtle form of control (Clegg and Dunkerley 1980). Yet in Nichols' (1969) survey of 65 managers and directors in the north of Britain, personnel specialists were far more likely than other non-line managers (sales, finance, technical) to provide answers which Nichols categorised as evincing 'social responsibility'. As will be seen, in Zimbabwe the personnel function at times appeared to benefit workers' interests; it is therefore necessary to see organisations as disaggregated, not monolithic.

Summary

A conflict approach is adopted based on a view of organisations as arenas of struggle, primarily between workers and management. This perspective is supplemented by concepts drawn from orthodox literature, those of management culture, leadership style and interdepartmental differentiation. While substantive differences between radical and orthodox approaches prevent synthesis, the divergences are less marked than is sometimes assumed, and the use of concepts from different perspectives is justified.
Simplistic formulations which see culture in organisations as unitary and open to manipulation are rejected in favour of a notion of culture as being negotiated by organisational leaders and members. Leadership style affects organisation behaviour, and it is possible that the personnel function manages labour relations in a manner more sympathetic to workers than does line management. These points are developed further in the case studies where the role of culture, leadership and personnel management are addressed. Having identified the general approach taken with respect to organisations the discussion now turns to organisations in Africa.

1.4 Labour Relations at Organisation Level in Africa

In this section it is shown that it is important to see organisations in their structural context, such as their position in the market, and also to take into account cultural phenomena at the national and organisational level.

Kapferer (1972) studied a small (45 employees) Indian-owned clothing factory in Kabwe, Zambia in 1965-66, shortly after independence (in 1964). His study is grounded in urban anthropology examining social relations among black workers and their interface with management. Its main interest for present purposes is its analysis of industrial conflict. An abortive attempt to strike led to changes that caused further dissatisfaction, and Kapferer focuses on workers' attempts to obtain a more efficacious result by staging a further strike. Kapferer places these events within the context of independence which engendered "high expectations" (p.3) and perceptions of a strengthened position among black workers, and uncertainty within management as to the role of the nationalist government (pp.124-5). The attitudes of management, working conditions, pay system, and the role of the trade union, party and government are also discussed by Kapferer, but his interactionist approach leads to a major concern with the development of social relations and the struggle for leadership among the black workers.
According to Kapferer, the unskilled workers were generally "target" workers who were more inclined to move on from the firm than the skilled workers. Consequently the latter were more predisposed to seeking improved conditions. There was a contest for leadership among the skilled workers and one strategy was to attain status by obtaining work improvements. After the ineffectual first strike, some skilled workers cultivated the support of unskilled workers to stage a more successful strike in order to enhance their leadership status.

Burawoy (1974) provides a sound critique of this analysis. For him, the key issues are derived from structural constraints imposed by capitalism. From evidence mentioned in passing by Kapferer, Burawoy argues that the advent of a direct competitor probably compelled the manager to increase the surplus extracted from the workers, and industrial action was the legitimate response from workers to resist this. Management action to increase surplus should not be ascribed to poor human relations or communications, according to Burawoy, and Kapferer is mistaken when he adopts the stereo-typical image of the Indian entrepreneur as a shrewd manipulator, 'maximising gains and minimising costs in the short run'. By focusing exclusively on Patel's [the manager] behaviour in the context of the factory social system, Kapferer implies that he 'mismanages' the factory with the further implication that Patel has some significant choice in the way he regulates behaviour in the factory. External forces and constraints are not included (1974: 19-20).

While Burawoy's structuralist reinterpretation remedies Kapferer's interactionist view, he implies that management has no significant choice in labour strategy, and in this he takes an unjustified deterministic position.

Burawoy's structuralist approach is set out in his analysis of Zambian Copperbelt miners based on research conducted during 1969-71 (1974, 1982, 1985). He links production politics to state politics. The function of the colonial state was to entrench capitalism as the dominant mode of production, and the post-colonial state functions for "expanded rather than
primitive accumulation of capital" (1985: 214). Consequently, the post-colonial state provides pressures for new forms of labour control which signify a transition from coerced labour to bureaucratic control. For Burawoy differing labour strategies have structural origins and he specifically rejects management style as an important factor in work relations. He lauds Perrings' (1979) study of mines in Northern Rhodesia and Katanga and comments:

Perrings shows how geological constraints, the state of technology and the price of copper determined the range of production techniques open to any given mine. Thus, the labour strategies of the various mines were shaped primarily by the specific technical conditions of production, not by managerial style, nationality of directors or corporate policies, as had previously been argued (1985: 220).

Burawoy summarises Perrings argument to the effect that better work conditions in the Katanga opencast operations resulted in less labour turnover than in the Northern Rhodesian underground mines. Katanga companies therefore adopted better policies for the more stabilised miners and their families. Similarly, more training was provided to black employees at Katanga since expatriate labour was not as readily available, and fewer white workers at Katanga meant there was less opposition to black advancement than was the case on the Copperbelt. In short, it was the material conditions that determined labour strategy, and Burawoy specifies no role for management style.

The transition from colonial to post-colonial relations in production involved the bureaucratisation of labour relations, and for Burawoy this process disadvantaged black workers (1985: 231-35). He found that changes in the operation of personnel functions of companies following independence were largely cosmetic or manipulative exercises, and that genuine black advancement was limited. For example, the personnel department was emasculated when blacks were appointed, initially by removing some of the powers and responsibilities attached to the positions, especially those
affecting expatriates. Black advancement took place without breaching "the colour bar principle that whites should not be subordinated to blacks", and new positions were often created for whites (1985: 233).

Burawoy's approach has much to recommend it over narrower treatments, such as Kapferer's, which inadequately recognise production politics and processes involved in post-colonial capital accumulation. However, Burawoy over-emphasises structural determination and takes insufficient account of management choice. This inadequacy is clearly shown in his earlier work which presents the case of lashers in detail.

Burawoy (1974) reports on two lashing gangs. One had younger, single workers who were more concerned with minimising their time at work in order to maximise their leisure time. They preferred not to share the burden of work nor to work overtime to finish the work task in order to obtain a bonus. This was especially so when the start of work was delayed while waiting for the section boss or "ganger" to carry out the mandatory safety precautions. Often this took two hours in an eight-hour shift. The older, married men in the other work group cooperated to optimise output so they could collect a bonus. Burawoy's explanation of this is couched in terms of work organisation, pay systems and the socio-economic interests of the workers - and all this is correct. Yet a crucial factor here, which Burawoy merely mentions in passing, is that the ganger of the older men bent the rules by encouraging certain members of his gang to prepare the ends [i.e. work area] themselves and he would then come and inspect. This gave Sinkala's gang more time in which to complete their ends before 2 a.m. and they would therefore be more likely to work as a team in order to finish early (1974: 33).

In other words, supervisory style, a notion Burawoy is intent on dismissing, is an important part of his own presentation of work relations. Burawoy's analysis of post-colonial conflict arising from colonial relations of production
helps to explain relations at General Industries, examined in Chapter 5. However, to increase explanatory power, his approach is supplemented by consideration of management style and culture.

Some writers have examined culture and organisations in Africa (see Blunt 1983), but they have commonly produced very general, even superficial results. Poole (1986) takes up an approach which sees national culture influencing management style, and applies this to labour relations management. He illustrates this by briefly contrasting Japanese, US and Nigerian cultures. In Japan, Confucian values in part contributed to employers and managers seeking "to appear to be good moral citizens", and so "benevolent paternalism" (p.47) is a feature of Japanese industrial relations, at least in some prominent companies. In American culture, individualism has contributed to a management style which seeks a direct relationship with workers and excludes unions through a unitary approach involving close attention to screening, rewards, grievance handling and human relations training for supervisors. Nigeria's culture, for Poole, following Damachi (1978), results in "an authoritarian but people-centred African 'arbitrary paternalistic style' .... It also occasions a lack of proper institutionalised grievance channels and persistent 'high-handedness' in the treatment of the workforce" (Poole 1986: 50). Poole is wisely very tentative in his view of culture and emphasises the illustrative nature of this discussion; others, however, are less sensitive to limitations.

An issue of International Studies in Management and Organisation focuses on Africa (in reality only Nigeria), and this is characterised by generalisation and a lack of substantiation. Nzelibe argues that Western and African management thought are not only different, they are in direct conflict. Whereas Western management thought advocates Eurocentricism, individualism, and modernity, African management thought emphasises ethnocentricism, traditionalism, communalism, and cooperative teamwork (1986: 10-11).
Such generalisations might be apposite but insufficient supporting evidence is provided; for example, it is not shown that teamwork is greater in Africa than in the West. Moreover, an exclusive focus on culture results in an exaggerated view of the importance of this concept. Nzelibe (1986), Abudu (1986) and Ahiauzu (1986) address the failure of African employees to adopt an "industrial culture" (Kerr et al 1960: 77-97) which implies a positive commitment to work. For Nzelibe the loss of traditional African management practices, traditionalism, communalism and teamwork and the associated importance of family, "has been responsible for managerial problems such as nepotism, bribery, corruption, and an acute lack of discipline in organisations, particularly in public servants" (p.15). Abudu presents a similar view and proposes their "cherished traditions of discipline, honesty, respect for constituted authority, and scorn for indolence have to be reinforced in families, schools, and churches" (1986: 33). These treatments neglect systemic politico-economic constraints that contribute to "the unsatisfactory attitudes toward work in Nigeria" (Abudu p.32). It is not simply that traditional cultures are not respected. Traditional structures of society have been partially eroded and destroyed, and the harsh conditions of developing capitalism militate against employees adopting a commitment to work.

For Ahiauzu western management thought is not always applicable to Africa since "the African thought-system" (1986: 37) has an impact on behaviour in the workplace. While nepotism is (ostensibly) deplored in western society it might be seen as appropriate social behaviour in support of family or community ties in Africa (p.51). The influence of traditional religion and "mystical thinking" (p.54) is also strong; for example, on his first day in a factory a Nigerian worker described the machines as "'white man's magic'" (p.48), and traditional diviners are consulted by workers and businessmen to overcome work or business problems (p.53). This approach has the benefit of alerting attention to the limitations of applying western frames of reference
to organisations in Africa (p.55) but, by remaining at the general level, it easily drifts into dubious areas such as discounting myths of African "laziness" by arguing instead that African "preference for slow, modulated action ... is probably, to a large extent, a reflection of the African thought-system" (p.50). A preferable approach examines the effects of culture at this general level and also within particular organisations. This enables the broad picture to be seen, but militates against superficial generalisation by maintaining an appreciation of diversity among organisations.

This is the approach taken by Hofstede (1985) who compares the value systems of 50 countries and 3 regions on four dimensions, namely, power distance (acceptance of unequal power), uncertainty avoidance ("uncomfortable with ... ambiguity"), individualism ("preference for loosely knit social framework"), and masculinity ("preference for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material success") (1985: 347-8). Hofstede's research places "East" African (Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia) and West African (Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone) countries in a relatively high position on acceptance of power distance, and moderately low on uncertainty avoidance (i.e. ambiguity is accepted). These regions are relatively collectivist, and feminine (i.e. emphasis is placed on "relationships, modesty, caring for the weak" p.348) (1985: 351, 354 Figures 1 and 2). Consequently, Hofstede would expect organisations in these countries to allow high personal authority for leaders and considerable ambiguity rather than strict adherence to bureaucratic procedure. Emphasis would be given to the group rather than individuals and modesty rather than assertiveness would be valued. Hofstede is aware, though, that specific organisations within these countries will have differing value systems as a result of, *inter alia*, industry type and size, and the values of the founder. A post office will be more bureaucratic than a small retail store (p.353), and the nationality of the founder is likely to affect the values in an organisation.
Hofstede provides a broad, international framework and he does not attempt to examine the culture of specific organisations in Africa. Indeed, there are very few discussions of this kind. One exception is Lessem (1987) who examines the culture of the Bank of Credit and Commerce which operates in Zimbabwe and other African countries. Lessem portrays this company as being guided by values such as integrity, humility and "interfusion" - a mixture of independence and interdependence creating "a merger of energies" (p.152). He claims that managers link material concerns with a "higher purpose" for "serving humanity", and he attempts to identify the "soul" of the company (pp.156-8). This is a weak treatment. Some of the most prominent flaws in Lessem's treatment can be briefly stated: shoddy empirical research which uncritically relies on pronouncements of top executives and policy statements; reification through attribution of "thought" and "feelings" to organisations (p.73); no conception of organisational conflict; failure to appreciate constraints of capital accumulation such as the systemic need to compete with rivals and extract surplus from employees. It is little wonder then, and not simply bad luck, that the company acclaimed by Lessem to be overflowing with munificence, was suspended from foreign exchange trading in Kenya over dubious transactions, and was indicted in a US court on charges relating to the "laundering" of US$32 million in proceeds from drug dealings (Canberra Times 13/10/88). In this study, I provide a more critical examination of the role of culture in Zimbabwean organisations, which takes cognisance of subcultures and not simply pronouncements from top management.

Summary

The need for structural analysis in organisation studies is shown in Burawoy's critique of Kapferer's interactionist study. Burawoy, however, incorrectly rejects the notion of managerial style, which is shown to be important even in his own work. It is preferable to take into account the effects of both national and management cultures on workplace behaviour.
Contributions such as Lessem's on culture in African organisations are weak. It is important to present a more refined view, as attempted in this study, which recognises structural constraints, such as the market, and subcultures and conflict within organisations.

Chapter Summary

In order to study labour relations strategy in Zimbabwe a framework is adopted which identifies processes involving the concentration of interest representation, and the fusion of representative bodies into state policy formulation and enforcement. In contrast to pluralist and Marxist perspectives, this approach sees the state not as a neutral arbiter nor merely as a class product but as interventionist, and influenced by both capital and labour. Schmitter has been validly criticised for failing to portray relations between interests groups and the state. In this thesis the dynamic character of corporatism is emphasised, and corporatism is seen as a strategy, not a system. Analyses of corporatism in Africa have remained at a superficial level, discussing the continent as a whole, and they reveal a poor conception of corporatism. This study presents a clear understanding of corporatism as a strategy of interest group concentration and fusion with state policy making and enforcement. This framework is applied to labour relations in Zimbabwe so that corporatist labour strategy can be seen in detail.

At the organisational level the starting point is to see organisations as arenas of conflict primarily between management and workers. This perspective requires modification, however, to take into account culture, leadership style and departmental differentiation, since these features have an impact on the conduct of labour relations. It is necessary to place organisations in Africa in structural context; yet orthodox concepts such as culture and leadership style are also required for an adequate understanding of labour relations in organisations.
Chapter 2 Historical and Conceptual Approaches to Labour Relations in Zimbabwe

Introduction

In broad terms labour relations for black workers in Zimbabwe can be divided into three periods: colonial labour relations from 1890 to the 1950s, the institutionalisation of labour relations from the 1950s to 1980, and post-independence corporatist labour relations. The first two periods are reviewed in this chapter. Under colonialism black workers were kept in a position of subservience to capital and the state; they were not permitted to form trade unions to bargain collectively with employers for improved wages and conditions of service. After the Second World War black workers' demands increased for the right to form trade unions, and eventually black unions were recognised and became a part of the institutional framework for regulating labour relations. However, the black union movement remained weak in terms of membership and bargaining power, and throughout these periods strikes were suppressed and trade unions were strictly controlled. At independence employers were relatively well organised, and the labour movement was weak and divided. The Mugabe Government pledged to counter the power of employers by protecting and enhancing workers' interests by, for example, improving workers' living standards and democratising the workplace. Following independence the government pursued a corporatist labour strategy (Chapters 3 and 4). Private enterprise was maintained, but government sought to impose controls over employers and trade unions. Corporatist policies were also pursued by government in areas other than labour relations; for example, the government attempted to monopolise interest representation in relation to political parties, women and youths. The monopoly representative bodies were expected to support and enforce government policy, and attempts were made to silence or incorporate sources of potential opposition within these groups.
Very different interpretations of pre-independence labour relations are provided in the literature. Liberal writers such as Ranger (1970) explain the weakness of the black labour movement by focusing on internal divisions, financial difficulties, ineffective leadership and the "unreadiness" of workers to mobilise a workers' movement. But radical authors such as van Onselen (1976) and Phimister (1988) show that black workers resisted capitalist exploitation through hidden forms of protest such as boycotting particularly callous employers. According to radical writers, labour movement weakness is better explained in terms of class action of capital and state to repress labour. In presenting their argument, however, radical writers overstate the role of class and understate the importance of ethnicity. In addition, radical writers such as Astrow (1983) condemn the trade union leadership for failing to develop a socialist revolution. Yet this view neglects the powerful constraints confronting unions including state repression, and financial and organisational weakness which are clearly described by Brand (1971, 1976).

Most interpretations of post-independence national labour relations have been presented from a radical perspective (e.g., Callinicos 1981; Astrow 1983; Mitchell 1987). Radical writers adopt the view that employers are exploitative, and they frequently suggest that the Mugabe Government assists in the exploitation of workers (e.g., Nangati 1984a and 1984b). Very few studies of labour relations have been carried out at enterprise level. Those that have been produced also see workers as being exploited by employers, and government is presented as either tacitly allowing or actively supporting this exploitation (e.g., Ladley and Lan 1985; Cheater 1986). These contributions do not reveal the complexity of labour relations in Zimbabwe. The government does not simply support employers; its corporatist strategy also involves benefits for workers. Similarly, management practices within organisations vary considerably, and there are pressures for colonial management culture to be reformed so that black workers' interests are taken into account.
2.1 Colonial Labour Relations

During the colonial period the key legislative mechanism for regulating the employment of black workers was the Masters and Servants Act of 1901 [Chapter 231 amended by 268]. Trade unions were not recognised under this Act; instead individual contracts "entered into voluntarily" (Chapter 231 s.3(2)) operated between master and servant. Penal provisions were applicable to a servant during the contract for "misconduct" such as desertion, failure to obey a command, or being "abusive or insulting ... to his master or his master's wife or children" (s.47(1)h). Penalties for such crimes included a maximum fine of four pounds or one month's gaol; first offenders would have been happy to note that this might be without spare diet. Women were the subject of special provisions; for instance, a woman could be dismissed if she became unfit for work due to pregnancy, or if she worked or lived on the master's premises, and married or entered into "a state which in the Colony is reputed to be the married state" (s.46(1)).

A number of scholars provide discussions of labour in the early colonial period, and these are reviewed by van Onselen (1975) and Phimister (1979). Most of these authors aim to dispel colonial myths, some of which seem self-contradictory, such as that black workers were indolent, fortunate to be employed, and content to perform menial, arduous labour for little reward under woeful conditions and white supervision (Harris 1974b; Ranger 1970).^ Ranger's (1970) classic study shows that blacks attempted to articulate their opposition to colonialism through organisations such as mutual aid societies, religious groups, and the forerunner to black trade unions, the Industrial and

^A Nyasaland labour officer described Nyasaland workers in Southern Rhodesia: "Natives will often work contentedly for low wages with unvaried food and dilapidated quarters if the employer or shift boss is a man who does not harry them or lose his temper easily" (quoted in Gray 1960: 109-10).
Commercial Workers Union (ICU). The ICU was modelled on its South African counterpart and operated from the late 1920s to the early 1930s when it declined. Ranger identifies four major weaknesses of this movement, namely, lack of finance, disunity in the South Africa ICU which led to problems of policy direction in the Rhodesian body, "the unreadiness for action" of black Rhodesian workers, and the leadership's failure to provide "an effective strategy of action" (1970: 163). Ranger's presentation is marred by his preoccupation with internal weaknesses and his tendency to assume rather than analyse capitalist and state repression. Nonetheless, Ranger provides rich evidence of repression which vitiates his argument concerning "unreadiness"; this included state intervention to ban and disperse meetings and arrest leaders, and the action of employers to refuse entry to officials and intimidate would-be members by, for example, spreading a rumour that members would be branded on the forehead.

Other writers seek to provide critical alternatives to liberal analyses. Arrighi (1966, 1967) produced a Marxist analysis which interpreted Rhodesian political economy primarily in class, not racial, terms. Subsequently, he provided a critique of Barber's contention (1961; following Lewis 1954) that economic development occurred with "unlimited" supplies of labour (Arrighi 1970b). Arrighi's account of the proletarianisation of the peasantry shows that there was a "shortage" (1970b: 200) of labour and blacks were coerced into the labour market (see also Malaba 1980). What Arrighi overlooks, however, is that primitive accumulation did not end around the 1920s, it is a continuing process (Clarke 1975).

The primitive accumulation process is further explicated by van Onselen (1973, 1975, 1976) and Phimister (1971, 1978, 1988) who document the appalling working conditions black workers faced in the first half century of colonialism. They contest the earlier liberal analyses of Ranger and others (e.g., Gann 1965) which identify only overt industrial action and formal
organisations (e.g., the ICU) as nascent attempts by blacks to articulate their interests. For van Onselen (1973, 1976) and Phimister (1978) attempts to resist the accumulation process can be seen in black workers' "day-to-day responses to the work situation" (van Onselen 1973: 239) - what Cohen calls "hidden forms of consciousness" (R. Cohen 1980) - such as avoidance of and desertion from particularly bad employers. Similarly, superstition was sometimes said to be the cause of mass desertions in especially bad mines, and van Onselen refers to this as "boycott by bewitchment" (1973: 242). These authors also examine in detail strikes, at Wankie Colliery in 1912 and Shamva Mine in 1927, that had been largely overlooked, and they present class as the primary explanatory variable. They describe the poor working conditions under capitalism and argue that workers displayed a consciousness of being workers in conflict with employers (Phimister 1971; van Onselen 1974).

The approach taken by these radical scholars raises the class-versus-ethnicity debate, since they frequently seek to play down the importance of ethnicity. This is clearly evident in Phimister and van Onselen's analysis of clashes between Ndebele and Shona in 1929. They sought to

refut[e] any suggestion that 'faction fights' were and are the manifestations of mindless, irrational violence. Indeed, ... it becomes clear that the Bulawayo 'faction fight' of December 1929 was primarily a manifestation of intra-working class conflict. The fighting ... was very largely an expression of competition within the working class about limited job opportunities (1979: 40-1).

This approach provides a constructive counter to simplistic explanations in terms of tribal animosity, but in so doing the role of tribal consciousness is reduced to a mere epiphenomenon and culture is accorded little influence. Prins (1978) makes this point well in relation to van Onselen's interpretation of the Wankie Colliery strike of 1912. Prins argues that van Onselen's stress on the base over the superstructure results in an "economic determinist" position (1978: 119) that "precludes a sensitive analysis" (p.118). Van Onselen states that ethnicity, occupation and indebtedness
contributed to worker unity in the Wankie Colliery strike of 1912 (1974: 284, cf.1976: 221), but he goes on to lay greater stress on worker consciousness. For Prins tribe was "the key determinant" in the unity of workers (1978: 118). He attests that a minority tribal grouping under the Lozi accounted for 64 percent of the workers prosecuted (1978: 118), and not 45 percent as van Onselen stated (1974: 284). Rather than attempt to identify which was the key determinant, it is more appropriate to see both class and ethnic affiliation at work here. It is likely that the perception of exploitation (worker consciousness) led workers to unite "in the ethnic groupings most familiar to them" (Prins 1978: 118). In short, both radical and liberal scholars err in so far as they attempt to reduce ethnicity or class to the other.

2.2 Institutionalising Labour Relations Before Independence

The key law which regulated the institutionalisation of labour relations for black workers was the Industrial Conciliation Act (ICA) of 1959. The earlier ICA of 1934 had recognised the right of white workers to form trade unions and bargain collectively, but "natives" were specifically excluded from the definition of "employee". The ICA of 1959 extended these rights to black workers, and allowed black workers equal representation to that of employers on industrial councils and industrial boards to negotiate legal agreements. Although this Act was in principle "non-racial", in practice it operated to control black trade unions. Representation by occupation encouraged fragmented craft unions with skilled white workers maintaining their own unions. The Act specifically permitted the formation of branches within unions on the basis of race (s.50(3)), and the weighting of votes according to skill meant substantial influence by whites in multi-racial unions, which dampened black workers' moves for major changes. Strikes were
limited to the point of being virtually illegal.\textsuperscript{2} Unions were prohibited from involvement in politics, and their internal affairs and international links were controlled (Brand 1971: 92-3, 1976: 59-62; Harris 1973, 1974a).

The process of institutionalising labour relations for black workers began after World War II, when there was an increase in the tempo of overt worker organisation and industrial action (Pollack 1973). Associations were formed which sought improved wages and conditions, and the right to collective bargaining. A strike was organised by the Rhodesia Railways African Employees' Association (RRAEA) in 1945, and this spread along the line to Northern Rhodesia. A subsequent inquiry recommended major reforms for workers. This resulted in improved housing, and in the late 1940s the RRAEA was accorded limited recognition as a consultative body - not as a union with direct bargaining rights. Reforms were slow in coming (Phimister 1988: 270) and it was only after much pressure from the RRAEA and the more militant Northern Rhodesian railways union, which had the support of the government there, that the RRAEA was eventually recognised in Southern Rhodesia in the early 1950s (Turner 1975). A Native Labour Board operated for all other industries except agriculture and domestic service, and this proved impracticable (Gray 1960: 327-8). A general strike was held in 1948, and the creation of labour boards for separate industries was sought by labour through continuing industrial action and trade union formation in the 1950s. Garfield Todd endeavoured to legalise black trade unions during his term as Prime Minister (1954-1958) (Harris 1974a: 66-7; Hancock 1984: 50-2), but he was unsuccessful and he was deposed primarily for his liberal leanings (Blake 1977: 313). Finally, as a result of persistent pressure, the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1959 came into effect.

\textsuperscript{2}As Brand puts it, "There has not, to my knowledge, been a single 'legal' strike since the Act came into force" (1976: 61), and it "is only a slight exaggeration to state that it could only happen with the [approval of the] Minister of Labour" (1976: 59).
on 1 January 1960, and permitted the recognition of black trade unions to allow them to bargain collectively.

In 1962 only six black trade unions were officially registered, but this increased to twenty-six two years later, and by 1966 the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) recognised twenty-two black unions with a paid-up membership of 31,726 (Brand 1971: 101). The union movement, however, remained weak. Davies presents the situation in 1975 as:

Paid-up membership ... is ... approximately 50,000, out of a workforce of 900,000. Most of the gains in membership were made in the early 1960s; since then the rate of enrolment has been slow. There still exist a number of unions whose very existence depends upon a single leader. The number of powerful well-established unions can be counted on one hand (1975: 12).

A further feature was the disunity among unions, with several federations perennially competing with each other. This general picture continued up to independence.

Astrow (1983) suggests that the petit bourgeois trade union and nationalist leadership were as much to blame for the perseverance of colonialism and the exploitation of Zimbabwean workers, as was capital and state repression.

The role of the trade union leadership combined with sustained repression by the settler regime helped to ensure that the struggle of the African working class was safely contained. As we shall see, the trade union bureaucrats worked actively to lead their members in a pro-capitalist direction and to limit the struggle of the rank and file to the narrow economics of wage arbitration. This proved decisive in dissipating the struggle of the working class (1983: 20).

To support this argument Astrow cites examples of union leaders receiving funds and training from pro-capitalist sources (see also B. Cohen 1980), attempting to curtail strike activity and moderate wage demands, and advocating a restricted non-political role for unions. Here Astrow quotes from Tom Mswaka's 1963 presidential address to the Southern Rhodesia African Trade Union Congress:
It is high time all of us realised that we cannot use this organisation as a political platform for our political ends. I hate to have a political boss in the Trade Union Movement .... Politicians must stop interference into Trade Union affairs (1983: 22).

It does not occur to Astrow to consider the historical context of this speech. It was given in late September 1963, just after the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) split from the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) on 8 August 1963. Seen in this light Mswaka's aim might have been to prevent the schism in the nationalist movement further dividing a disunited labour movement. More importantly, this point merely serves to highlight a fundamental problem with Astrow's shallow analysis. As Moore points out, while attributing to the petit bourgeoisie "the power to manipulate and betray whole revolutions" (Moore 1985: 111), Astrow does not tie this class to the material conditions that give rise to it. Consequently, Astrow neglects the historical circumstances in which the "petit bourgeois" leadership must operate, and makes an unrealistic assessment of the practical potential for unions to mobilise workers for a socialist transformation.3

Analysis of trade union formation from the end of World War II into the 1970s by other writers (e.g., Gray 1960; Pollack 1973; Harris 1974a; Davies 1975; Hyslop 1986), provides a clearer understanding of trade union weakness than that presented by Astrow. Brand (1971, 1975, 1976) in particular focuses on the problems which have beset unions of black workers. While Brand records that some union leaders adopted a moderate, pro-capitalist approach, he also provides much other evidence that better explains the weakness of black trade unions than does Astrow's notion of leadership "betrayal" (1983: 21). Prominent features here include government strategy through the ICA of 1959 to control black trade unions,

3Astrow, like many Marxists, does not specify what socialist transformation means; however, this presumably involves workers and peasants seizing ownership and control of the state and the means of production.
as noted above. Other government action included the breaking of strikes, close police surveillance, harassment, and the arrest of leaders. According to the ICFTU eighty-eight unionists were detained or restricted in 1966 (Brand 1976: 76). Employer hostility, especially from farmers and small employers, entailed the denial of entry to union officials and the dismissal of workers supportive of union activity.

Wider socio-economic phenomena contributed to union weakness, and these have had an impact up until the present time. Union development was inhibited by regional and internal labour migration, which hampered the recruitment and maintenance of membership. High unemployment (Hawkins 1972; Clarke 1977, 1978) decreased workers' propensity to strike, and this limited the bargaining position of unions. The low level of formal education and training of union leaders restricted their organisational and negotiating skills, and a related problem was that training programmes were preoccupied with mundane aspects, rather than strategies for mobilisation. Internal disunity in the black labour movement has been a major problem, and this has resulted from many complex factors, such as leadership disputes, differing alignments within the divided nationalist movement, affiliation with international labour bodies, and regional and ethnic cleavages, especially Harare versus Bulawayo, and Shona versus Ndebele (Brand 1971, Davies 1975). Finally, financial weakness has been a major problem. Zimbabwe's peripheral position in the world economy has entailed low wage levels and, combined with the lack of the check-off system in which employers deduct union dues, this has meant meagre union resources. A further consequence of meagre union funds is the inability of many poorly-paid union officials to resist the twin temptations of corruption and reliance on foreign aid. This complex of factors is associated with the weak trade union movement, and the complicity of leaders is not as important as Astrow suggests.
Having noted these constraints it is also necessary to point out that the labour movement was not simply a compliant, non-political body. While moderate leaders did exist they were often attacked from within. The archetypical moderate, Reuben Jamela, was expelled from ZAPU and assaulted by "young militants" in 1962, and a rival union centre was formed against him before he was finally pressed into resignation in 1963 (Brand 1971: 98-101). Moreover, there was considerable affinity between unions and the nationalist movement. According to Ignatius Chigwendere (n.d.), who was a prominent unionist and ZANU activist in the early 1960s, the unionists were generally younger and tended to be more militant than the political leaders. Chigwendere, however, provides insufficient evidence to support this view. There is some evidence in Zimbabwean labour history to support Berg and Butler's (1964: 340, 380) renowned thesis that trade unions in Africa played a limited direct role in achieving independence (Turner 1975: 74). For example, while political strikes did occur, such as those staged during the Pearce Commission visit in 1972 (Harris 1974a: 76), they were very much the exception. Brand captures the situation most accurately when he states that the labour movement certainly identified with "nationalist aspirations" (1971: 107). He quotes Phineas Sithole, Textile and Allied Workers' Union official, as saying that the vast majority of his textile union members were also members of the National Democratic Party (precursor to ZAPU), and then writes:

Whereas the parties might at times have feared the unions as potential rivals or opposition, the unions' formal position vis-a-vis these parties was more a matter of strategy in terms of what they stood to lose by way of foreign support and relative immunity from government persecution. Their insistence on autonomy was probably founded on a desire to secure a degree of protection as much from direct government interference as from domination by nationalist politicians. A more neutral course simply meant a better chance for survival on [sic] the short term in difficult conditions (1971: 107).

Given the experience of incorporation after independence in countries such as Ghana and Tanzania (Ananaba 1979), the union movement showed considerable insight in trying to maintain a supportive but separate role from...
political parties. Brand quotes one of the more radical union leaders, Josiah Maluleke, on this point:

We as a trade union are fully prepared to throw our weight behind the nationalist party’s fight - after all, we all want to get rid of the present minority government, but we want to do so as workers, with our own organisation. For after independence the party will be the government and will be as much concerned as any government to increase production to develop the country. This may happen at the expense of the workers' wages and general standard of living. Then we want our own organisation to defend our position and our rights; if we, then are merely an arm of the party we as workers will be defenceless (1975: 32).

As will be seen, several commentators on independent Zimbabwe have failed to grasp this point. The discussion now turns to the situation in relation capital, labour and government labour policy at independence.

2.3 Capital, Labour and Government at Independence

The broad picture of capital in Zimbabwe can be briefly indicated (cf. Stoneman and Cliffe 1989; Phimister 1988; Wield 1981; Stoneman 1981; Arrighi 1967). In the competitive sector of small and medium-sized enterprises there is extensive local white ownership, and Indian ownership is prominent in retail trade and clothing. There is an increasing number of black entrepreneurs in transport, repair services, retail trade and particularly in farming. Local white ownership is prevalent in commercial farming. There are some large non-agricultural corporations with high local ownership (e.g., TA Holdings, Mashonaland Holdings), but much of this sector is dominated by companies with high South African, British or American ownership (Clarke 1980). Stoneman estimates that in 1963 "about two-thirds of the productive investment in Rhodesia was foreign-controlled" (1978: 65), and the general pattern remained the same in the 1970s (1976: 44, 1978: 68, 1980: 20). The economy was, and remains, substantially dependent on foreign-controlled monopoly and oligopolistic industries, as Stoneman puts it:

the general picture of the Rhodesian economy in almost every sector is of one or two multinational firms operating in a monopoly [sic]
situation (this applies to some 65 percent of the 4,000 products listed in the ... [Association of Rhodesian Industries] register) with a number of small domestically-owned firms picking up what crumbs are to be had" (1978: 71).

Thus private enterprise monopolies, whether foreign or domestically owned, were in key industries such as coal (Wankie Colliery), tyres (Dunlop), industrial and medical gases (Oxyco), glass manufacture (Zimbabwe Glass Industries), and urban bus services in the main centres (United Transport Group). Monopoly parastatals supplied, for example, electricity, oil supply, telecommunications, rail and air transport, and steel production.

Compared to trade unions and black entrepreneurs, white employers have well established trade and employer associations in the broad sectors of agriculture (Commercial Farmers’ Union, Agricultural Labour Bureau), industrials (Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries), mining (Chamber of Mines), commerce (Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce and National Commercial Employers’ Association of Zimbabwe), and building (Construction Industry Federation of Zimbabwe). In addition, industry associations exist within these sectors (e.g., Engineering Employers’ Association of Zimbabwe). Before independence these bodies, especially the Commercial Farmers’ Union and Chamber of Mines, generally had close relations with government. Consequently, the Confederation of Rhodesian Employers, which was formed in 1966 as the central body on labour issues, played a very minor role. After independence this body became the Employers’ Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ) and its position was strengthened both in its representational role on labour matters, and organisationally with the appointment of a full-time secretariat in 1982. In the early years of independence a degree of suspicion, if not conflict, characterised relations between the major employer groups and the government.

The formal sector employed slightly more than 1 million of the estimated total population of 7.4 million in 1980 (Central Statistical Office (CSO),
Quarterly Digest of Statistics, September 1985). In comparison with many other African countries Zimbabwe has a well-developed, and diversified industrial infrastructure. It is shown in Table 2.1 that in 1980 manufacturing constituted a higher percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and proportion of the workforce in Zimbabwe than in, for example, Zambia, Kenya and Nigeria (though in absolute terms Nigeria's manufacturing sector was much larger).

### Table 2.1 Size of Manufacturing Sector in Selected African Countries 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% of GDP</th>
<th>Number of Employees (000s)</th>
<th>% of formal sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>159.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>141.3</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1,343.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Calculated from CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, September 1986 (for Zimbabwe); Africa South of the Sahara, various editions.

A sectoral breakdown of employment in Zimbabwe (Table 2.2) shows that many Zimbabwean workers were in agriculture (32.4%) and domestic service (10.7%) which involved low-paid and low-skilled work. The manufacturing sector workforce (15.8%) was quite high, and other major sectors for employment were the public service (7.0), distribution (7.0) and mining (6.6%).

### Table 2.2 Number of Employees by Industrial Sector 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Employees (000s)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>327.0</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>159.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity and water</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution, restaurants and hotels</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private domestic</td>
<td>108.0</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,009.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated from CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, September 1986.
Many workers are employed in sizeable, "modern" organisations, and visitors unfamiliar with Zimbabwe are surprised by the size and diversity of industrial activity. Clarke lists over "1,000 'separate' sub-sectors" (1980: 209) in the economy, and in 1981 there were 181 mining or manufacturing establishments with over 500 employees, 84 of which had over 1,000 workers (CSO, Census of Production 1981/82: 85).

Unemployment has been a persistent major problem in Zimbabwe, at least since World War II (Clarke 1977, 1978). It is difficult to estimate unemployment in Zimbabwe since statistics for the informal and peasant sectors are very imprecise. For December 1979 the Riddell Commission proffers a "crude estimate" of 857,000 persons, or 34 percent of the total labour force, who could be considered job seekers (p.80). In the Annual Review of Manpower of 1983 the number of persons either unemployed or in informal activities is estimated to be 787,384 or 24 percent of the actual labour force (Department of Research and Planning 1983: 19). This figure excludes two people in each of the estimated 700,000 families in the peasant sector, yet it might be that many of these persons would be job seekers if employment were available. Accordingly, this report states that "a more realistic" estimate of unemployment, based on the exclusion of only one person in peasant sector families, is 1,487,384 persons, or 46 percent of the actual labour force (Department of Research and Planning 1983: 18-19). No matter which of these figures is accepted it is clear that at independence unemployment was high, and it has remained so until the present (Hawkins et al 1988). Thus a large reservoir of labour is available and this has obvious consequences for labour relations such as pressure against industrial action and wage increases for low-skilled workers. It also

*By using different methods of calculation, which are in part but not totally justifiable, the Annual Review of Manpower for 1984 produces a highly optimistic unemployment rate of 12.5% (Department of Research and Planning 1984: 16).*
means government policies which might result in job losses, such as increasing statutory minimum wages, entail major difficulties.

The majority of black workers in formal employment were in low-paying and low-skilled work. Of the 862,014 employees in the National Manpower Survey of 1981, 60% were unskilled and 20% were semi-skilled; the vast majority of workers in these two groups are black (e.g., 90% of semi-skilled workers were black, Ministry of Manpower Planning and Development 1981: 73-74). Wages for black workers were far below those for whites. The Riddell Commission provided much relevant data. For instance, the average earnings per quarter in March 1979 in manufacturing for non-blacks was $1,932 and for blacks $274, a ratio of 7:1; in mining the respective figures were $2,472 and $198, a ratio of over 12:1 (p.53). Black workers received low wages in absolute terms, over half (53%) the 820,000 workers in a 1977 survey received less than $50 per month, and 28% were below $30 per month (p.55). Only 7.6% of workers in the 1977 survey (pp.54-5) received earnings above the September 1978 Poverty Datum Line for urban workers, $110 (p.96). In short, black workers were generally poor and wage increases were an overriding concern of workers at independence.

Average annual earnings for all formal sector employees in 1980 were $1,863 (calculated from CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, September 1986: Table 6.1). There was substantial variation of minimum monthly wages among different industries; for example, in February 1980 tobacco grading was $22.66, building $55.25, sugar refining $76.70, and tyre manufacturing $99.88 (Riddell 1982: 6-7 Table 1). In September 1979 the mining industry minimum was $31.61 (Statutory Instrument 614 of 1979). Domestic service remained under the Masters and Servants Act until 1980 (agricultural workers were also until just before independence) so individual contracts operated and wage rates were generally lower; for example, in 1977 over 87 percent of domestic workers received below $30 (Riddell
Commission 1981: 316 Table E). Most other industries fell under the Industrial Conciliation Act which allowed collective bargaining agreements on industrial councils (where there were registered trade unions) or industrial boards (where there was no registered union). In 1979 there were 21 industrial councils and 66 industrial boards (Riddell Commission 1981: 257-9 Tables 25 and 28).

At independence, as has been noted, the union movement was characterised by weakness and disunity; a high number of unions existed which were generally small and divided. Figures for registered unions as of March 1980 are not available, but they would not be very different to figures as of 1 September 1980 which are provided in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service (Riddell Commission 1981). At that time there were 40 registered unions, representing 79,310 employees or roughly 8 percent of the one million employees in the formal sector. There were 10 separate municipal unions, and representation according to skill meant, for example, there were 4 separate unions within the National Railways and 3 within Air Zimbabwe (Riddell Commission 1981: 256), and the close relationship between race and skill meant some of these unions were racially divided. According to the Riddell Commission "there were at least 71 known unregistered trade unions" in April 1980 (p.243). Many of these were small unions with little organisational infrastructure and some claimed membership of the same employees claimed by other unions. In consequence, the Riddell Commission estimated that "[i]t would be highly unlikely if the total membership of these unions was greater than 30,000 paid-up members" (p.260). This would mean that there was a maximum of 110,000 union members of the private sector workforce at independence. When public sector organisations were included, the Riddell Commission estimated "it is doubtful if the total number of organised employees would reach 200,000, which is only 20 percent of all formal sector employees" (p.260).
Focusing on the figure of 20 percent would tend to overstate the importance and level of organisation of Zimbabwe's trade union movement. The divisions on racial, regional, tribal and political cleavages reduced union strength. At independence there were six federations, and in addition there were moves to create the United Trade Unions of Zimbabwe (UTUZ) as the single national congress to supersede these six federations. Some very approximate data relating to the six federations are provided in Figure 2.1.

### Figure 2.1 Selected Data Relating to Six Union Federations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federation</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Year formed</th>
<th>Prominent Unions</th>
<th>Political leaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>African Trades Union Congress</strong></td>
<td>Phineas Sithole</td>
<td>1954 and reformed 1962</td>
<td>United Textiles Workers' Union, Motor Trade Workers' Union</td>
<td>ZANU(Sithole)^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National African Trades Union Congress</strong></td>
<td>&quot;J. J.&quot; Dube</td>
<td>Initially 1974, dissolved, revived in late 1970s</td>
<td>Tailors &amp; Garment Workers' Union, Clothing Industry Workers' Union, Railway Associated Workers' Union, United Food and Allied Workers' Union</td>
<td>Reputedly ZAPU, but actually independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trades Union Congress of Rhodesia (white unions)</strong></td>
<td>Howard Bloomfield, Brian Holleran</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Associated Mine Workers' Union, National Union of Railwaymen</td>
<td>Rhodesian Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zimbabwe African Congress of Unions</strong></td>
<td>Aaron Ndhlou</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
<td>ZAPU (ZACU was in exile in Zambia before independence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zimbabwe Federation of Labour</strong></td>
<td>Abisha Kupfuma, Shangwa Chifamba</td>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial Workers' Union, Catering and Hotel Workers' Union</td>
<td>United African National Council (led by Bishop Muzorewa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zimbabwe Trades Union Congress</strong></td>
<td>Alfred Makwarimba, Albert Mugabe</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Air Transport Workers' Association, Commercial and Allied Workers' Union (Salisbury)</td>
<td>openly ZANU(PF)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^The parenthetical extension "Sithole", or "Mwenje", is often added to avoid confusion with ZANU(PF); however, the correct name is ZANU. "Mwenje" means walking stick, the symbol of ZANU."
Caution is needed in relation to the data in Figure 2.1. Alliances among unions changed continuously, and political allegiances were not always clearly stated. The data merely provide a general indication of the divisions within the union movement before independence.

The labour policy of the Mugabe Government was placed in the context of its stated commitment to "establish progressively a society founded on socialist, democratic and egalitarian principles" (Government of Zimbabwe, Growth With Equity, 1981: 2). In the Growth With Equity policy statement of February 1981 there was an attempt to enunciate the policies and measures these elusive principles would involve. For labour relations government aimed (1) "to raise incomes and standards of living of all our people" (p.2) and reduce the income gap (p.10), (2) to end discrimination (p.10) and "redress the historical racial imbalance in skilled employment" (p.2), and (3) to "democratise the workplace ... by inter alia encouraging worker participation in decision making" (p.2), while (4) economic and employment growth was seen by government as being a concomitant goal (p.2).\textsuperscript{8}

In addition to these main objectives, the statement included a commitment to be guided by International Labour Organisation (ILO) policies and "the concept of 'tripartitism'", and indicated that attention would be given to dispute settlement machinery (p.10). Given the government's objectives to promote economic and employment growth, orderly industrial relations became a major issue in government policy, and from the outset government statements exhorted workers to work hard and unions to maintain "industrial peace" (Kumbirai Kangai, Minister of Labour, Address to National Trade Unions Seminar, 21 May 1980). In other statements much emphasis was

\textsuperscript{8}A related objective, which is outside the present focus on labour relations, was to strengthen human resource development, especially for blacks.
placed on government's resolve to develop a united labour movement, and the need for government to intervene on behalf of labour in order to counteract the historically greater power of employers (e.g., Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister, Address to the Inaugural Congress of the ZCTU, 1 March 1981). These policies are examined in Chapters 3 and 4 where it is shown that, in order to pursue these policies, government adopted a corporatist labour strategy. This involved the curtailing of strikes in an effort to impose industrial peace so that economic growth could be pursued, and the incorporation of the trade union movement to support and enforce government labour policies (Chapter 3). In Chapter 4 it is shown that in pursuing its labour policies so as to increase lower incomes and reduce the income gap, to legislate for and administer labour relations machinery, and to promote workers participation, government assumed the roles that trade unions frequently play, and this assumption of union functions contributed to the weakness of the union movement.

2.4 The Post-Independence Political Context

It is argued in the following chapters that the Mugabe Government adopted a corporatist labour policy, and it is briefly indicated here that the government opted for corporatist political arrangements in areas other than labour relations. Private enterprise was retained with extensive government controls, and the government sought to monopolise interest representation in a variety areas (e.g., political parties, women, youth, agricultural producers). Government also expected the representative bodies to enforce government policy. Much emphasis was placed on curtailing opposition to the government, and uniting the country under the leadership of the ZANU(PF) Government.

Private ownership of the means of production remains a major component of the Zimbabwean economy. In 1981 it was estimated that the state-owned
share of productive capital might have been "about a sixth" of the total (Stoneman and Davies 1981: 118). Significant state ownership was inherited from the colonial government in key sectors such as communications, rail and air transport, energy, and iron and steel (Stoneman and Davies 1981: 112-3). The Mugabe Government has increased state ownership in mining and manufacturing, and the public sector share of gross fixed capital formation increased from 41.9 percent in 1978, and 30.7 percent in 1980, to 54.9 percent in 1983 (Ministry of Finance 1986: 30 Table 3.9). Yet while ZANU(PF) declares its commitment to Marxist-Leninist socialism, for a number of reasons the Mugabe Government has not as yet embarked on a policy of large scale nationalisation. The Constitution of Zimbabwe negotiated at Lancaster House requires "adequate compensation" (s.16(1)c) for government acquisition of private property (see Ministry of Finance 1986: 8). More important, however, is the Government's policy of reconciliation with war-time opponents and, related to this, the perception that nationalisation elsewhere in Africa has raised many problems such as the exodus of skilled manpower (Smith and Simpson 1981: 166-9; Flower 1987: 260). These considerations have impelled the Mugabe government to keep the private sector largely intact, at least for the present.

Statements concerning the government's aims for a transition to socialism are usually accompanied by a recognition of the persistence of capitalism. This is seen in key government policy statements such as *Growth With Equity* (Government of Zimbabwe 1981: 1), and the *First Five Year National Development Plan* (Government of Zimbabwe 1986: 2). There have been some government acquisitions, and the *First Five Year National Development Plan* presented in 1986 presages that Zimbabwean ownership, including state ownership, "should be increased progressively" (Government of Zimbabwe 1986: 2). The Chairman of the Industrial Development Corporation said that this policy had been misunderstood. "Far from nationalisation of the economy, the policy aims at increasing the degree of
local control within the economy, in close conjunction with local industrialists" (Herald 5/6/86). Nonetheless, the government has been a major actor in localisation, and state ownership is likely to continue to increase. A number of government corporations operate to promote development in particular industries such as mining, manufacturing and tourism, and heavy use is also made of state controls over capital. Measures which are aimed at regulating capital include the control of a wide range of producer and retail prices, and numerous purchasing and marketing boards control or supervise sales of, for example, minerals, grain, tobacco, beef, dairy products and cotton. Much of this complex of state ownership and control was inherited from the highly interventionist settler state. Independence has not marked a radical increase in the extent of state intervention; the major departure is that intervention is ostensibly in the interests of the nation as a whole and not only the minority white community. In the field of labour relations, as will be seen below, many controls are placed on employers concerning minimum wages, termination of employment and the selection of apprentices. This large degree of private ownership coupled with extensive controls is one characteristic of a corporatist polity; other common features are the monopolisation of interest representation and the enforcement of public policies by the monopoly bodies.

The ZANU(PF) Government has to a considerable extent endeavoured to monopolise political representation, especially for blacks. As Shaw (1986) notes, there are strong moves within ZANU(PF) for the creation of a one party state. Shaw concentrates on the intellectual debates surrounding the issue and completely neglects the processes involved in attempting to achieve a one party state. Black opposition parties were effectively prevented from organising. Through co-optation and coercion their leaders were variously detained, charged with aiding dissidents, prevented from holding public rallies throughout the country, and enticed into joining ZANU(PF) (Nkomo 1984; Herald 6/8/85). Supporters of minority parties
were subjected to violence and intimidation by ZANU(PF) supporters, particularly the ZANU(PF) Youth League (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights 1986). After losing in the 1980 elections Bishop Abel Muzorewa, leader of the United African National Council (UANC), and Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, leader of ZANU(Sithole) were effectively forced out of politics, although one ZANU(Sithole) candidate was returned from the Chipinge area in the 1985 elections. In December 1987 a unity agreement was reached to incorporate ZAPU into ZANU(PF), and in January 1988 Joshua Nkomo and other ZAPU parliamentarians were reintroduced into the ministry. There were, thus, few channels for organised political activity to take place outside ZANU(PF). Indeed, the party has endeavoured to establish hegemonic control over political representation, and ZANU(PF) youths frequently force attendance at party meetings and rallies by intimidating, beating and even whipping people (Herald 15/4/86, 21/7/86). Discontent in the political sphere eventually found expression through other channels, such as student demonstrations and the formation of a new political party, but during the period under study the government and party quite successfully pursued a strategy to curtail unauthorised political activity within the black community. The government has abolished the seats in Parliament reserved for whites under the Lancaster House Constitution, thus curtailing opposition from the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe, the successor to Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front. The government has attempted to gain the support of whites who are independent of the Conservative Alliance, and appointed to Parliament white business and community leaders such as Dawn Taunton, President of the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce, and Tony Read, Director of the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries.

Within the government and ZANU(PF) members are expected to support and enforce official policy, and a number of government members have been disciplined for their outspokenness. Two prominent ZANU(PF) ministers,
Edgar Tekere and Herbert Ushewokunze, who are considered to be more militant than many other ZANU(PF) leaders (Libby 1984), were removed from many of their executive and party positions. Tekere, who was Minister of Manpower Planning and Development and Secretary-General of ZANU(PF), was involved in an attack on a farm shortly after independence which resulted in the killing of a white farmer. Tekere was an outspoken critic of ZANU(PF) leaders and policies, and called for an acceleration in the implementation of ZANU(PF)'s strategy for socialism. He was progressively removed from government and party positions, and was finally expelled from ZANU(PF) in October 1988 after criticising leadership corruption and the drive toward a one-party state (Moto No.68/69: 15). In 1989 Tekere formed a new political party, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement, in opposition to ZANU(PF) (Herald 1/5/89).

Herbert Ushewokunze was removed from the Politburo of ZANU(PF) and shifted from several ministerial positions following his unorthodox approach in these posts. In 1981 he was removed from the health portfolio after encouraging a demonstration by nurses and criticising the Public Service Commission (which, significantly, was responsible to a minister in the Prime Minister's office) for not accepting his nominees for positions in his ministry, and for not reducing the wage gap between white and black nurses' quickly enough (Libby 1984: 150; Moto 4 & 18/7/81; Herald 14/10/81). After a short period as Minister of Home Affairs he was in turn removed from the transport portfolio after the Smith Commission of inquiry into parastatals reported numerous cases of mismanagement and irregularities, such as Ushewokunze's appointment of blacks with questionable qualifications and the removal of whites he considered to be racist (Smith Commission 1986a, 1987). Ushewokunze defended his action on the grounds that he was carrying out ZANU(PF) policy for black advancement and socialism: "We seek to correct historical injustices, restructure and democratise parastatals so that they would become important vehicles in [the] transformation to
socialism" (Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, 10 November 1987, col: 2186). Nonetheless, he was transferred to a ministerial position without portfolio.

There were attempts through both the party and government to coordinate interest organisations and in many cases the formation of single bodies for interest representation was attempted. A Ministry of Community Development and Women’s Affairs was formed to "mobilise, organise, coordinate and monitor public and private" women’s interest groups (Ministry of Community Development and Women’s Affairs 1985: 13 quoted in Kazembe 1986: 399), and a central role was given to the ZANU(PF) Women’s League. Similarly, there were attempts to form bodies to coordinate youths. The Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture created the Youth Brigade ostensibly to minimise problems of unemployment and delinquency, but the Youth Brigade and the youth wing of ZANU(PF) have acted as instruments of control by, for example, coercing people to attend ZANU(PF) rallies and meetings, and intimidating opposition supporters. Youth Brigade members shot to death five UANC members in Hwange during the 1985 election campaign (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights 1986: 54-7, 113-34; Moto No.44 1986: 5-6). Emphasis was also placed upon corporatising interest representation for other groups such as farmers, non-governmental organisations.

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7Moto (No.71 1988: 4-5) reported that, after student demonstrations against corruption in government,

The fear here is possible manipulation of the povo [peasants, workers, unemployed] by the leadership. The demonstration mounted by members of the Youth League against the anti-corruption demonstrations smelt of this. "Youth League attacks anti-corruptions demos" read a title in the Sunday Mail of November 23. The story quotes a statement signed by ZANU(PF)'s Secretary for Youth, Ernest Kadungure. The question and fear here is who is the Youth League?

At this time 44 year-old Ernest Kadungure was a Minister of State (Political Affairs), and former Minister of Youth.
2.5 Interpretations of Labour Relations in Independent Zimbabwe

2.5.1 National Labour Relations

In this section the literature on labour in independent Zimbabwe is reviewed, beginning with discussions of national labour relations and followed by organisation level contributions. In comparison to the interest shown in current political and development issues (e.g., Stoneman ed. 1981; Schatzberg ed. 1984; Mandaza ed. 1986), and indeed earlier interest in labour, rather less work has been produced on labour in independent Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the material available is of varying quality and most contributions are from a radical perspective. Discussions at a national level have been provided by Callinicos (1981), Astrow (1983), Nangati (1984a and 1984b), Sachikonye (1986), Herbst (1987), Mitchell (1987) and Wood (1987), and studies at enterprise level include those by Cheater (1986), Ladley and Lan (1985), Maphosa (1985).

Taking up Rosa Luxemburg's position, Callinicos (1981; Callinicos and Rogers 1980) argues that in adopting a reformist strategy the Mugabe government failed to pursue a socialist programme, and accommodation with capital entailed the suppression rather than the "development of a mass movement of workers and peasants" (1981: 66). As a result, the government crushed the widespread strike waves which followed independence. Similarly, Mitchell (1987) interprets the ending of the 1980-82 strikes as part of the government's overall strategy to maintain a disciplined workforce and prevent the emergence of a strong independent trade union movement. He quotes one of the many exhortations by party and government leaders for workers to work hard and opines

This is the thinking which lies at the heart of the state's industrial relations policies since Independence. Capitalist development, cooperation between workers and employers, requires a disciplined, peaceful workforce. It is not helped by strong independent unions. As the government has sought to maintain a favourable business climate and encourage foreign investment, it has waged a relentless
campaign against strikes and taken a range of measures intended to prevent the emergence of a truly independent union movement (Mitchell 1987: 105).

These treatments are similar to the analysis adopted by Astrow (1983) and suffer from the same flaws. Despite repeated reference to capitalist and state repression the authors inadequately grasp the structural constraints confronting the Mugabe government and the difficulties that the labour movement has historically faced. The result is an unrealistic expectation of the possibilities for workers to build socialism.

A number of writers on post-independence labour relations argue that strong government intervention to form a single trade union congress was an understandable and, by implication, an acceptable outcome to remove the influence of the formerly powerful white unions. Sachikonye (1986: 256-7) and Herbst (1987) portray the government as playing a positive role in the creation of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. For Herbst "[t]he ZCTU represents something of a worker success because it is a consolidation of the five national labour centres that were present at independence" (1987: 351). Wood notes that the non-ZANU(PF) unions which were "tainted" for supporting the Muzorewa internal settlement, "would be rejected by most of its more or less 'captured' black membership", and pro-ZANU(PF) unions attracted considerable support (1987: 65). Yet in order to achieve pre-eminence, these ZANU(PF)-aligned unions undermined the existing unions and the result was the creation of a sycophantic and corrupt ZCTU leadership. These writers are not critical of the Mugabe government for emasculating an already weak labour movement. While Wood offers a generally critical approach, he does not clearly indicate whether the Mugabe government should be considered progressive or capitalist, and Sachikonye reserves most criticisms for capital and not the state.
Nangati’s critique differs from those of Sachikonye and Wood in that he specifically argues that it is "simplistic" to see the Mugabe government as "progressive" (1984a: 31). He adduces a critique of Zimbabwean political economy similar to that of Shivji (1976, 1983; see Leys 1976: 40) in relation to Tanzania, in which everything is seen as working against the interests of workers. By adopting a putative "gradualist road to socialism" (1984a: 34), accepting the existence of capitalism and the consequent need "to create and maintain a favourable investment climate" (Nangati 1984a: 30 quoting Government of Zimbabwe 1982b: 37), the government, Nangati argues, plays the specific role of the capitalist state. The trade union movement is thus subject to "severe control" while "control over employers is only a weak counter-weight" (1984a: 30). All seemingly progressive labour policies, such as restrictions on termination of employment, the use of labour officers to protect workers, and the introduction of workers' committees, are rejected as meaningless in practice and designed merely to obscure conflict. In the case of "participatory institutions", workers' committees and works councils, these are only consultative bodies which remain subservient to capital and are "simply a tool for manipulating workers" (1984a: 34).

In contrast to these views, I argue that the "progressive" aspects of the Mugabe government’s labour policy are not simply means for manipulating workers. Measures such as restricting termination of employment, imposing minimum wages, instituting workers' committees and unfair labour practices, in many cases do provide important gains for workers. They do not amount to a socialist challenge to capital precisely because they are not designed to achieve this. Secondly, the controls over employers are not as weak as Nangati suggests and, to some extent, the Zimbabwean state is not a typically weak state. There are extensive restrictions on capital, including stringent controls over many producer and retail prices, investment, export and domestic marketing (particularly of agricultural and mineral products),
and increases in managerial salaries. With regard to labour relations, there are regulations on dismissals, minimum wages and unfair labour practices.

Given this context of state attempts to impose controls over both capital and labour, it is more productive to analyse Zimbabwean labour relations in terms of corporatism rather than to identify the state as capitalist and simply as a corollary dismiss the gains for labour and the controls over capital. There is considerable evidence of corporatism in Zimbabwe. To begin with, after independence the government forced the trade union movement to form a single national congress and to dissolve the five existing congresses. The numerous controls over unions inherited from colonialism were generally maintained and, in some cases, extended as is the case with respect to the prevention of strikes. Employers were also pressed to form a single national body for dealing with government on labour issues. There has been much emphasis on tripartite consultative bodies to make recommendations to government on, for instance, minimum wages and retrenchment. The government continually evokes "the national interest" in making decisions on labour issues, which usually please neither employers nor trade unions. This is not to say the state is neutral; nor is it passive. It has accumulated extensive legislative power and it plays a highly interventionist corporatist role.

One writer on Zimbabwe has specifically rejected corporatist analysis (Herbst 1987). In one of the few liberal discussions of labour in Zimbabwe, Herbst (1987) examines minimum wage setting as part of a study of policy formulation in Zimbabwe which focuses on a number of issue areas including land, agricultural pricing, foreign investment, minerals marketing, health services and minimum wages. Herbst spurns corporatist analysis since he holds that it does not fit with his desire to produce a theory of the state which takes into account "three vital issues" (p.10): "the patterns of state decision-making, the autonomy of the state, and the locus of decision-
making in the state" (p.32). For Herbst "the corporatist model" has a number of drawbacks: it is only a "partial ... phenomenon in society" (p.30 quoting Stepan 1978: 71) and therefore a comprehensive theory of the state cannot be developed from this, the level of analysis is "too general" (p.33), and it does not generate "persuasive propositions about state decision-making" (p.29). Herbst's criticisms, however, are overstated. While he correctly argues that presentations from Shaw and Higgott are "too imprecise" (p.32), detailed empirical analysis of corporatist structures and processes is indeed possible, and is provided in this thesis. It is shown in later chapters that Herbst's analysis of the setting of minimum wages is weakened by failing to recognise the corporatist processes at work. This is ironic since he provides evidence of the aggregation of employers and labour representation into single officially-sanctioned bodies (pp.350-1).

2.5.2 Labour Relations at Organisation Level

Very few studies of labour have been carried out at the organisational level in Zimbabwe. Virtually all of these assume a radical perspective and generally argue or assume that capital is exploitative, government complicit and trade unions and workers' committees ineffective. Ladley and Lan (1985) provide an examination of a single dispute on a commercial farm in which the workers were disappointed and the farmer relieved at the outcome of the meeting with the labour relations officer. The suggestion is that the government supports capital over labour. In an unpublished dissertation Maphosa (1985) examines a mining company, a subsidiary of a multinational corporation, and finds that the company, with the assistance of the state, successfully resisted workers' demands for improved conditions and participation in decision-making in the immediate post-independence years. Nangati (1987), in his study of the private security industry, details the harsh working conditions and exploitation workers experienced for little return. He
reports no redeeming features associated with this work or in the conduct of employers.

In a survey of 20 corporations in Zimbabwe, Nyoka (1987) found in that in 12 of these the personnel manager had lower status than other managers, and did not perform conventional personnel functions such as administration of salaries of senior staff. In each of these cases the managing director was white and the personnel manager was black. Nyoka implies that the personnel function was not taken seriously, and that blacks were appointed as a public relations exercise. Raftopolous, Wittich and Ndlela similarly assert, without providing evidence, that "[m]any Blacks who have moved into the private sector moved into 'window dressing' positions such as industrial relations officers and personnel officers. The more substantive managerial positions have remained for the most part, a closed field for Blacks" (1987: 34). Nyoka’s conclusions need to be treated cautiously since the sample was not random, his measurement of status is open to discussion, and it is not clear that race is the determining factor in the low status of personnel. It could be, for example, that top management in these 12 companies assumes conventional responsibilities of other areas of management, and not just those of personnel. Personnel management has low status compared to the more established areas of management (e.g., production, accounting) for reasons other than race in many countries; for instance, in some US companies personnel functions for top management are handled not by the personnel manager but "by someone else attached to the chief executive’s office" (Beach 1985: 594). Nonetheless, the case of General Industries is presented to exemplify companies which continue with window-dressing and racial employment practices in independent Zimbabwe.

In the most thorough analysis available to date, Cheater (1986) studies a textile factory of over five hundred employees in 1982-83. She examines the "triangular interface" of workers, management and government in the
context of "Zimbabwe's attempt to move from a colonial capitalism to a socialist economy" (p.xiii). She finds that management remained aloof and retained colonial management styles. Government professed to support workers and to an extent did so, initially rejecting the company's application to retrench. But when workers acquiesced to revised proposals, the government allowed the retrenchments to be effected. The trade union was rent by internal fighting and was ineffective, and the workers' committee is presented as being weak in the face of the more powerful employer and government. Cheater is pessimistic about the prospect of Zimbabwean workers' committees being transformed into revolutionary committees such as those in Turin discussed by Gramsci. Cheater's study is grounded in social anthropology and explicitly seeks to see industrial life "from the workers' perspective" (p.xix). While it might present a valid view from this perspective, it does not represent a broad view of labour relations in Zimbabwe. The aim in the present study is to provide a fuller understanding by taking into consideration the perspectives of capital and the state, and by examining three differing enterprises.

I am unaware of any published discussions of management culture in independent Zimbabwe. Ethical issues among Zimbabwean managers have been considered (Gifford and McBurney 1988), and pre-independence management styles have been discussed (Mothobi and Cheater 1975; Cheater 1975). Baldly stated, white Rhodesian culture, with notions of racial superiority, a pioneering spirit and "rugged individualism", contributed to a labour relations management style that was at worst authoritarian and racist and at best authoritarian paternalistic (Mothobi 1975; Mothobi and Cheater 1975; Cheater 1975). In general the pursuit of workers' collective interests was regarded as illegitimate; workers as individuals were expected to be happy with what they were given, since many whites considered workers to be better-off in employment than in villages (Clarke 1974). Thus during the war against the nationalists whites wore shirts emblazoned: "We Made
Rhodesia Great” - epitomising the view that whites built the country and blacks were inconsequential. Liberals were present in Rhodesian society (Hodder-Williams 1983) and many top managers rejected racist and authoritarian management ideologies (Hancock 1984: 88), but they were a minority and benevolent paternalism did not have much impact on Rhodesian racist labour relations management style. It is argued in this study that in independent Zimbabwe this colonial management style is being challenged by the government, party, workers and trade unions.

Black managers in Zimbabwe are struggling to find their own management culture. It is a difficult task to find an amalgam or to chart a course between the cultural traditions of blacks and the structures and processes of western bureaucratic organisation. Mparutsa (1987) calls for organisations to be sensitive to Zimbabwean culture and, undoubtedly, there is a strong underlying desire to bring out Zimbabwean values. At the national convention of the Institute of Personnel Management of Zimbabwe, where two hundred personnel practitioners gathered in 1987, there was spontaneous acclaim for the following passage on "indigenous management":

Organisations which ignore the culture and values of their employees treat them as 'non persons'. Under those circumstances, the employee could be excused if he views his work as totally unconnected to the rest of his life....

To illustrate my point, take for example an employee from Chiweshe holding a job in a factory in Harare. If during the month end he goes home to his village and discovers that a recently harvested crop is not secured and might be reached by livestock, he will demand the fullest explanation from those concerned. He might even decide to skip work on Monday to make sure that the crop is safe. Yet the same man will leave a water tap running in the factory because he was not responsible for turning it on. The same person might be the first to down tools on an important export order for which the deadline is imminent because it is time to go home and management have not suggested overtime (Mparutsa 1987: 4).

This touched a definite impulse in the predominantly black audience; and yet the underlying issues are not necessarily particular to Zimbabwe or Africa. The worker can be likened to, for example, an Australian wage-earner who
at home works into the night, devotedly repairing his own or a friend’s car, and at work behaves identically to his Zimbabwean counterpart. There are common strands of autonomy, ownership, challenge and self-satisfaction at home, and subordination to authority, lack of ownership, boredom and dissatisfaction at work.

Mparutsa gives little indication as to how traditional Zimbabwe culture traits can be introduced into modern organisations, and what form such innovations should take. Most large organisations and European-run businesses deny entry to traditional mores (e.g., commitments to extended families) and endeavour to run the organisation according to western values. In part, this is by order of the whites who remain in senior positions though, more importantly in the long-run, industrialisation carries pressures for the adoption of rational bureaucratic processes. As Kerr et al (1960; Kerr 1983) point out, traditional skills and many social structures and practices (e.g., the extended family) tend to be eroded by the development of new skills, formal education, social and geographic mobility, highly differentiated occupations, and bureaucratic forms of organisation.

There are a few cases in Zimbabwe in which conscious efforts have been made to interweave traditional cultural mores into large business organisations. At a tea estate in Honde Valley, Eastern Highlands Tea Estates, spirit mediums are consulted to improve production, and “production festivals” are held (Interview with Lovemore Mbigi, Personnel Manager, Eastern Highlands Tea Estates, May and November 1987). In a Bulawayo textile company, Cotton Printers, workers contribute to a fund and, in as in traditional society, collectively build houses for individual workers (Interview, David Chiweshe, Personnel Manager, Cotton Printers, September 1987; Moto No.44 1986: 3-4). These cases are very much the exception in Zimbabwean management to date. In many companies white management rejects traditional culture, and a colonial management culture prevails (e.g.,
General Industries see Chapter 5). The trend, however, is away from colonial management culture, and in many enterprises changes have occurred which mean that more empathy is shown toward black workers and their social needs such as responsibilities to extended families (e.g., Anglo American and Dairy Marketing Board, Chapters 6 and 7).

Summary

The historical development of labour relations in Zimbabwe has meant that the black labour movement was weak and disunited, while employers were more powerful and well organised. Liberal analyses attribute trade union weakness to factors such as internal divisions and workers' continuing attachment to the land which militated against the development of a working-class consciousness. Radical scholars provide an important reinterpretation of labour history by arguing that workers showed signs of working-class consciousness in hidden forms of resistance (e.g., desertion). But radical writers emphasise class to the exclusion of other factors which influence labour relations (e.g., ethnicity). Another problem is that radical writers unrealistically assess workers' achievements in terms of socialist transformation (Astrow 1983), when state repression and other constraints provide major obstacles to such a transformation.

The power imbalance between black labour and capital had major implications for labour relations after independence. In the context of weak trade unionism the ZANU(PF) Government adopted policies to counter employers' power and enhance workers' interests. Chapters 3 and 4 show that the government pursued a corporatist labour strategy to implement these policies. Corporatist arrangements were also established in areas other than labour relations (e.g., political representation), to concentrate interest representation and have the monopoly bodies support and enforce government policy.
Discussions of national labour relations since independence have been piecemeal. Many writers argue polemically that the Mugabe Government acted to benefit capital and not labour. Radical critics contend that the drive for socialism has been betrayed by the petit bourgeois leadership, but these writers do not take adequate account of historical and structural constraints, and incorrectly attribute enormous power to the petit bourgeoisie. From a different perspective, Herbst erroneously rejects corporatist analysis on the basis of simplistic treatments, and it is held here that more refined formulations provide greater understanding. Herbst in fact identifies aspects of corporatist strategy, but his liberal approach fails to recognise these as such.

Few studies at organisational level have been produced, and again these are generally highly critical of employers and government's role in labour relations. Earlier work on management attitudes to black workers show that Rhodesian management style was characterised by racism and authoritarianism at worst, and paternalism at best. Colonial management styles are now being challenged. The following chapters show that the government and workers provide a major force for reform, and it has been argued here that industrialisation involves strong pressures for bureaucratisation. There are isolated cases in which features of traditional Zimbabwean culture have been adopted in large business organisations, but for the most part reforms have been more limited, taking into account the social needs of black workers in the context of Western-style organisational management.
Chapter 3 Curtailing Strikes and Corporatising Trade Unions

I want to make it crystal clear that the ZCTU and all the trade unions affiliated to it will not condone thieving by our members. We want honest and disciplined workers whom we are proud to represent. We will not represent thieves and lazy people.

Abisha Kupfuma,
Acting Secretary-General, ZCTU,
Herald 4 January 1983.

We are all honourable men here ....

- Don Corleone

Introduction

A corporatist perspective provides the most useful conceptualisation of labour relations in independent Zimbabwe. Industrial action was sharply curtailed, the process of confining interest representation to single, officially sanctioned bodies was undertaken with considerable success, and heavy reliance was placed on the national interest to legitimize government action. One difference between the corporatist schema identified by Cawson and Crouch and labour strategy in Zimbabwe, however, is that the government took the major role in policing agreements, and unions played an auxiliary role. The first section of this chapter examines the curtailment of labour militancy, and following sections describe the partial incorporation of trade unions and limited attempts to coordinate employers' associations.

3.1 Curtailing Industrial Action

3.1.1 The 1980-82 Strikes

Industrial action was curtailed following wildcat strikes at independence. The electoral victory of Robert Mugabe was announced on 4 March 1980, but before Zimbabwe's Independence Day, 18 April, strikes broke out in Harare. A wave of strikes quickly spread throughout the country, and Zimbabwe's first year of independence saw more strikes and production-days lost than
the country had experienced in any year since the general strike of 1948 (Wood 1987: 67). Wood estimates that 153 strikes occurred, involving over 300,000 lost production-days (1987: 67).¹

The unrest chiefly took place in large organisations involving hundreds, and in many cases thousands, of workers in private enterprise, parastatals and local authorities. Some of the immediate causes included demands for higher pay, improved working conditions, an end to racist management practices, the removal of racist managers, the reinstatement of dismissed workers, and the return of workers’ pension contributions. Underlying these issues was what came to be known as the "crisis of expectations" in which workers sought immediate redress for the frustrations and unfulfilled demands they had accumulated under years of colonial rule (Herald March-November 1980; numerous interviews with trade unionists and strikers September 1984-June 1985 e.g., Shangwa Chifamba, Education Officer, ZCTU, October 1984; see also Sachikonye 1986: 252). This was the view expressed in semi-official Herald editorials (e.g., 23/3/80) and by government leaders. The government position also held that "misunderstandings" and "agitators" contributed to the disputes (Herald 22/3/80, 23/3/80; Sachikonye 1986: 254). The then Minister of Labour and Social Services, Kumbirai Kangai, suggested that one cause was a "malicious rumour" that was generated by followers of opposing parties to the effect that the government would nationalise pension funds (Herald 19/3/80, 20/3/80, 22/3/80). This line of argument is hard to sustain for in the case of ZAPU, as Wood (1987: 67) points out, very few strikes took place in Bulawayo, the stronghold of ZAPU and its trade union ally, ZACU; and neither Wood nor I could find any evidence to support the agitator thesis in Matabeleland. The Chief Industrial Relations Officer, Ignatius Chigwendere, later said: "I have not seen a single instance of minority parties organising strikes. Under no

¹Sachikonye (1986: 268-72) lists fewer strikes, namely, 131 strikes in 1980, and a further 47 strikes to June 1981.
circumstances did I find ZAPU a hindrance to my operations" (Interview April 1988). A minor exception might be found in the lowveld where, as will be seen in Chapter 6, there were some suggestions that supporters of ZANU(Sithole) did seek to provoke strikes to oppose the government. In general, however, it is more likely that the strikes were motivated by a genuine desire to improve wages and work conditions, and that the confused prevailing circumstances contributed to workers’ willingness to strike. Workers perceived that fundamental change might be possible, and they endeavoured to have their genuine grievances resolved and their wages and conditions improved. Equally, it is probable that the agitator view presented by Kangai and others was primarily a stratagem to pressure strikers into returning to work, and to discredit overt industrial action.

In an effort to quell the strikes, Kangai acknowledged that workers did have genuine grounds for dissatisfaction, but appealed for time so the government could formulate and implement new labour policies to benefit workers. In the meantime, disruption to industry would only serve to delay improvements and to hamper attempts to resettle thousands of people after the war (Herald 22/3/80). To deal with the immediate grievances, Kangai, his Deputy Minister, Robson Manyika, and the Chief Industrial Relations Officer, Ignatius Chigwendere (a former union official), visited strikers seeking to settle the disputes. Communication between management and black workers within companies was virtually non-existent or confined to liaison consultative committees to which workers’ representatives were appointed by management. Kangai called for the establishment of workers’ committees so that workers’ representatives could meet with management, and the parties themselves could negotiate the issues. But Kangai’s extemporaneous strategy had only limited success; strikes continued and there were occasions when strikes broke out again only hours after he left the site (e.g., Herald 26/3/80).
At this stage Mugabe made an address to the nation on radio and television which was a more persuasive exposition of the government’s stance towards the strikes than Kangai had been able to present to strike meetings. Mugabe said that he sympathised with the aspirations of low-paid workers but argued that strike action was not the way to improve the situation; in fact, this would harm themselves and the community. The tenor of his address is projected in the following passage:

The loss of production in many factories is to be deplored and when it comes to essential services, the resultant shortage of bread, and the spoiling of many thousands of dollars worth of dough, with so many hungry people in our land, is nothing short of criminal (Herald 26/3/80).

In an effort to show workers that their predicament had not been forgotten, Mugabe pledged that his government would give priority to an examination of the wage structure with the intention of increasing low incomes as soon as possible. Mugabe called upon the community to exercise "tolerance and patience" during the very delicate period of transition, and he volunteered the following opinion: "Let me be the first to say that no one is blameless, least of all elements within my own party, and I shall be personally seeing that the message is brought home in the strongest possible terms" (Herald 26/3/80).

In conjunction with this moderate approach, Mugabe also addressed the issue of law and order in peremptory tones. At the same time industrial unrest was occurring, there were outbreaks of violence and robbery. Not only had an elderly couple on a farm and a mining engineer been assaulted, but in a grenade attack three children had been killed. Mugabe stated that the "primary function" of his government was to maintain law and order and consequently he would give the police "whatever authority is necessary" to end the lawlessness (Herald 26/3/80). The warning of severity in relation to crime in the speech chastising strikers would have had an effect on those considering industrial action. Indeed, this spate of strikes ended quickly;
however, the issues involved were far from resolved and strikes broke out again only one month later.

The second wave of industrial action spread throughout the country with serious strikes occurring in many companies such as Wankie Colliery, Swift Transport, and the Empress Nickel Mine where eight people were hurt in violence. On 28 May, in an effort to stem this new strike wave, the government brought forward an announcement of the introduction of minimum wage rates effective from 1 July 1980. Many workers, especially industrial and commercial workers, were already in receipt of wages above the stipulated minima, and some strikers had recently rejected offers above the awards (ARB-EFT 15 May - 14 June 1980: 5540). Kangai argued that the introduction of these minima was "only a stop-gap measure", since the government intended to appoint a commission to make a detailed examination of wages, prices and work conditions (Herald 29/5/80). To prevent price increases negating the wage increases, government imposed controls over prices of essential commodities, rent and public transport.

Strikes continued on the day after the Minister's announcement, and the government's policy of tolerating strikes clearly changed. Kangai ordered strikers to return to work and stated that he and Labour Ministry officials would no longer deal with striking workers. The stricter policy was emphasised when about 1,000 strikers were dismissed at Swift Transport and police were used to disperse them. Police also used batons to break up a demonstration by women outside Parliament calling for the dismissal of Joshua Nkomo as Home Affairs Minister and the disbanding of the British South Africa Police (Herald 30/5/80). This hardened policy curtailed strikes until a third wave occurred in November 1980, especially at mines such as Trojan Nickel Mine, and again at Wankie Colliery. Once more the government ordered strikers to desist, and workers gradually complied.
The government adopted an increasingly impatient attitude to strike action and eventually took steps to stamp out strikes altogether. During 1981 strike waves were reduced to occasional ripples. In late October teachers and nurses broke the calm by staging strikes and gathering outside government offices in Salisbury, demanding to see their respective ministers. The teachers called for pay increases, improved conditions and an end to racial discrimination, especially in pay rates. Nurses, too, put forward a host of demands (Herald 24/10/81). When the demonstrations continued for several days despite ministers’ calls to resume work, the government sent in military medical staff to deal with patients in hospitals, and police to deal with the strikers. Almost one thousand nurses and teachers were arrested, loaded into trucks and taken to police stations where they were, reportedly, briefly detained (Herald 21/10/81). In the case of nurses, police struck people - including a Herald reporter - with batons. The Home Affairs Ministry stated that the demonstrations contravened emergency regulations that the Mugabe Government had recently gazetted, and also warned that future gatherings would be treated similarly.

The strikers were told to proceed with their demands through the "proper channels", but the teachers replied that this had been tried for almost a year without success because the Zimbabwe Teachers’ Association was subservient to the Minister, and the "proper channels" meant the pre-independence procedures. The nurses made similar points. Government statements conceded that the teachers and nurses did have legitimate grievances but pointed out that their salaries, along with those for all public servants, were being reviewed in the light of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service (Riddell Commission 1981) with a view to ending anomalies and increasing pay where possible. The government argued that it was justified in using harsh measures to end the strikes, and consequently issued ultimata to the nurses and teachers to return to work or be dismissed.
The terms of the ultimata were severe. Teachers would be dismissed if arrested for unlawful assembly or if they did not return to duty by 22 October 1981. Dismissed teachers would have to re-apply for positions. Their previous service and benefits relating to it would not be recognised, and they might be posted to rural schools (Herald 22/10/81). Mugabe, a former teacher, was particularly severe in his criticisms of the nurses and teachers; they were, he said "people with unrevolutionary minds who never experienced the hardships of the struggle for liberation .... It is not difficult to arrest them and throw them into the bush for two or three months in order to make them feel such hardships" (Herald 22/10/81). He pointed out that the nurses and teachers did not strike under Smith despite calls to do so by the nationalists. He contrasted their strike with the patience of former Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) fighters who waited in assembly camps for months without pay, and the endurance of peasants who were still waiting for land. The teachers and nurses returned to work in accordance with the government's ultimata. After examining the issues, the government announced a restructuring of teachers' pay scales in an effort to end racial differences in pay in late January 1982. This involved an increase of $3,000 for some teachers to $6,000 per annum, the level previously restricted usually to whites (ARB-EFT 15 January - 14 February 1982: 6308). As noted above, one upshot of the nurses' strike was that Herbert Ushewokunze's support for them contributed to his removal as Minister of Health.

Firemen in the state-owned National Railways also met with harsh treatment when they struck in January 1982. They called for a wage increase of almost 100 percent and argued that there had been too many delays in their case through the industrial conciliation machinery. Their strike lasted for six days and virtually halted Zimbabwe's national rail system, causing an
estimated loss of $1 million per day. When Kangai's order to return to work was ignored, the strikers were arrested. Thirty of them appeared in court for disrupting an essential service and were given six-month suspended gaol terms (ARB-EFT 15 December 1981 - 14 January 1982: 6275; African Business February 1982: 46).

In March 1982 bus drivers and ticket checkers stopped work. This was the last major strike that Zimbabwe experienced until the agro-industry dispute over three years later. One of the major immediate reasons for this was that the strike was put down comprehensively and severely, and especially since this response followed the harsh government reaction to the nurses, teachers and railway firemen strikes. On the first day of the strike, 10 March, 850 workers in Salisbury and 450 in Bulawayo were involved. On the following day when the strike continued and spread to other regional centres, United Omnibus Company strikers around the country were arrested: 424 in Salisbury, 315 in Bulawayo, 142 in Umtali and 101 in Gwelo (Herald 12/3/82). Police acted indiscriminately, using batons to load anyone wearing a company uniform into police vans. The leader of the Transport and General Workers' Union (Transport & GWU), Farai Makanda, was also arrested at the Ministry of Labour, even though he had been urging strikers to return to work and was trying to see the Minister of Labour to explain that the strikers were going back to work. The company was authorised to dismiss all strikers and could re-hire on a selective basis; those who had a "bad record" or were considered "troublemakers" were not re-engaged. Most of those arrested were given a $50 fine and a three months suspended gaol sentence (Interviews with General Manager, Harare United Omnibus Company and Secretary-General, Transport & GWU, October 1984).

A major immediate cause of the dispute was confusion and disagreement over a pay increase. In October 1981 the Industrial Board for Transport
agreed to a 12.5 percent increase for drivers, and on 25 December 1981
the statutory wage regulations allowed an increase for these drivers of up to
16 percent. The drivers wanted to receive both increases, making a total of
28.5 percent. The company refused on the grounds that the regulations
accompanying the minimum wage increase had the effect of including
industry agreements within the 16 percent statutory increase. Management
therefore insisted that the drivers were legally entitled to only an additional
3.5 percent above the negotiated 12.5 percent. So confusion over
government wage regulations was central to this dispute.

The influence of the party needs mention in relation to this dispute. At the
Belvedere depot in Harare, the centre of the strike, ZANU(PF) meetings
were held regularly. In 1984, they were held for 1/2-hour each Thursday
morning, with the tacit acceptance of management. At Harare United it
seems that party did have an impact on industrial relations; workers were
highly politicised and they were apparently prepared to challenge
management's policies and practices. They had many complaints
concerning wages, work practices and disciplinary action, and they wanted
the government to nationalise the company.\(^2\) A further complicating factor
was that a brother of the Minister of Labour was the company's Personnel
Officer. The workers became hostile to him and it was only after a long
campaign and the replacement of the Minister that he was dismissed from
the company in 1984. Party remained a factor in labour relations in this
company, as a contest developed between the new Personnel Officer, a
ZANU(PF) official, and the workers' committee chairman, also a ZANU(PF)
official though junior to the Personnel Officer. Both tried to use their party

\(^2\)The company also invited the government to buy 49 percent of company
shares. A senior manager interviewed explained that labour relations
problems, price controls, and shortages of spare parts, foreign exchange and
skilled labour made operations extremely difficult. In addition the company
was criticised for failing to meet public expectations, and so United would
welcome a convenient escape from this predicament, see also Herald
26/3/88.
position to strengthen their standing in company labour matters (Personal communication Zivanayi Tamangani). The Personnel Officer was suspended and resigned in 1987 following allegations of nepotism in his appointments (*Sunday Mail* 25/10/87).

Party played a more prominent role at Harare United than in most other Zimbabwean companies. It was a rare occurrence for formal party meetings to be held at the workplace, and nationally many workers and managers, perhaps most, maintain that there should be a separation between work relations and party politics, especially while a multi-party system exists. The National Trade Unions Survey (NTUS) (Department of Research and Planning 1987: 60) arrived at similar findings with respect to trade unionists’ views, and the Riddell Commission concluded:

> In talking to workers’ committees, the Commission is convinced that the vast majority of workers do accept that political parties should have no direct influence on employee-employer relations and that sectional party politics should have no place on the shopfloor (1981: 248).

 Probably most workers’ representatives, outside Matabeleland at least, would claim they supported ZANU(PF), and this is to be expected given the social pressures not to be seen as being opposed to the ruling party.\(^3\) Party usually had an almost subliminal impact on shopfloor labour relations. As Cheater remarks for Zimtex workers: "Party seemed to be viewed as an optional extra channel of communication to the party bureaucracy in Harare" (1986: 128). Generally, workers’ representatives would allude to party connections in order to strengthen their popularity or power among workers. Reference to party support or policies might also be made in their dealings with management. This generally had limited impact and government, especially through the Ministry of Labour (see Chapter 4), played a greater

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\(^3\)In her textile company study Cheater states that "[p]resumably everyone in the village belonged, at least nominally, to the Party: we did not ask. Such an organisation implied a comprehensive coverage that was unlikely to be contradicted to a stranger" (1986: 128).
role than party in shopfloor relations with management.

Government policy with respect to the 1980-82 industrial action warrants detailed discussion since the elimination of strikes has been a major feature of Zimbabwean labour relations, and state manacles on strikes has attracted more attention in the literature than most other issues. Commentators such as Callinicos (1981), Astrow (1983) and Mitchell (1987) condemn government action to stop strikes and suggest that this was the action of a petit bourgeois government to maintain capitalism and repress the drive for socialism which could be furthered by militant labour action. For Callinicos "ZANU(PF)’s response to the strikes was in line with Mugabe’s overall strategy ... to accept, and modify gradually, the existing structures" (1981: 60). These writers subscribe to Mitchell’s view that "[t]he theory of a steady transition to socialism through capitalist growth together with an expanding state sector is a complete illusion" (1987: 121).

Given their low income, the history of authoritarian management practices and their pent-up grievances, workers felt justified in striking. Equally, from the point of view of the government, there were sufficient grounds for ending strikes. Firstly, the government defended its position by arguing that it was endeavouring to achieve its populist objectives to ameliorate the poor economic and social conditions faced by the majority of the population. The government had strong policies to provide universal basic health services (Agere 1986: 363-9), universal primary education (Zvobgo 1986), and the development of black manpower (Murapa 1984; Raftopolous 1986; Presidential Speech, Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, 14 May 1980 cols: 15-29). Minimum wages had been introduced and restrictions were placed on the dismissal of workers (see Chapter 4). The Riddell Commission had been established and its terms of reference acknowledged "the need for an equitable system of employment, conditions of service and
remuneration consistent with a free egalitarian society" (1981: 1). The government insisted that it needed time to implement its policies.

Secondly, as has been seen with respect to other independent African countries, the government sought to justify the prohibition of strikes in terms of economic development. In Zimbabwe a further point was made that national recovery was necessary after a bitter civil war which cost over 30,000 lives. Many more had been injured, leaving 10,000 blinded or maimed and 250,000 refugees outside the country (Cilliers 1985: 241). Strikes, the government argued, would retard national recovery. Gertzel points out that although the "subordination" of trade unions in Africa was rationalised by reference to "the imperatives of economic development ... the more fundamental issue ... is political" (1975: 290). Governments have been loth to tolerate any potential sources of opposition. In Zimbabwe, government presented the argument as follows.

Zimbabwe's economy was and remains substantially dependent on monopoly and oligopolistic industries. Intentionally or not, strikes in these monopoly enterprises could cripple industry. The United Transport Group, for example, provides the basis of public transport to ferry employees to work in Harare, Bulawayo and other urban centres. Although transport is supplemented by private vehicles and Emergency Taxis (cars which carry multiple passengers on set routes), industry largely depends on United Transport buses for the transport of labour. In Harare alone at the time of the strike, the company carried between 300,000 and 345,000 passengers daily, half of Harare's 275,000 employees in 1982 (Interview, General Manager, Harare United Omnibus Company, October 1984).^1

^1Figures calculated on approximately 140,000 employees each making two trips per day.
The importance of the post-independence strikes is played down by Wood (1987). He points out that while the 1980 strikes were high by Zimbabwean standards, and to some extent worried managers and investors, "the total loss of working days only amounted to about one third of that lost simply through one national public holiday" (1987: 67). Even indirect effects, he estimates, were unlikely to be "more than the equivalent of one national holiday" (p.67). But the government position was that this overlooks the major danger associated with the strikes: the possibility of national instability. If the strikes continued and escalated throughout the country then this could have had a disastrous impact on the economy, at the least hampering development and possibly destabilising the government. A state of chaos might have developed as a result of crippling strikes and opponents of the Mugabe Government (South Africa, some Zimbabwean whites and black opposition parties) would have welcomed the opportunity to take steps to undermine it (Interview with Dr Micah Tsomondo, formerly Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Labour and then Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs May 1985). Waterman, who welcomes strike action to stimulate worker consciousness, explains in relation to developing countries in general that:

Since workers are frequently concentrated in the capital or in one or two major industries, and since they are often highly conscious of their potential, strikes by even small sectors have a social impact far greater than that of similar groups in industrialised countries during their period of early industrialisation, and can be in startling disproportion to their proportion within the particular country. Moreover, workers are inter-related with peasants and the urban poor .... Strike action by the relatively minute urban working class may be supported implicitly or explicitly by the rest of the poor (1975: 334-5).

Zimbabwe's position was complicated by other factors. There was immense conflict seething in the country and the region. Many whites and supporters of opposition nationalist parties believed they were cheated in the elections
by ZANU(PF) intimidation (Nkomo 1984: 201-10). From a staunch
ZANU(PF) position Martin and Johnson (1986: 47-54) provide abundant
evidence to show that national security was at risk from independence until
at least 1982. For example, a bomb exploded on 18 December 1981 at
ZANU(PF) headquarters where the Central Committee was to have met; and
a quarter of Zimbabwe's air force aeroplanes were destroyed by sabotage
on 25 July 1982. Conflicts among the nationalists included large-scale
fighting between ZANLA and ZIPRA soldiers in Entumbane, in Bulawayo's
western suburbs, in November 1980, and more serious clashes recurred in
February 1981 resulting in a total of over 150 killed and hundreds wounded
(Herald 12-18/11/80, 18/2/81). In early 1982 large arms caches were found
on ZAPU properties, and after Entumbane, many ex-ZIPRA soldiers deserted
the Zimbabwe National Army and dissident activity intensified. From March
to August 1982, 66 people were killed in contacts with dissidents and in July
1982, 6 tourists were kidnapped (Martin and Johnson 1986).

Government action to crush the bus drivers' strike was efficacious in virtually
ending strikes. Only occasional and, in comparison with 1980-81, minor
strikes were experienced in Zimbabwe from March 1982 until at least 1987.
Three strikes during this period are examined to illustrate the nature of
industrial action and the conflicts underlying labour relations. These strikes
occurred at Schweppes in 1982, in the agro-industry in 1985, and at

3.1.2 Limited Industrial Action 1982-1987

Nkomo does not say he would have won the 1980 elections had there not
been ZANU(PF) intimidation, but presumably he felt that "free and fair"
elections would not have given a ZANU(PF) majority (1984: 207-8). This
would have given minority parties a stronger bargaining position, or possibly
allowed them to form a coalition government without ZANU(PF).
With only occasional strikes between 1982 and 1987, industrial action took other forms. This included frequent articulation of grievances by workers’ committees within organisations, unofficial go-slow, demonstrations outside working hours, and work-ins (where workers continued to work and refused to leave the company premises) in order to voice their grievances in an unreceptive climate. In some instances action took more militant forms. One of the most serious of these was the industrial action which took place at Schweppes in late 1982 (Herald 17/11/82). This dispute shows that while industrial action took place during 1982-85, such action was isolated and contained, and the most important immediate reason for this was government policy to forbid strikes. This case also raises questions about the involvement of the police in labour relations.

Schweppes (Central Africa) Limited, supplier of Pepsi Cola, was very much a minor competitor to the only other sizeable company in the carbonated soft drink industry, United Bottlers, producers of Coca-Cola. In 1982, Schweppes had approximately half the number of employees (658) of its competitor (1,159) and about half the annual sales. Pre-tax profits for Schweppes had dropped from $503,001 in 1979 to $215,325 in 1981 and were to fall to $191,868 in 1982, the year of militant industrial action in the company (Annual Reports for selected years for Schweppes (Central Africa) Limited and for Delta Corporation, parent company of United Bottlers). Some employees saw this as a declining company whose days were numbered in Zimbabwe. A white senior manager was appointed who believed his expatriate predecessor took little disciplinary action and allowed workers to become unruly and dictate to white managers and intimidate black managers. He sought to impose "discipline" upon the workforce by various actions, including down-grading some positions. The workers opposed his attempts to introduce a new industrial relations regime, and in mid-October the workers assembled in the factory to hold a meeting concerning their grievances. The white manager went to address them and
conflict ensured in which the workers beat up the manager. Over 30 armed police came and arrested 89 workers. The workers showed remarkable solidarity since 85 pleaded guilty to assault (Interviews with Schweppes' managers, January 1985).

The role of the Ministry of Labour in this case was one of subduing the workforce. The ministry gave permission for the company to dismiss all 85 workers, and disbanded the workers' committee for 12 months. This effectively ended any further militancy on the part of workers. The other notable aspect to this case was the role of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) in the Prime Minister's Department. After the assault, members of the industrial wing of the CIO investigated Schweppes, and their investigations resumed in 1984, following allegations that retrenchments were being carried out on a tribal and party basis. Management rejected these allegations and made available documents to justify company action. The CIO accepted this evidence and did not prevent the retrenchments (Interview with Schweppes' manager, January 1985).

The CIO operates widely in Zimbabwe and in general people are, for understandable reasons, very cautious in discussing this organisation. Nonetheless some clear examples of CIO involvement can be indicated. The colonial practice of police officers attending union meetings (Ranger 1970: 153; Sithole 1977: 7) has continued. At the national congress of RAWU in December 1984, for example, two CIO officers attended to observe proceedings, and the business of the meeting had to be hastily completed since these officers wished to leave by 5.00pm. (Observation December 1984). It is likely that CIO observation of union congresses was compulsory. Union officials at the RAWU congress considered it to be normal practice, and expressed satisfaction with this as their activities could then be seen to be "above board" (Interviews with Samson Moyo, President, and Anderson Mhungu, Secretary-General, December 1984). It would seem
that CIO surveillance of union activities is extensive, and one episode reveals that interference in trade unions results from this, in the form of detention of unionists.

In March 1985 fourteen people involved in the Workers’ Campaign for a Democratic GEMWU (General Engineering and Metal Workers’ Union) were detained, as Emmerson Mnangagwa, Minister of State (Security), later described it, for “subversive” activities (Chronicle 16/4/86). Two expatriates among the detainees, Darcy du Toit and David Hemson, who were members of the Militant Tendency of the British Labour Party, were deported after six weeks’ in detention, and there were claims that some of the black Zimbabwean detainees were tortured before being released (Reed 1985). These activists were opposed to the Secretary-General of GEMWU, David Chimusoro, who was aligned with Muzorewa’s UANC, and alleged that he collaborated with employers and mismanaged union funds. In opposition to what they perceived to be bureaucratic unionism these activists endeavoured to develop a more militant grassroots organisation through study groups, and proposed more assertive demands such as a minimum wage of $150 per month (the industrial minimum at the time was $125), no redundancies and nationalisation of bankrupt companies (Inqaba ya Basebenzi Nos. 16/17 1985).

The implications for trade unions of state interference were that their activities were closely monitored, and they were prohibited from mobilising workers in a manner that the state defined as militant and therefore subversive. According to Mitchell this was the “clearest sign of the state’s opposition to politically independent unions and to left wing political activity in general” (1987: 119). This assessment is only marginally inaccurate in that it suggests it was exclusively left wing political activity that was prohibited. In fact (see Chapter 2), the state opposed virtually all forms of political activity outside ZANU(PF) and government control. It is to be
expected, then, that union leaders were very cautious in their activities and they avoided confrontations with government. This made the task of leaders virtually impossible in trying to chart a course between government control on the one hand, and their need to represent and mobilise workers on the other. In these circumstances, there were pressures on workers to resort to wildcat strikes, and this occurred in 1985 in the agro-industry.

Following the 1985 elections widespread and serious strikes took place in the agro-industry and a few other industries (Zimbabwe Correspondent 1987a). The immediate cause of the agro-industry disputes was confusion and conflict associated with the statutory minimum wage adjustment promulgated on 28 June 1985. For the first time employees in "agro-industrial undertakings" (Statutory Instrument (S.I.) 186 of 1985) were awarded the same amount as industrial and commercial workers, namely, $143.75 per month. This was a 120 percent increase on the existing agricultural basic minimum wage of $65.00 for workers provided with certain benefits such as accommodation.

There was confusion over the application of the term "agro-industrial undertaking". The regulations stipulated most agricultural industries involved in the "processing" of products, for example, fruit, meat, sugar, tea and coffee. These sectors included approximately 40,000 employees. The regulations created anomalies whereby field workers on neighbouring plantations performing identical work might be paid $143.75 on one site, while those on the other site received only $65.00 since no processing was undertaken. An amendment (S.I.219A of 1985) was promulgated on 16 August 1985 which sought to clarify the terms of the earlier regulations, but this was only partially successful (Makings 1987: 191). Conflict arose when most "agro-industrial" enterprises refused to pay the $143.75 wage and sought exemptions. Exemptions had been available to a small minority of employers in the past who lacked the capacity to pay, but the majority of
agro-industry employers, 355 in number, applied for exemptions, including state-owned estates operated by the Agricultural Research and Development Authority. Bitter strikes broke out on many plantations and estates, and in some instances people were severely injured in violence that occurred (e.g., Herald 31/8/85, 5/10/85, 10/10/85, 5/11/85, 8/11/85).

For Sachikonye the underlying cause of these strikes is to be found in capitalist exploitation (1986: 263-4). He suggests that the strikes occurred on estates that were in the forefront of industrial action in 1980-81, particularly those which were "characterised by ... transnational ownership and control (concentrated mainly in Anglo-American and Lonrho)" (p.263). This included, according to Sachikonye, sugar, fruit, coffee and tea plantations, but in reality the 1980-81 strikes did not occur on multinational-owned estates in these industries except for those on Anglo-American-controlled sugar estates. The Anglo-owned Mazowe Citrus Estate is not mentioned in his detailed list of strikes, and a maximum of only 6 tea or coffee plantations appear in his list of 178 strikes. None of these 6 plantations was owned by Anglo or Lonrho. By comparison, he lists at least 15 strikes in parastatals, 15 in municipal authorities, and 5 in other government establishments (1986: 268-72). So it is incorrect to suggest that labour conditions under multinational corporations were any more the cause of the strikes than were conditions elsewhere, including government enterprises.

The agro-industry dispute provides a rare opportunity to examine clearly how senior government members stood in relation to a particular policy issue. Capital lobbied Cabinet members heavily to have the decision reversed (Financial Gazette 9/8/85) and confusion within government developed when the new Deputy Minister of Labour, Alexio Mudzingwa, was reported as saying that the $143.75 wage for agro-industrial workers had been suspended and the $75 wage would operate until an agreement had been
reached between the Agricultural Labour Bureau (the employers' representative body), the agricultural trade union, and the Ministry of Labour (Herald 30/8/85). But Frederick Shava, the Minister of Labour replacing Kangai in January 1984, maintained that all employees in agro-industries should be paid $143.75 (Herald 7/9/85). Herbert Ushewokunze, Minister of Transport, agreed with this (Herald 25/10/85), and the Prime Minister strongly supported Shava in the following terms:

> If anyone is foolish enough to take what a deputy minister says, which contradicts what the minister himself will have said, well they have only themselves to blame .... There is absolutely no reason for us to make a change in regard to agro-industry and plantations. But cases of hardship, as before, can be brought to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Labour will look into them individually (Herald 9/9/85).

It was clear that some senior ministers were opposed to the huge pay rise and this included the Ministers of Finance, Bernard Chidzero, Justice, Eddison Zvobgo, and Agriculture, Moven Mahachi. The Minister of Labour, Shava, apparently refused to alter his position in support of the increase, and it was only after about four months that a decision was announced in November to reduce the award. Agro-industrial workers' minimum was set according to a scale from $110 up to $143.75 per month, and for agricultural employees the scale was from $85 to $145 (Herald 27/11/85). This meant that most agricultural workers obtained an increase above the original $65 per month, but this fell far short of $143.75. The power of capital predominated over labour in this dispute. Nonetheless, employers were unable completely to overturn the increase and labour obtained a compromise increase. This is a fair reflection of the power relations in Zimbabwean labour relations more generally. It was noteworthy that Zvobgo became Acting Minister of Labour and announced this Cabinet decision, for he is reputed to be more sympathetic to capital than those whom Libby (1984) refers to as "populists" (e.g., Tekere, Ushewokunze). Shava was "on leave" (Financial Gazette 22/11/85) in Britain where he addressed the
Britain-Zimbabwe Society *(Sunday Mail 17/11/85).* It seems likely that he had refused to alter his stance and left the country for convenience.

The agro-industry strikes show that wildcat strikes were not efficacious in radically improving workers' wages and conditions. *(This point can be made against Herbst's view, which is challenged in Chapter 4, that labour "was at its most powerful" (1987: 374) when it was engaged in strike action, particularly in 1980-81.) Conversely, these strikes indicate that employers have considerable, though far from total, influence over government wage policy. They also show that an important immediate cause was confusion over government labour policy and laws. Moreover, they reveal important divisions within government over wage policy, with some ministers favouring populist policies to improve workers' wages, while others, the more powerful in this case, insisted on more restrictive wage policies.

One further strike that deserves consideration occurred at Standard Chartered Bank of Zimbabwe in 1987. The central issue in this dispute was the allegation of racism and lack of black advancement. After independence many blacks experienced rapid advancement into managerial, professional and skilled positions, especially in the public service, as whites left for private enterprise or emigrated and these positions became open to blacks. As time went on many cases of alleged racist management practices and lack of black advancement were reported in the media, and the issue appeared to be gaining in importance *(e.g., Herald 26/6/86, 10/7/86, 15/9/87).* Partly this was due to the ebbing of the white exodus and the slowing of rapid advancement, although this was also a product of frustration with racist practices which continued to entrench whites in senior positions.

The Labour Relations Act of 1985 prohibited discrimination on a wide range of grounds including race, tribe, political opinion and sex, and the Presidential Directive of May 1980 ordered the accelerated the advancement
of Africans in the Public Service (Presidential Speech, Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, 14 May 1980 cols: 15-29). There was, however, no legislation for affirmative action in the private sector. Herbst states that it was tacit government policy to allow economically active whites to stay in Zimbabwe, continue in their vocation, and be replaced by blacks through natural attrition. "However, their children, with two exceptions [farming and wildlife-tourism], cannot stay" (1987: 383). This is only broadly correct. Career paths were not entirely ended for young whites, especially for children of business owners or those who embraced the spirit of independence, and the government did not passively await black advancement by natural attrition. Government policy strongly encouraged the promotion of blacks. This took a variety of forms ranging from general statements urging such promotions, to public exposure of companies alleged to have racist practices. There were also instances, such as that of Beverley Building Society and Legal and General Assurance, in which the Ministry of Labour ordered companies to "redress imbalances" caused by alleged racist practices (Sunday Mail 17/8/86; cf. 13/7/86, 26/7/87, 15/11/87, 21/2/88). In the case of Legal and General, the white Assistant General Manager resigned after a meeting conducted by the Ministry of Labour "found [him] guilty of instituting racist policies" (Herald 17/5/86).

At Standard Chartered Bank a wildcat strike of 1,000 workers was organised by the Harare workers’ committee in September 1987 (Herald 12/9/87). Following this strike senior Ministry of Labour officials investigated the company and Minister Shava announced that "many of the employment practices ... tended to perpetuate past discrimination", and "a precedent setting settlement" had been reached between the Ministry of Labour and senior management of the bank to overcome the alleged discrimination (Ministerial Statement 5/11/87). The company, however, denied an agreement had been reached (Financial Gazette 6/11/87), and maintained that there were no racist personnel practices. Much training and significant
black advancement had taken place over a period of years, so that 26 of the 54 branch managers in November 1987 were black. Top management remained largely white, but the company pointed out that banking was characterised by slow advancement relative to some other industries, the length of service for many white managers was over 20 years, and promotions had slowed since the years following independence. In an effort to overcome the differences between workers and management, meetings were arranged so that workers' committee members could express their grievances to the Chief Executive. Practical steps taken included the introduction of a new job evaluation scheme, the spelling out of manpower plans to promote black personnel, the replacement of the white Senior Personnel Manager by a black personnel manager, and the commitment by the Chief Executive to cooperative negotiations to resolve workers' grievances (Observation and interviews with managers and workers, November 1987 to April 1988).

There were thus three major stimuli for organisational change and black advancement: workers within the organisation, the Ministry of Labour, and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive was receptive to changes in personnel procedures and practices in order to reduce the discontent among black employees and create a more cooperative industrial relations' climate. There were strong pressures for black advancement and many whites felt their future in the bank and the country was very bleak, as one old, long-serving manager exclaimed: "They want us out. I just want you to know that. There is no future for us here. I'm getting out" (January 1988). So, contrary to Herbst's view, there was pressure on older whites to relinquish their senior positions to facilitate black advancement. At the same time, blacks in Zimbabwe were disenchanted with the pace of organisational change and demanded a more energetic role than had hitherto been played by the personnel function to establish or reform procedures, articulate policies and act upon grievances, for example, by setting out manpower
plans and career paths. Standard Chartered, like many companies, was faced with the quandary of either alienating white employees or failing to accommodate the increasingly impatient aspirations of blacks. The state, in this and other cases, did not legislate for affirmative action but engendered considerable public pressure for black advancement.

Throughout this period, then, the government curtailed industrial action by prohibiting strikes, police surveillance of trade unions, and presenting itself as working in the interests of labour, particularly black workers. At the same time, the strategy was to incorporate the trade union movement under the direction of ZANU(PF) and the government, as is now seen.

3.2 Partially Incorporating Trade Unions

3.2.1 Introduction

Soon after independence ZANU(PF) supporters endeavoured to capture control of the labour movement and incorporate trade unions under the direction of ZANU(PF) and the government. To a substantial extent they were successful due to a number of factors. The union movement was divided and disorganised, and furthermore ZANU(PF) considered the existing unions to be opposed to the party. To some extent this was correct; for example, Phineas Sithole, leader of the United Textile Workers’ Union and the African Trades Union Congress, was a member of the national executive of ZANU(Sithole), one of the internal settlement nationalist parties. The involvement of opposition supporters within the union movement provided grounds for the government to intervene actively in order to change the situation. Change was effected by creating the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) as the single national federation, and forming pro-ZANU(PF) splinter unions, or trying to oust existing trade unionists opposed to ZANU(PF). ZANU(PF) was not a *deus ex machina*, planning
and implementing the incorporation of the union movement. Of significant importance were opportunists who had been associated with rival political parties, but who now sought to present themselves as being more faithful to ZANU(PF) than the founding members. In this respect the party played a major role as a control mechanism over trade unions, which Herbst overlooks when he remarks that ZANU(PF) "has become irrelevant in so many of Zimbabwe's decision-making processes" (1987: 431).

From the point of view of ZANU(PF), many existing trade unions were controlled either by white Rhodesian Front supporters or by vatengesi (sellout) blacks, such as Phineas Sithole. ZANU(PF) supporters felt no compunction in emasculating the existing trade unions. Sachikonye, while acknowledging that many members of the first ZCTU leadership became "divisionists" and "others were centres [sic] of allegations of maladministration and corruption" (1986: 257), does little to question ZANU(PF)'s control strategy. For him the ZCTU was created to "fill the conspicuous vacuum in labour organisation" (p.256). He states that the United Trade Unions of Zimbabwe (UTUZ), a federation rivalling the ZCTU, was "ignored and allowed to dissolve" (p.256). As seen below, this is misleading since government recognised only the ZCTU, thus forcing the demise of the UTUZ. Wood is critical of the "tainted", "internal settlement" unions which gradually coalesced around the UTUZ (1987: 65), and sees it as natural that the discredited existing unions were supplanted by a central union body aligned to ZANU(PF). Yet this meant that long-established trade unions and leaders were weakened, if not removed, and supporting the ZTUC entailed supporting corrupt sycophants. Many of the ZTUC members did not have bona fide trade union credentials; for example, Webster Gwekwerere had recently returned from Britain and Albert Mugabe, although a unionist of long-standing, had recently been ousted from the Transport &
GWU leadership. Their "rallying cry was 'sign-up and support the new government because they will solve your problems'" (Wood 1987: 65). Consequently, there were no representatives of labour available to criticise effectively the Labour Relations Act promulgated in 1985, get trade unions registered and employment councils formed, increase union membership, pressure government into genuine tripartite consultation for wage fixation and labour market regulation, and contest government policy limiting collective bargaining.

3.2.2 Creating a Weak National Congress

In the years following independence the ZCTU became a very important organisation, despite its ineffectiveness in representing labour at the national level. The ZCTU was important because it was the body that the government, following its corporatist strategy, helped to form as the single, officially-recognised body to represent and control labour nationally. Control of the ZCTU leadership thus became a crucial issue for trade unions and the government.

The Inaugural Congress of the ZCTU was held from 28 February to 1 March 1981 with much fanfare and speeches from dignitaries including the Prime Minister. But the real formation of the ZCTU took place on 25 July of the previous year when Minister Kangai held a meeting with "prominent" trade unionists and established an Interim Committee to create a single national congress. This was quietly announced in an article in The Herald the following day. The formation of the ZCTU proceeded under the auspices of the Minister despite attempts by a number of the existing union groupings to head it off.
In 1978 there had been moves to create a unified congress (UTUZ Press Statement 23/11/80), and the formation of the United Trade Unions of Zimbabwe was reported in The Herald on 5 July 1979. This body was formed from ATUC, TUCR, and ZFL and claimed to represent 350,000 workers. The actual paid-up membership could not have been even one-third of this number, and Wood puts it as 50,000 (1987: 65). By late 1980, UTUZ also claimed the affiliation of two Bulawayo-based federations, the independent NATUC and the ZAPU-aligned ZACU which meant all umbrella organisations except "one small centre", the ZTUC, which happened to have the support of Minister Kangai (UTUZ Press Statement 23/11/80). Wood says that NATUC "injudiciously" (1987: 72) attended a major UTUZ meeting in June 1980, but this move was in keeping with NATUC policy to develop a labour movement independent from political parties, in this case, ZANU(PF). As Wood points out, the perception that NATUC was ZAPU-aligned was exaggerated (1987: 66), and the deliberate policy of NATUC unions was to stay at arm's length from political parties. One NATUC leader, Ishmael Nedziwe, later explained it in these terms:

When political parties were banned [under colonialism] the unions aligned with them went underground or into exile. From this we learnt the lesson not to be an arm of the political wing - [or] government now. Government's can come and go, but workers need unions .... We are pleased when government supports workers, and work alongside government then. But we reserve the right to criticise when they are not acting for workers' interests (Interview September 1984).

NATUC maintained this policy by finally embracing the UTUZ in June 1980, not with enthusiastic support for the organisers, but as the only possible means of developing a union movement outside ZANU(PF) hegemony (Interviews with several NATUC unionists, September-October 1984).6

Kangai opposed the UTUZ for a number of reasons. White unionists were the initiators and were prominent in the leadership: Brian Holleran from the

6These unionists preferred not to be named.
railways and Howard Bloomfield from the mineworkers union were Acting General Secretary and "Co-chairman", respectively. Also in the leadership were black unionists who were opposed to ZANU(PF) such as Phineas Sithole. The ideological direction of the UTUZ was also at odds with ZANU(PF), as Holleran was reported to have stated that the UTUZ was "totally opposed to marxism" and wanted to establish contact with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the British Trade Union Congress (Herald 5/2/80). So Kangai did not recognise the UTUZ; instead, shortly after he formed the Interim Committee, Kangai said he would recognise no congress other than the ZCTU (Herald 4/8/80). When the UTUZ still endeavoured to operate outside the ZCTU Kangai declared: "Any trade unions who act against the government policy of having one national centre will be crushed" (Herald 9/12/80).

There were strong allegations that the Interim Committee was a puppet of ZANU(PF). This assessment was basically accurate. It is true that members were drawn from different political affiliations, for example, Phineas Sithole (pro-ZANU(Sithole)) was Vice Chairman, Anderson Mhungu (not aligned) was Treasurer, and Brian Holleran (RF) and Aaron Ndhlovu (ZAPU) were committee members. But many of the executive members were ZANU(PF)-aligned; for example, the Chairman, Alfred Makwarimba, was from ZTUC, Albert Mugabe (Vice Secretary), Webster Gwekwerere (Organising Secretary), and Dickson Ndawana (Deputy Organising Secretary) were also from the pro-ZANU(PF) ZTUC. Michael Mawere (Financial Secretary) was known to be an organiser for ZANU(PF) and Elphegio Soko (Publicity Secretary) was a rival of Phineas Sithole and was later to become a member of the ruling clique of the ZCTU closely aligned with Kangai.

The Interim Committee quickly became known simply as "the ZCTU" and reports soon appeared of unionists’ opposition to this body. Philemon Lubengo, Deputy National President of the General Engineering and Metal
Workers Union suggested that the ZCTU leadership were "hand-picked individuals belonging to one political party" (Sunday Mail 10/8/80). Less than three months after Kangai formed the Interim Committee, the Vice-President, Phineas Sithole, resigned saying that:

the Government and the ZANU(PF) [are] trying to actively usurp the rights and role of established trade unions, [and] the ZCTU is ZANU-oriented and divisive (Herald 22/10/80).

In December 1980 Aaron Ndhlovu (Secretary-General of ZACU) also resigned from the Interim Committee and was reported as saying 16 of the 20 member Interim Committee were ZANU(PF) appointments (Herald 31/12/80). When Sithole resigned, he claimed that the labour department of ZANU(PF) had created 30 unions in the last 7 months.

In November 1980, even after Kangai’s announcement that he would only recognise the ZCTU, the UTUZ still tried to organise outside the Minister’s direction or control, and issued a press statement attacking the ZCTU and the Minister. This stated that Kangai "personally nominated" the individuals who attended the meeting to form the ZCTU Co-ordinating Committee and "seven of whom ... had no position in any trade union whatsoever!". The UTUZ further claimed of the ZCTU that: it was run by a small group and there were many members who were not informed of meetings; financial records were not kept; it was creating unions in industries where existing unions operated well; and, alluding to the appointment of Soko and Mutemi despite Sithole’s opposition, that the Chief Industrial Relations Officer on behalf of the Minister, refused some nominations to represent trade union organisations and appointed individuals whom the unions themselves opposed (UTUZ Press Statement 23/11/80).

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7 The original membership was 18. A Herald report of 23/10/80 indicated the membership was expanded to 25.
But the UTUZ did not get off the ground. Late in December 1980, Minister Kangai warned unionists that the government would intervene if no single central body was formed by February 1981 (Herald 29/12/80). The trade union movement duly complied and the Inaugural Congress of the ZCTU commenced on 28 February 1981. The government's position was that it was merely facilitating the labour movement to achieve unity and therefore greater strength, but the election results showed that Kangai sought to create a weak and sycophantic labour movement.

As Table 3.1 indicates, the ZANU(PF)-aligned ZTUC contingent clearly gained the ascendancy in the elections winning 5 of the 8 executive positions (excluding the 2 Trustees). Albert Mugabe, the Prime Minister's younger step-brother, was elected Secretary-General, defeating veteran railways unionist Anderson Mhungu by only 5 votes, yet Mugabe, who had been President of the Transport & GWU, had just been expelled from his union (Interviews with numerous unionists e.g., Farai Makanda, Transport & GWU; Jeffrey Mutandare, AMWZ, September 1984).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZCTU Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Union</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Former ZTUC Members</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Alfred Makwarimba</td>
<td>CWU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary-General</td>
<td>Albert Mugabe</td>
<td>Transport &amp; GWU(deposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Vice President</td>
<td>Abisha Kupfuma²</td>
<td>ZCHWU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Vice President</td>
<td>Paul Mashavira</td>
<td>ZCIWU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Secretary-General</td>
<td>Dickson Ndawana</td>
<td>ZAPWU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Vice President</td>
<td>Mkhushi Khumalo</td>
<td>NUCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Secretary-General</td>
<td>Ishmael Nedziwe</td>
<td>UFAWU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Anderson Mhungu</td>
<td>RAWU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Brian Holleran</td>
<td>NUR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>R. Baleni</td>
<td>ZECWU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 3.1 Executive Elected at ZCTU Inaugural Congress

Source: Derived from ZCTU records.

¹See abbreviations for union name.

²Recently switched to ZTUC from the Muzorewa-aligned ZFL.

Wood notes that the credentials for entry to the Congress were "very relaxed" (1987: 73). Many unionists put the matter far more strongly than this, stating that the elections were "rigged" since Minister Kangai said this.
should be an "all-comers' Congress" disregarding the results of the credentials committee. Unionists further claim that many ZANU(PF)-aligned unions were literally formed "at the door" of the Congress, and that only 32 of the 52 unions voting at the Congress were authentic trade unions (Interviews with numerous trade unionists e.g., Jeffrey Mutandare, AMWZ; Emmanuel Tavagwisa, UFAWU; Michael Mawere, GAPWUZ, September-November 1984; see also Department of Research and Planning 1987: 50-1). Thus the pro-ZANU(PF) splinter unions played a major role in deciding the outlook of the ZCTU during the important formative years following independence.

The five ZANU(PF)-aligned unionists elected to the ZCTU formed a ruling clique, and over time its membership changed. Albert Mugabe was found dead in his swimming pool in mysterious circumstances on 2 December 1981, and Abisha Kupfuma became Acting Secretary-General. Ndawana was suspended from the ZCTU Executive by the Chief IRO for financial malpractice, and Carlton Moyo came in as Publicity Secretary. In 1984 the leadership clique consisted of Makwarimba, Kupfuma, Moyo and Mashavira and they became known as the "Gang of Four". They operated with support of Elphegio Soko, Edward Njekesa and Dickson Ndwana and some other General Council members. Kangai in effect put these people into the leadership of the national trade union centre by allowing, indeed encouraging, bogus trade unions to participate in the ZCTU Congress. They remained beholden to him and he protected them, helping them to consolidate their hold over the ZCTU. The strategy of incorporating the trade union organisations was most successful during the period from 1981 until January 1984, when Kangai was replaced as Minister of Labour by Dr Frederick Shava.

The clique sought to entrench its power by weakening or even removing opponents. It continued to support splinter unions and threatened to expel
established unions in the clothing, food, and engineering industries (*Herald* 27/9/83 and numerous interviews with trade unionists e.g., David Chimusoro, GEMWU; Paul Mashavira, ZCIWU, September 1984; Charles Pasipanodya, NUCI, December 1984). In relation to the clothing industry, for example, in early 1982 Soko announced that the ZANU(PF)-aligned splinter union, the ZCIWU, had merged with NUCI and the older leaders, Charles Pasipanodya (General Council member) and Mkhushi Khumalo (Vice President), were not re-elected so they could no longer serve on the ZCTU. NUCI denied there was any such merger and pointed out that the ZCIWU was five months in arrears in payments to the ZCTU while NUCI was fully paid up. Yet Makwarimba stated that the ZCTU would recognise the ZCIWU and not NUCI until the dispute was settled (*Herald* 1/2/82, 2/2/82, 17/2/82, 19/2/82).

Kangai was supportive of these manoeuvrings, as shown in the removal of Ishmael Nedziwe, ZCTU Assistant General-Secretary. Kangai needed support from the trade unions for his new labour bill, which was to replace the Industrial Conciliation Act as the basic labour law in the country. Employers had criticised the bill and Kangai allegedly assured Cabinet that trade unions supported it. Soko dutifully obliged the Minister by announcing in April 1983 that the new labour bill was "the fairest ever" (*Herald* 6/4/83). But Nedziwe was secretary of a ZCTU committee to examine the bill and this committee had many points of contention including broad objections to restrictions on the right to strike, excessive ministerial powers, and provisions in conflict with one of the ILO’s most important Conventions, No.87 relating to freedom of association (Interviews with Ishmael Nedziwe September 1984, and many other unionists e.g., Anderson Mhungu, RAWU, September 1984; Emmanuel Tavagwisa, UFAWU; Jeffrey Mutandare, AMWZ September; *Herald* 7/4/83). Indeed the ZCTU produced a "Policy Document" setting out these general criticisms and 38 specific objections, and calling for a tripartite committee to be established to redraft the bill (ZCTU Policy Document, March 1983). Nonetheless, Makwarimba and Kupfuma
suspended and later expelled Nedziwe from the ZCTU, again relying on the support of unions with dubious authenticity which had not been paying their affiliation fees to the ZCTU (Interviews with numerous trade unionists e.g., Emmanuel Tavagwisa, UFAWU; Bernard Murinda, NUCI, October 1984; Samson Moyo, RAWU, December 1984; *Herald* 14/4/83, 15/4/83, 20/7/83).

The incorporation of the labour movement intensified from 1981 to 1984. The ZCTU leadership was sycophantic to the Minister and did not represent workers' interests effectively in relation to the drafting of the Labour Relations Act and, as will be seen below, pay-setting. This was also a static period in terms of increasing unionisation of the workforce, and establishing industrial councils for unions to bargain with employers. Figures on union membership are notoriously unreliable since unions tend to inflate their claims, but the broad picture was that overall union density remained about the same between 1980 and 1985. Unions affiliated to the ZCTU claimed a total membership of 161,884 in July 1985 (ZCTU Subscription Register 5 July 1985). In addition, the Zimbabwe Teachers' Association claimed 30,000 members, the Zimbabwe Nurses' Association 5,000 members, and the Public Service Association 17,000 members (Interviews with association officers, July 1985). Total union membership in Zimbabwe in July 1985 was, therefore, no more than 213,884 or about 20 percent of the formal sector workforce. This was no higher than the estimate of union density in 1980 (20 percent) provided by the Riddell Commission (1981: 260). In the period 1980 to 1984, 8 unions were registered but no new employment councils were formed to allow unions to bargain collectively with employers (Interview, Oliver Takuba, Senior Industrial Relations Officer March 1985; Department of Research and Planning 1987: 81-2). Unions were also prevented from holding their annual or biennial congresses because the Minister allegedly instructed them to await the passage of the

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8Wood provides a sectoral breakdown of union membership (1988: 295-6).
The ruling clique members and many of their supporters from the splinter unions were not willing to differ publicly from government policy. There were two factors at work here. On the one hand, some of them saw ZANU(PF) as playing the leading role as the representative of labour. The view was that the older unions were ineffective at best or sell-outs to imperialism at worst, and therefore opposed to the progressive policies of ZANU(PF). The splinter unions tended to use more socialist rhetoric than the established unions, but in many cases this was the adoption of a socialism of convenience. On the other hand, some clique adherents were quite simply opportunists who were sycophantic to the ruling party after independence. Kupfuma, for example, was a member of Muzorewa's UANC team at the Lancaster House talks, and both he and Soko had been associated with the UTUZ (Department of Research and Planning 1987: 23). But they quickly changed their allegiance and completely refrained from any public criticism of the government. One reason for this timidity, no doubt, was that they recognised their lack of party credentials, and therefore felt obliged to be more ZANU(PF) than founding members. This deference to government's leading role was poignantly demonstrated at a trade union training course when the question was raised as to how minimum wages were set. One member stated that they were simply announced at a public rally by a government Minister, and the unionists present began to question why unions were not more involved than this. Abisha Kupfuma then interrupted and said: "This is a matter between the government, ruling party and the leadership of the ZCTU. This is not a matter for public discussion". This

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9 Shangwa Chifamba, Education Officer for the ZCTU, was also in Muzorewa's team at Lancaster House, but he seemed to keep some distance between himself and the activities of the clique, and recently returned as Secretary-General of the Commercial Workers Union where he is apparently operating in a bona fide manner.
was a gathering of many top trade unionists in the country and Kupfuma told them that they had no right to question how minimum wages were set. Moreover, these top trade unionists acquiesced (Observation September 1984). In other words, the ZCTU leadership was playing the corporatist role of enforcing government wage policy on its own senior membership.

In short, while the ZCTU leadership enforced government policy upon its membership, in relation to government it was weak and unwilling to challenge government policy. Yet many other unionists were more prepared to criticise government and develop the role of trade unions in representing labour. In the following section it is shown how the leadership gained ascendancy by neutralising non-ZANU(PF) trade unionists.

3.2.3 Neutralising non-ZANU(PF) Unions

At around the time of independence, numerous so-called splinter trade unions were formed in competition to existing unions in particular industries. Splinter unions were formed in, for example, the clothing, engineering, food, mining, and motor industries. In the clothing industry, for instance, alongside the Bulawayo-based National Union of the Clothing Industry (formed by the amalgamation of the long-established Tailors and Garment Workers' Union and the Clothing Industry Workers' Union) was the formation of the Zimbabwe Clothing Industry Workers Union based in Harare and led by Paul Mashavira. In the mining industry, veteran unionist Howard Bloomfield and his white colleagues found themselves challenged by a splinter union under the leadership of Webster Gwekwerere, who had just returned from 14 years in Britain (Sunday Mail 23/11/80) where he had allegedly operated a discotheque (Interview with Jeffrey Mutandare, President AMWZ, September 1984). Most of the splinter unions adopted a strongly pro-ZANU(PF) stance and were associated with the ZTUC though there were one or two exceptions. In agriculture Michael Mawere’s GAPWUZ split from Dickson...
Ndawana's Zimbabwe Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union, and although Mawere had been a ZANU(PF) organiser (Herald 2/5/80) he aligned himself with the non-ZANU(PF) unions. The Transport and General Workers' Union was formed in 1980, and Albert Mugabe was the Secretary-General. But this union was not in opposition to any established union in the industry and Mugabe was voted out of office by the union membership. Moreover, this union was in the forefront of moves to overhaul the corrupt ZCTU.

In some industries an attempt was made to take over existing unions. This happened in the textiles industry in which Phineas Sithole battled for months against Elphegio Soko and John Mutemi for the leadership of the United Textile Workers Union. Both sides claimed to have been elected to the leadership, and each asserted that the other's election was fraudulent. This was a bitter struggle and violence broke out between rival supporters in the Lonrho subsidiary, David Whitehead textile plant in March 1981 (Herald 18 & 19/3/81). Despite Sithole's intention to mount a court challenge and his reported appeal to the Organisation of African Trade Unions Unity to stop government intervention in trade union affairs, Soko and Mutemi eventually ousted Sithole. The government clearly supported them since, despite Sithole's protests, the Chief IRO, Ignatius Chigwendere, appointed Soko and Mutemi to represent Sithole's federation, ATUC, on the committee formed to establish the ZCTU (Herald 15/11/80).

Soko became Publicity Secretary of the ZCTU at the Inaugural Congress and in June 1981 Sithole finally announced his resignation as Secretary-General of UTWU and General Council member of the ZCTU (Sunday Mail 7/6/81), after many years as one of his country's most prominent trade unionists. He was National Chairman of ZANU(Sithole) (Sunday Mail 4/1/81) so he was considered by ZANU(PF) to be a sell-out. The last time he was involved in public affairs appears to have been when he was arrested in
Masvingo following reported violence associated with a political rally he was organising for ZANU (Sithole), probably in 1983 (Interviews with two former industrial relations officers September 1984).

While many of the splinter unions continued in opposition to established trade unions for several years, and some still exist, others were not so successful. The Associated Mine Workers' of Zimbabwe, for example, relatively quickly incorporated Gwekwerere by giving him the position of Deputy President (Herald 20/2/82). This concession was shortlived, though, for he shortly lost this position in elections. Bloomfield not only neutralised Gwekwerere's challenge, he also won an $8,000 defamation case against his rival who had alleged Bloomfield received $30,000 per annum (Herald 25/6/81).

3.3 Incorporation Retreats Slightly

There were numerous allegations of corruption and mismanagement and possible theft of ZCTU funds, and as time went on it became clear that these allegations were justified. In July 1982 a report commissioned by Ignatius Chigwendere, the Chief IRO, revealed that thousands of dollars were unaccounted for and cheque stubs were left blank. The ZCTU was given a court order to vacate its office premises in Sinoia Street in April 1982 because it had not paid the rent. In July 1984, the new Minister of Labour, Dr Frederick Shava, told Parliament that the ZCTU illegally sold a Peugeot 504 car and a number of bicycles which were donated by a French union organisation (Herald 20/7/84; Chronicle 27/7/84). Kupfuma denied that the car was sold and said Carlton Moyo sold 20 bicycles to pay for rent arrears and customs charges; 10 were shared among unions. Shava later agreed the car was not sold, but stated 24 bicycles were improperly sold, and added "the administrative machinery of the ZCTU was not working
Overseas travel to attend trade union training courses was allegedly given to girl-friends of clique members. For example, a female police officer from Headlands, allegedly a girl-friend of Kupfuma, was sent to Bulgaria (Department of Research and Planning 1987: 53). Relatives of Makwarimba, Mashavira and Soko were allegedly sent to Moscow on trade union scholarships (*Chronicle* 12/10/84). Clique members were also of doubtful integrity as trade unionists. Makwarimba allegedly bought former Rhodesian Chief of Defence Staff General Walls’ former house in Gunhill, an affluent Harare suburb, and was living above his means. The Headlands Hotel near Marondera is owned, according to Kupfuma, by his wife, and Kupfuma was Secretary-General of the Zimbabwe Catering and Hotel Workers’ Union. Elphegio Soko was Secretary-General of the United Textile Workers’ Union and simultaneously Personnel Manager for a textiles company, David Whitehead, a Lonrho subsidiary (Interviews with William Gillies, former Senior Industrial Relations Officer, July 1985; and numerous trade unionists e.g., Herbert Kupara, NUCI, October 1984; David Chimusoro, GEMWU, November 1984; Department of Research and Planning 1987: 56; Sachikonye 1986: 265).

Increasingly the ruling clique came into disrepute. Articles appeared in the media exposing these malpractices and the calls for reform of the ZCTU leadership were frequent. But this campaign began only after Minister Shava’s criticisms of the ZCTU. The trade union movement in opposition to the clique had been largely incapacitated and they were extremely hesitant to do anything without the Minister’s blessing. Their earlier experience with Kangai had demonstrated the necessity of ministerial support since, for example, they achieved nothing to reform the leadership after Chigwendere’s inquiry reported gross mismanagement (Ndwana was reinstated by Kangai
after Chigwendere had suspended him), and Nedziwe was removed following his criticisms of the Labour Relations Bill. Even after Kangai’s removal, unionists were hesitant to act without the Minister’s approval. The hesitance seemed incongruent since Minister Shava was in the forefront of attacks on the ruling clique, as the bicycles incident indicates.

Shortly after Shava’s criticisms of the ZCTU, the Transport & GWU staged a demonstration, a rare event in Zimbabwe, calling for new ZCTU elections and these calls continued in the following months (Herald 1/8/84). In October, Shava seconded an official from the Ministry of Labour to administer the ZCTU. His role was not initially clear, though it later turned out that he oversaw the credentials committee for the Second ZCTU Congress. There were a number of meetings held by opposition unionists to engineer the demise of the clique, and the clique retaliated by writing a letter to the Prime Minister claiming that Shava was not genuinely ZANU(PF). According to many unionists, the Prime Minister was not pleased with the letter; it was addressed to him simply as “Comrade Minister”, and he merely handed it to Shava to deal with. Shava then called a meeting of over 100 trade unionists, virtually the entire union leadership in the country, at Msasa near Harare on 2 December 1984. At this meeting Shava reiterated his criticisms of the ZCTU leadership. Some unionists stated that interim replacements should be elected at the meeting, but Shava argued that this could be seen as government interference. If unions wanted an interim committee then they should, in conjunction with the administrator, call their own meeting to do so (Interviews with several unionists e.g., Jeffrey Mutandare, AMWZ; Edward Njekesa, BWTU, Samson Moyo, RAWU, December 1984).

It was not until March 1985 that an Interim Committee was formed, and the Second Congress was finally held on 27-28 July 1985. The results of the elections are shown in Table 3.2.
The result of the Second Congress was the ousting of all the remaining clique members, although Njekesa was able to switch camps early enough to retain his position on the executive. Some of the prominent unionists who had opposed the clique were elected to the executive, for example, Jeffrey Mutandare, Ishmael Nedziwe, Jerry Jaricha. But there were others elected who did not have the clear support of opponents of the clique; for example, Anselm Chitehwe was elected Secretary General and he was the person who replaced Nedziwe when the clique ousted him from the 1984 executive. Opponents of the clique unsuccessfully sought to have Anderson Mhungu elected to this post. A motion was accepted that the Secretary General give up his full-time membership of his own union, and it was known that Mhungu was unwilling to do this (Interviews with unionists e.g., Anselm Chitehwe, ZCTU; Jeffrey Mutandare, ZCTU; Shangwa Chifamba, ZCTU; Bernard Murinda, NUCI, November 1985).

The new ZCTU leaders were more willing than their predecessors to speak out for trade union interests, but they were still circumscribed and circumspect in what they said and did; for example, they were unwilling to countenance strike action. When questioned on his union’s policy on strikes one prominent union leader responded as follows:
As time went on, Mutandare began to speak out in the media in a manner different from that of his predecessors. This occurred at a time when, as Cheater (1988: 297) notes, there was increased criticism of government in the print media. However, the criticisms did not develop into a major offensive against the government; the media reported very few other unionists voicing objections to government policy. In an interview with the *South African Labour Bulletin* Mutandare continued his attack by arguing that the Labour Relations Act provisions were too restrictive in respect of regulating strikes and were too sweeping with respect to granting ministerial powers, especially to control trade union affairs, "all in all, the Minister has got very draconian powers, powers to throttle the unions if he so wishes" (Mutandare 1987: 65). Earlier Mutandare remonstrated against government wage policy stating that the ZCTU was not "party" to the 1986 minimum wage adjustment, as the Minister had claimed (*Herald* 30/6/86), and he further asserted that statutory wage increases had a retarding effect on collective bargaining (*Moto* No.47 1986: 3). When he returned from an ILO meeting in July he attacked the government as it "has not ratified a single ILO convention since independence" (*Sunday Mail* 6/7/86).

For these challenges to government policy he was in turn attacked by the government. Minister Shava hit back at Mutandare in the media by saying the ZCTU was involved in setting the minimum wages and further, that "some" ILO conventions had been ratified since independence (*Herald* 1/7/86, 8/7/86, 25/7/86). After these exchanges an editorial in the semi-official *Herald* (9/7/86) entitled "ZCTU rambles", expostulated against the ZCTU and adjured it to work in unison with the government. At a later date, after the ZCTU called for representation in Parliament for labour representatives following the abolition of the white reserved seats (*Herald*
25/10/87), Mutandare was again attacked. This time he was censured by the Speaker of the House of Assembly and a Herald editorial which advised him to stop promoting sectionalism and spend his time on more constructive issues, such as building the labour college using the materials donated in 1983 and which were still "rotting in the open in Chitungwiza" (26/10/87).

There was another aspect to circumspection in Mutandare's criticisms. The ZANU(PF) Government was seen as the harbinger of independence and the champion of the povo, so Mutandare and other union leaders accepted that the ruling party played the leading role in setting economic and perhaps even labour policy. When Mutandare addressed a May Day rally, for example, he began by shouting "Viva ZANU" three or four times (Observation 1986, 1987). But that does not mean he and other labour leaders were completely dominated by the party or government. He performed a balancing act, knowing that he could not go too far in his criticisms of government, yet trying to represent labour and not be a simple "appendage of the government", as he put it (Mutandare 1987: 67). Mutandare ventured to criticise government policy in a careful manner, but he was aware that this should be balanced, as the following statement reveals.

Here the government people talk about socialism. Of course, they talk about socialism in the day, and they're capitalists at night. But we know that there are real limitations on what we can achieve at this point in time. We believe in socialism, we think we should gravitate slowly towards socialism, not rapidly, otherwise we get a disaster like in Tanzania....

I don't want to be considered a reactionary. Let me say that I do believe in socialism, I think we have to start right away. But I don't think we can do it rapidly ... (Mutandare 1987: 68).

Like many Zimbabweans, he was also hesitant to attack specific government members. When asked: "Have things improved with the new Labour Minister?" He replied:
You know, this is a very dangerous thing to say, I don't want to be seen to be crossing swords with the Minister, you know we have to get along, and I'd rather not comment on the various Ministers of Labour that we have had (Mutandare 1987: 69).

Unions were prevented from adopting a position in political opposition to government, but there were signs that the union movement was becoming better organised under the second ZCTU leadership and the direction of Minister Shava. Union density remained static: in March 1988 unions affiliated to the ZCTU claimed a total membership of 162,835 (ZCTU document 10 March 1988), almost identical to the figure for July 1985 (161,884). But from 1984 to 1987 the number of registered trade unions and employment councils increased markedly. From 1984 to July 1987, 11 unions were registered (compared to 8 from 1980 to 1983), and between 1985 and December 1987 4 new employment councils were formed to allow unions to negotiate industrial agreements with employers (no new councils were formed from 1980 to 1984) (Interview with Oliver Takuba, Senior Industrial Relations Officer, March 1985; Department of Research and Planning 1987: 81-2; Ministry of Labour records).

3.4 Limited Incorporation of Employers' Organisations

Government attempted to organise employers into a single officially recognised body to deal with labour matters. This reorganisation was much less thorough-going than for trade unions, and is only briefly examined here.

The government insisted on dealing with only one employers' organisation, the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ), for national labour relations issues such as minimum wage negotiations, ILO matters and the
drafting of labour relations regulations. However, the incorporation of employers' groups was far less successful than was the case for trade unions. Sectoral employer bodies occasionally continued to make direct representations to the Ministry of Labour on issues particular to their industry. Unlike black trade unions the sectoral employer bodies (e.g., Confederation of Zimbabwe Industry (CZI), Commercial Farmers' Union, Chamber of Mines) were strong organisationally and financially, and they had considerable political clout both before and after independence (Murray 1970; Stoneman and Cliffe 1989: 108-10). The main employers' groups were dominated by whites and they viewed ZANU(PF) with suspicion if not hostility, thus the ruling party was unable to attract support among employers as it did in the labour movement. Still, employers generally did not wish to be seen to be totally opposed to the government, and, admittedly with reluctance, agreed to compromise with government labour policy on many issues such as minimum wages and termination of employment restrictions.

While government did not control the election of the EMCOZ executive, this organisation appointed personnel who could develop a cooperative relationship with government. EMCOZ appointed David Chanaiwa as Executive Director, and Dawn Hove as an organising officer, both of whom were black former Ministry of Labour officials. Chanaiwa had held a very senior position as Director of Employment and Hove was a Senior Labour Relations Officer responsible for the administration of employment boards. Employers' associations have not been controlled to the extent that trade unions have; nonetheless, the government does influence some of their affairs. Employers are expected to eschew open opposition to government policy. One example of government influence occurred after the President of CZI, John Mkushi, stated in a television interview that Zimbabwe's economy would collapse if it imposed economic sanctions on South Africa. The government and reports in the semi-official newspapers strongly
criticised Mkushi, and four black CZI members resigned in protest. CZI was attacked for having predominantly white membership drawn from multinational corporations and the private sector generally and under-representing parastatals (*Sunday Mail* 22/12/85, 5/1/86). Later CZI moderated its policy on sanctions in order to improve relations with government.

Herbst characterises EMCOZ as follows:

EMCOZ was created recently (1986 was the first year it was completely involved in wage bargaining) because the government wanted to negotiate with only one group of employers during the wage-setting process. EMCOZ is well-organised, adequately funded, and quite sophisticated in its lobbying techniques. The director ..., Dr David Chanaiwa, is a former Ministry of Labour official who was intimately involved in writing much of the current labour legislation (1987: 350).

This view is broadly correct although EMCOZ's predecessor was created in 1966, and Herbst misses the corporatist significance of the government's insistence that EMCOZ be the monopoly representative body for employers on national labour matters. Employers valued EMCOZ for providing services such as advice on and interpretation of labour law and practice, and getting the voice of employers heard on wages and labour law especially during the chaotic years following independence. Nonetheless, employers preferred to negotiate wages on a sectoral basis, and would have continued doing so if it were not for government insistence on centralised wage-setting (Interviews with George Makings, EMCOZ, April and December 1985; Doug Verden, Chamber of Mines, October 1984 and April 1988; Lovemore Marere, CZI, September 1984).

**Conclusion**

A primary objective in state labour policy following independence was to end industrial action. This was attempted by exhorting workers to support government and party policies to benefit workers and aid national recovery. When this was not entirely successful strikes were repressed and police
monitoring of labour activities intensified. This virtually ended strikes although wildcat industrial action occasionally broke out. Often the immediate cause of these strikes was confusion over government wage policy. A corporatist labour strategy was pursued in which trade unions, and to a lesser extent employers, were organised into a single, officially recognised body. ZANU(PF)-aligned unionists gained control of the union movement. This was justified on the grounds that ZANU(PF) provided the leading role in promoting workers’ interests; however, the result was a weak union congress that was sycophantic to the government, and played a role in enforcing compliance with government labour policies such as support for the new labour relations bill, minimum wage policy and the no strike policy.

Given the political tension in Zimbabwe and the region, government mounted a strong argument that strikes could jeopardise political stability, but as the ZANU(PF) government consolidated its position this argument lost force. From 1987 discontent in the community was expressed by disillusioned ZANU(PF) leaders (e.g., Edgar Tekere, Byron Hove), and student demonstrations against corruption in government, but controls over the labour movement prevented strikes by workers at least until 1988. Nonetheless, dissatisfaction with the sycophantic ZCTU leadership was sufficient to engender their removal, and the new leadership was more prepared to criticise government labour policy.

Gertzel points out in relation to African governments generally, that controls over trade unions were rationalised in terms of economic imperatives, yet the key issue was political control, since any potential opposition to government and party was not tolerated (1975: 290). Zimbabwean trade unions were subordinated to government and party to a much greater degree than was the case in Zambia. In both countries the union movement did not formally become a wing of the party, as was practically the case in Ghana and Tanzania (Ananaba 1979). In Zambia, the Mineworkers’ Union,
the most powerful union, "resisted steadily anything that smacked of party political interference" (Gertzel 1975: 293; cf. Gertzel 1979; Bates 1971: 146-65). Gertzel notes that the Zambian government has taken many steps to control unions, for example by appointing "strong" leaders to government positions (1975: 295), and there are elaborate laws to prohibit strikes in essential services, but despite this the government has refrained from prosecuting strikers: "Thus, although in 1970 there were nineteen stoppages ... [in] essential services ..., no prosecutions were made" (Gertzel 1979: 338-9). As Gertzel explains:

The length of Zambia's miners' industrial experience, the strength of the union as an institution, the miners' strategic position in industry, have all helped the union to maintain some degree of independent action in relation to collective bargaining (1975: 295).

In Zimbabwe this did not obtain. Due to the history of state repression, internal disunity, organisational and financial weakness, and the leading role of ZANU(PF) in the liberation struggle, Zimbabwean trade unions were unable to resist moves to subordinate them to the government and party. Similarly, the government did not hesitate in prosecuting strikers, and strikes were virtually stamped out. Curtailing industrial action and controlling trade unions were the first steps in incorporating labour. The following chapter examines the assumption by government of trade union functions, such as wage-setting and job protection.
Chapter 4 Government Assumption of Trade Union Functions

No longer are the strictures of past legislation and the employment of draconian laws to thwart the development of a labour movement a necessary resort.

Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe,
Inaugural Congress of the ZCTU, 1 March 1981.

Our role as mediator for the workers has been hijacked by government. Decisions are being made for us, yet government should only come in on invitation, and as long as the government continues to interfere with the union, it will be difficult for the union to represent the workers effectively.

Jeffrey Mutandare, President ZCTU,
(Moto No.47 1986: 3).

At least if we control it we can cover it better, organise it better, make sure it causes less trouble. Being in it is not so bad, there has to be control, there has to be protection, there has to be organisation, we can't have everybody running around doing just what they please like a bunch of anarchists.

Don Falcone

Introduction

In attempting to implement its labour policies government assumed many basic trade union roles, and this contributed to the incorporation of the labour movement. This process is analysed in this chapter by examining four major government labour policies: (1) increasing lower-level incomes and reducing the income gap, (2) establishing and administering labour relations machinery to protect workers and ensure industrial peace, (3) promoting democracy in the work place, and (4) establishing tripartite institutions.1

There has been some discussion of government labour policies in the literature. It has been noted that statutory wage increases have not kept pace with inflation (Herbst 1987; Zimbabwe Correspondent 1987b). Some writers suggest that the government has not administered labour laws to the benefit of workers. Ladley and Lan (1985) and Cheater (1986), for example,

1Two other major government labour objectives were to end discrimination and generate employment growth. Employment growth is considered in the context of wage policy in this chapter. Anti-discrimination laws are also discussed in this chapter, and government policy on discrimination was discussed in the previous chapter. The case studies also discuss this issue.
suggest that government labour relations officers better serve the interests of employers than those of workers, and Nangati (1984b) argues that the tripartite committee to decide employer applications for retrenchment does not protect workers. There is also reference to the possibility that workers' committees were created by government to rival the existing unions (Cheater 1988: 296). These conclusions are assessed after an analysis of the manner in which government labour policies had the effect of assuming trade union functions.

4.1 Wage Policy and Employment

4.1.1 Wage Regulation

From independence government policy was to improve workers' wages but there was no coherent incomes policy to achieve this. There was an attempt to increase statutory minimum wages annually, but in the face of difficult economic conditions and employer resistance these were imposed in an irregular manner. Government intervention to control wages superseded collective bargaining, and this meant that government assumed one of the major functions that trade unions frequently perform.

Government intervention in setting minimum wages has had a major impact on wages since independence. Much pressure came from striking workers in 1980 and in an attempt to head off the strikes, and in keeping with its policy of improving pay for workers, the government announced a statutory minimum wage for workers in certain industries effective from 1 July 1980. The increases were awarded under the Minimum Wage Act, No.4 of 1980, one of the first Acts of the new government.

Trade unionists such as Phineas Sithole (Herald 30/5/80) pointed out that the $70 for industrial and commercial workers was well below the Poverty
Datum Line level (the minimum amount necessary to sustain an urban family of six, Riddell and Harris 1975), which was $120 in 1980. While workers argued that the increase was insufficient, many employers were opposed to minimum wage awards altogether and sought to lay off workers. White Members of Parliament speaking on their behalf claimed that employers, especially farmers, lacked the capacity to pay the minima. Workers would have to be sacked or businesses would fold (Herald 22/5/80).

In the following years, the government continued to walk a tightrope between those pushing for wage increases and those resisting them (see Table 4.1). In favour of increases were workers and their sympathisers including elements within ZANU(PF), and the Commission of Inquiry into Incomes Prices and Conditions of Service, chaired by Roger Riddell, who supported increased incomes for blacks. In general, those opposed to minimum wages were employers, some white Members of Parliament, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and some University of Zimbabwe academics (Muir et al. 1982; World Bank 1985 and 1987).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Date</th>
<th>Domestic Grade 1</th>
<th>Domestic Grade 3</th>
<th>Agriculture Grade 1</th>
<th>Agriculture Grade 3</th>
<th>Mining Grade 1</th>
<th>Mining Grade 3</th>
<th>Industry &amp; Commerce Grade 1</th>
<th>Industry &amp; Commerce Grade 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/7/80</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43 (70)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/81</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58 (85)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/82</td>
<td>50-62</td>
<td>54-66</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/9/83</td>
<td>55-67</td>
<td>59-71</td>
<td>55-65</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/84</td>
<td>65-77</td>
<td>69-81</td>
<td>65-75</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/85</td>
<td>75-93</td>
<td>79-97</td>
<td>75-90</td>
<td>143.75</td>
<td>143.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/86</td>
<td>85-103</td>
<td>89-107</td>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>158.13</td>
<td>158.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3/88</td>
<td>100-118.50</td>
<td>104-122.50</td>
<td>100-115.50</td>
<td>181.85</td>
<td>181.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1From 1 January 1982 there were 3 grades of domestic workers, Grade 1 = gardener; Grade 2 = cook/housekeeper; Grade 3 = child-minder.
2From 1 January 1982 domestic and agricultural employees were to be paid allowances if the following benefits were not provided by the employer: accommodation, transportation, light and fuel.
3Amount in parentheses paid if aforementioned benefits not provided.
Between July 1980 and January 1982 substantial statutory wage increases were introduced, the industrial minimum rose $35 or 50 percent. The economy was buoyant as trade sanctions were lifted and a bumper harvest was recorded, and real Gross Domestic Product increased by 23 percent in 1980 and 1981 (Hawkins 1987: 186). This mini-boom was short-lived and a lack of investment, the world recession and drought took effect and the economy declined. Growth in GDP averaged less than 1 percent per annum during 1982 to 1987 (Hawkins 1987: 186), and actually declined in 1983 (CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, December 1987: 10). In an effort to cope with this slump there were no statutory wage increases after January 1982 until September 1983 when a small increase was awarded. In 1985 slightly higher increases were granted, but a wage freeze was reimposed during 1987.

A striking feature of wage regulation in Zimbabwe is that statutory minimum wage increases were usually accompanied by regulations made under the Emergency Powers Act which set the maximum rate of pay increases that could be negotiated or awarded to employees. Table 4.2 shows these income controls for 1981 to 1987.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income p.a. up to $</td>
<td>Maximum increase</td>
<td>Income p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>Up to 3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>3,600-7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>7,200-10,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10,800-14,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>14,400-18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>18,000-21,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>21,600-25,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>25,200-28,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>28,800-32,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>32,400-36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>Over 36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: As shown in this Table.
In addition to the schedule shown in Table 4.2, the 1981 regulations prohibited increases in directors' fees (s.4) and salaries and allowances paid to managerial employees (s.7). For 1988 the maximum increase permitted was 15 percent up to $3,600 p.a. tapering down to no permissible increase over $45,000 p.a. (S.I.26A of 1988).

There are three major points to be made in relation to the minimum wage and control of income regulations: (1) the regulations were characterised by confusion and led to a number of industrial disputes and strikes; (2) the role of trade unions was to a considerable extent usurped by the government; and (3) the government aim to reduce the income gap and improve the real incomes of workers was not successful, especially for industrial and commercial workers.

In each year that statutory minimum wage regulations were promulgated they were characterised by confusion with respect to their interpretation and application. This confusion has been a major factor in some of the disputes and strikes that have occurred; the bus drivers' and agro-industrial strikes described earlier are cases in point. Furthermore, in the past most prominent companies, especially multinational corporations, had an established system of annual increases based on, for example, length of service or performance. Virtually the entire workforce usually received some increase even if performance was the criterion. During 1981 many employers negotiated with their employees a company-based or industry-level increase. On 25 December 1981 minimum wage and control of income regulations were promulgated which did not recognise normal annual increases, and employers were then required to pay a statutory wage increase (S.I.925A of 1981 s.6(1)a) on top of the negotiated increase. Under these circumstances, many employers simply stopped negotiating company-based increments. The government then found it necessary to
amend the regulations, and this was done with respect to the control of income regulations in November 1982 to allow "normal annual increments" to be awarded (S.I.714A of 1982).

The general perception remained, however, that collective bargaining had been superseded by government wage regulation. The industrial boards and industrial councils through which collective bargaining was supposed to take place still operated but in many instances the results of their negotiations were overtaken by minimum wage adjustments. Some industries did not negotiate an increase for a number of years.\(^2\) It was therefore not surprising that an attempt by government in 1985 to allow greater autonomy for collective bargaining was largely unsuccessful. The 1985 regulations awarded a scale of increases beginning at 15 percent for those earning up to $300 per month and permitted other employees to bargain with employers for increases, within the control of income scale ranging from 15 percent for lowest-paid workers down to zero for those above $36,000 per annum (S.I.185 and 186 of 1986). While many of the large organisations, such as multinationals and parastatals which presented themselves as responsible employers, did negotiate increases, many other employers either refused or delayed. Consequently, in August 1985 the government issued regulations to compel employers to bargain in good faith, or the Minister would determine an increase (S.I.219B of 1985).

Advocates of minimum wage regulation could cite this failure of collective bargaining to justify the policy, but it can also be seen as a consequence of both employer opposition to government wage policy and the confusion associated with its implementation. Employers took the view that another statutory increase would be likely at some time without regard to their

\(^2\)For example, the printing, packaging and publishing industry, did not negotiate an increase between January 1982 and April 1984 (Interviews with members and secretary of NIC for this industry May 1985).
capacity to pay, so they were prudent to avoid an increase, especially in depressed economic conditions.

The minimum wage and control of income regulations also usurped perhaps the major function of trade unions, namely, negotiating pay levels. The government not only set minimum wages, it also set the limit to which trade unions could extract increases from employers. This moved ZCTU President Mutandare to declare, "Infact [sic] the minimum wage has become the maximum wage" (Moto No.47 1986: 3). This criticism is broadly accurate, but there is still confusion over this point. The control of income regulations allow "normal annual increases up to the appropriate maximum rates" set out in the schedule (S.I.185 of 1985 s.4(4)f). Many observers, including employers and trade unionists, have operated as though the regulations prevent all increases above the prescribed statutory increase. There is considerable difference of opinion on this matter, but in the view of perhaps the most experienced labour lawyer for employers, George Makings, this clause allows negotiated increases equal to the appropriate rates in the schedule, to be made over and above the statutory increase (Interview May 1987; see also Makings 1987). Pay increases based on a system of promotion, merit or seniority can be a "normal" policy or custom in the organisation or industry, according to Makings. Nonetheless, labour representatives have difficulties in convincing employers to accept such increases. So the role of trade unions has been considerably undermined by government wage policy.

In the early years of independence government justified the control of income increases in terms of reducing the income gap between high and low income-earners. The Zimbabwe economy declined in 1982, with real GDP per capita declining by 2.3% (Ministry of Finance 1986: 14), and inflation increased sharply, by over 20% per annum in 1983 and 1984 for low income-earners (Ministry of Finance 1986: 79). Formal sector
employment declined in 1983 by over 12,000 (CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, September 1986: 6). The government then justified the income controls as mechanisms to contain inflation and assist employers' capacity to pay (World Bank 1987: 50). With respect to controlling inflation, in late 1982 the government agreed to an IMF package which, despite government denials (ARB-EFT 15 November - 14 December 1982: 6654), included constraints on economic policy (Hawkins 1987: 187), and provided pressure for wage controls. The IMF agreement collapsed in early 1984 though in an effort to cope with the weak economy (Hawkins 1987), the government continued a policy involving elements of wage restraint in the following years.

Narrowing the income gap has proved to be a difficult matter. To begin with, the policy was stalled by the two wage freezes. After the 1 January 1982 increase there was no statutory increment until 1 September 1983, and a similar freeze operated in the period 1 July 1986 to 1 March 1988. It might also be that controls on increases were more effective at the lower income scale. Figures provided in the Castellion Salary Survey of 1985 indicate that salaries for top and senior managers (grades 1 to 4) on average increased by 52 percent between 1981 and 1985, and for unskilled and semi-skilled workers (grades 13-16) the increase was 90 percent (Castellion Salary Survey 1985: xvi-xx, my calculations MAS). The increase for managers was below the inflation rate of 70 percent for high income-earners (for workers it was 78 percent) during this period. This increase was, however, well above the maximum increase allowable under the control of income regulations, which was commonly only a few percent per annum or zero for higher paid employees, and much higher percentages for low-paid workers (Table 4.2). One factor here was that the regulations permitted increases, for example, for promotions and schemes of advancement.

\(^{3}\)Using the 1986 income control scale, it would take $6,000 per annum workers 30 years to reach $36,000 per annum.
Although, in order to cope with skills shortages and high labour turnover, there was great pressure to circumvent the controls over managerial and professional salaries. This was effected through a variety of methods prohibited by the regulations such as discreetly increasing allowances (e.g., entertainment, payment of school fees of employees' children), "promoting" personnel, or just raising the salary without making this publicly known (Interviews with numerous personnel managers, 1984-1987).

While low incomes might have been increasing faster than high incomes, wages nonetheless remained depressed. The Riddell Commission estimated that the Poverty Datum Line to be $128 in December 1980 (1981: 96). In similar fashion to commissions appointed in other newly independent African countries (e.g., the 1962 Chetsworth Commission in Tanganyika, Scott 1967: 147), the Riddell Commission recommended that "target minimum income levels" be set so as gradually to reach 90 percent of the Poverty Datum Line in July 1984 viz, "$115 per month, at 1980 prices" (1981: 97). This was certainly not obtained. As Table 4.3 shows, real wage increases were affected for mining and industry and commerce up to 1982, but have since fallen to below the 1980 level (using the mining base figure of $70). Except for 1981, agricultural and domestic wages remained well above the 1980 rates, but have not increased to a level near the Poverty Datum Line. The decline in industrial, commercial and mining real wages from 1982 resulted from government policy to control inflation, unemployment and the budget deficit (Hawkins 1987). This included the wage freezes in 1982-83 and 1987, and the increases from 1983 to 1986, which averaged 11.25% per annum, were insufficient to keep up with inflation, which averaged 18.9% per annum for lower income earners in these four years (calculated from CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, December 1987).
Table 4.3 Real Minimum Wages at 1 July 1980-1987 (in 1980 Prices)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Date</th>
<th>Domestic Grade 1</th>
<th>Domestic Grade 3</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Mining</th>
<th>Industry &amp; Commerce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>26.53</td>
<td>26.53</td>
<td>51.29</td>
<td>75.15</td>
<td>75.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>49.52</td>
<td>52.72</td>
<td>47.92</td>
<td>83.87</td>
<td>83.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>40.23</td>
<td>42.83</td>
<td>38.94</td>
<td>68.14</td>
<td>68.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>41.58</td>
<td>43.74</td>
<td>40.50</td>
<td>64.79</td>
<td>67.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>46.29</td>
<td>48.28</td>
<td>44.80</td>
<td>71.55</td>
<td>71.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>44.84</td>
<td>46.58</td>
<td>43.53</td>
<td>68.85</td>
<td>68.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>39.88</td>
<td>41.42</td>
<td>38.72</td>
<td>61.22</td>
<td>61.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Calculated from various Statutory Instruments (see Table 4.1) and CSO, *Monthly Digest of Statistics* various issues average annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) for lower income urban families.

*From 1982 there were 3 grades of domestic workers; wage for those without benefits provided is shown.*

*Wage for those without benefits provided is shown.*

*In 1980 and 1981 mining wages were discounted for benefits provided; both wage levels shown.*

So the statutory minimum wage adjustments did not achieve their intended purposes of increasing real wages of all low income-workers, and narrowing the income gap. Furthermore, as the World Bank points out, there may have been negative consequences including: (1) decreased employment demand; (2) potential drift from labour-intensive to capital-intensive production and from price-elastic products to less elastic sectors, possibly dampening employment creating expansion; and (3) a greater decline in youth employment due to higher training costs which cannot be compensated by lower wages (World Bank 1987: 50).

Muir *et al* (1982) support the view that minimum wage laws contribute to a lack of employment growth. In an examination of the tobacco and maize industries in the early 1980s, they found farmers were likely to shift from labour-intensive tobacco production to the less labour-intensive maize crop (1982: 77; Muir 1984). More recent evidence is found in a national survey on employment prospects, the Employment Demand Conditions Survey.
carried out in 1986 (Hawkins et al. 1988). Employers were asked to rank the factors preventing them from hiring additional staff. Table 4.4 has the results for non-agricultural and agricultural employers showing the percentage of respondents who included the listed factor among their three most important factors.

Table 4.4 Factors Deterring Increased Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Non-Agricultural</th>
<th>Agricultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient demand for product/output</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to dismiss (dismissal regulations)</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage and salary costs</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign exchange availability</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess capacity</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled labour availability</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of capital investment</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other factors</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hawkins et al. 1988: 36, Table 3.17

For non-agricultural employers, wage and salary costs were the third most important factor deterring further employment, which was higher than the unavailability of foreign exchange that is commonly considered a major constraint in Zimbabwe. For agricultural employers, wage and salary costs were the second most important factor exceeded only by the dismissal regulations discussed below. Hawkins et al. also pointed out that increases in average real wages appear to be associated with decreased employment when examined by industry, as seen in Table 4.5. This is particularly so in the competitive export-oriented agriculture and mining sectors, though in manufacturing and distribution, sectors somewhat cushioned from international competition, the result has been a stagnation or decline in productivity, rather than a fall in employment.
Job losses did take place following the introduction of minimum wages, and the government's response was to place restrictions on the termination of employment.

4.1.2 Termination of Employment Regulations

Restrictions on termination of employment were imposed in the Minimum Wage Act of 1980 to stop employers dismissing workers solely on the ground of unwillingness to pay the minimum wage. As discussed later in this chapter, a tripartite committee was also established to consider employer applications for retrenchment. Later regulations further restricted employers' power to dismiss employees to protect workers from unfair dismissals. This was an important curative after arbitrary and discriminatory dismissals which could and did take place under colonialism. But these laws were characterised by uncertainty and confusion. There were also negative results in terms of deterring employment growth and usurping the role of trade unions.

In early July 1980, Labour Minister Kangai stated that 1,030 workers had been dismissed in anticipation of the minimum wage rates which were to take effect from 1 July. This was illegal under the Minimum Wage Act, except in special circumstances which received ministerial approval. The offence carried a fine of $1,000 or three months' imprisonment or both, and
Kangai warned employers: "We shall insist that the first few culprits must get the maximum penalty" (ARB-EFT 15 June - 14 July 1980: 5573); however, only one employer was reported to have been prosecuted for breaching the Act (African Business February 1982: 45-6).

Despite the restrictions on dismissal many jobs were lost, especially in agriculture and domestic service, in the early 1980s. In the non-drought year 1980-81, employment declined in agriculture by 32,700 and domestic service by 3,400. There was a secular decline in employment in these two industries dating back to at least 1975. A number of factors were involved in this decline including the emigration of white employers and economic stagnation, but the minimum wage requirements also played a major part. Employment growth was recorded in the manufacturing and distribution sectors despite the minimum wage provisions, and with public sector expansion total employment rose from 1.010 million in 1980 to 1.033 million in 1983. However, as Hawkins et al argue, employment growth has been insufficient to keep up with growth in the population and the number of school-leavers, and unemployment is projected to remain high (24 percent in 1990) (1988: 1-7).

### Table 4.6 Number of Employees (000s) in Selected Industries 1975-1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Mining</th>
<th>Manufacturing</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Public Service</th>
<th>Total(^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>363.8</td>
<td>124.1</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>156.0</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>1,050.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>356.1</td>
<td>122.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>153.6</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>104.2</td>
<td>1,033.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>348.2</td>
<td>120.0</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>145.1</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>111.2</td>
<td>1,012.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>341.4</td>
<td>115.9</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>139.3</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>117.9</td>
<td>936.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>335.2</td>
<td>110.4</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>144.7</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>122.3</td>
<td>984.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>-28.6</th>
<th>-13.7</th>
<th>-3.1</th>
<th>-11.3</th>
<th>-9.7</th>
<th>+23.9</th>
<th>-65.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>335.2</td>
<td>110.4</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>144.7</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>122.3</td>
<td>984.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>327.0</td>
<td>108.0</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>159.4</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>128.2</td>
<td>1,009.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>294.3</td>
<td>104.6</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>173.2</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>158.6</td>
<td>1,037.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>274.3</td>
<td>101.4</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>180.5</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>172.0</td>
<td>1,045.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>263.5</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>173.4</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>179.7</td>
<td>1,033.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Change | -71.7 | -10.6 | +0.8 | +28.7 | +13.0 | +57.4 | +48.7 |


\(^1\)Includes public administration, education and health.

\(^2\)Includes all formal sector industries.
In an effort to stem the flow of dismissals and retrenchments, the government, on 11 December 1981, gazetted S.I.894 of 1981, the Employment (Conditions of Service) Regulations. Like the minimum wage and control of income regulations, these laws were from the beginning accompanied by controversy and confusion. These regulations were wide-ranging in their effect, stating that:

No employer shall-

(a) retrench or lay-off any employee from employment without the prior written approval of the Minister ...;
(b) dismiss any employee from employment without the prior written approval of the Minister (s.4(1)).

This was a major curtailment of the classical employers' prerogative to dismiss, yet the Employment Act of 1980 (s.8(1)), the enabling Act for these regulations, allowed for summary dismissal on a wide range of grounds modified from the Masters and Servants Act of 1901 [Chapter 268] (cf. s.30 (1) b,d,f,h). These grounds were:

(a) where an employee is guilty of misconduct, whether in the course of his duties or not ...;
(b) for wilful disobedience to a lawful order given by his employer;
(c) for lack of skill which the employee ... holds himself out to possess;
(d) for habitual or substantial neglect of duties;
(e) for absence from work without the permission of the employer or without reasonable excuse (Employment Act of 1980 s.8(1)).

The regulations were arguably ultra vires the enabling Act, and this was in fact advanced in the Elizabeth Jovner v. the State case of 1982 (Reportable (79) Judgement No. S.C. 164/82). It is often suggested that this Supreme Court case found the regulations ultra vires, but this is not strictly correct. The case was decided in favour of the employer Mrs Jovner who allegedly wrongly dismissed an employee, Mr Marimira; but the grounds for this decision were that the Industrial Agreement for the commercial industry covering Jovner's undertaking allowed summary dismissal and this agreement took precedence over the dismissal regulations, in accordance
with the Employment Act (s.5(2)a). It was therefore unnecessary for the *ultra vires* argument to be considered, but the Chief Justice, John Fieldsend, did cast doubt on the validity of the regulations, describing the proposal as an "interesting argument" and remarking that it would be "far safer" to regulate unemployment through an Act of Parliament (*Reportable* (79) S.C. 164/82: 10-11).

This judgement was handed down on Thursday 18 November 1982 and on Monday 22 November 1982 Emergency Powers (Termination of Employment) Regulations, S.I.714B of 1982 were gazetted. These regulations were made under the Emergency Powers Act [*Chapter 83*] and replaced S.I.894 of 1981. The 1982 regulations stipulated that ministerial approval was needed for involuntary termination of employment "by notice", and summary dismissal was not mentioned. Summary dismissal was therefore permitted without ministerial approval and this was upheld in a 1984 High Court judgement (*Christopher Taderera Tavengwa v. Marine Centre (Pvt) Ltd Reportable* (ZLR Only) 38, HC-H 461/84). Many responsible employers such as parastatals, multinational corporations and prominent local companies, were aware of the moderated requirements, but sought ministerial approval for all terminations of employment, summary or otherwise (Interviews with numerous Industrial Relations Officers, company officials, workers' committee members and trade unionists 1984-1985).

Under the Labour Relations Act No.16 of 1985, regulations were made reverting to the 1981 requirements of ministerial approval for virtually all types ("summarily or otherwise") of termination of employment (S.I.371 of 1985). The procedure is that an employer can "summarily suspend" an employee with or without pay where there is "good cause to

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4Exceptions to this arise if the employee and employer mutually agree in writing to end the contract, or if the contract was for a fixed duration or performance of a task.
believe” the employee is guilty of misconduct as defined in the regulations. The grounds are similar to those in the Employment Act.

There were a number of problems in implementing the various dismissal regulations. With the early regulations there were often long delays in obtaining a decision from the Ministry of Labour, some cases were still pending after two years, and usually the minimum time between suspension and the ministry decision was two months. Meanwhile neither the employer nor the employee knew if the suspended workers would be reinstated. The laws were changed frequently and so were the industrial relations officers (IROs) administering the laws. There was no coherent body of case law to guide judgements and employers’ assessments of the likely ruling, and often employers found ministry decisions inconsistent. There were other problems in terms of alleged bias and corruption on the part of IROs which are examined later in this chapter.

The dismissal regulations had the effect of government assuming one of the roles that unions play in many countries, namely, endeavouring to protect workers from unfair dismissal. If workers felt they had been unfairly dismissed they could approach the Ministry of Labour. In many instances the assistance of trade unions was sought by workers, but this need not have occurred. Workers could do without union help. Secondly, a major role for some trade unions in industrialised countries, and some developing countries such as India and Sudan, has been to negotiate substantial pay agreements for retrenchments or plant closures. But in Zimbabwe such payments are rare and comparatively small (World Bank 1987: 54).

A further criticism is that the dismissal regulations have helped to create what they were intended to prevent, viz, increased unemployment. Put simply, employers were reluctant to risk taking on additional labour since they might be unable to shed labour if this became necessary. As shown in
Table 4.4 above, the Employment Demand Conditions Survey found that the dismissal regulations were a major factor deterring employers from hiring more labour (Hawkins et al 1988). In late 1987, the Chief Justice of Zimbabwe, Justice Enoch Dumbutshena, took the unusual step of severely criticising legislation:

The [Labour Relations] Act forces employers to keep unproductive workers and to shut their doors to would-be future [sic] employees who may prove to be better workers. There must be competition on the labour market. The general impression is that the Labour Relations Act says: 'Thou shalt not dismiss a lazy worker. If you do, the heavy hammer of the Ministry of Labour will descend on your skull' (Financial Gazette 6/11/87).

The dismissal regulations have had some benefits in terms of social equity. The procedures are also becoming institutionalised and therefore better understood, reducing confusion and delays. One further benefit from these regulations is that they have indirectly compelled employers to adopt improved personnel policies and practices. Before independence staff record-keeping was of very poor standard. Now for a case to be accepted by the Ministry of Labour, records have to be kept of employees' work history with a company, especially their disciplinary records, so there is a felt need to improve records and address personnel and industrial relations issues more seriously. As the case study chapters show, this has had an impact on the adoption of disciplinary codes to move away from previous haphazard and arbitrary disciplinary practices. Similarly, formal job evaluation schemes have been and continue to be implemented in many organisations to replace previous ad hoc grading and remuneration practices.

Overall, though, government wage and employment objectives have not been met. Workers' living standards have not increased substantially and the income gap has not been greatly reduced. In addition, formal

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5The 1987 draft amendments to the LRA propose that records relating to wages must be kept by employers.
employment growth has been insufficient to absorb labour supply so unemployment has remained high. Employment generation and wage growth have been restricted by Zimbabwe's poor economic performance, and government explanations hold that this is the result of international recession and drought (Government of Zimbabwe 1986: 1). But, as Hawkins argues, the government's own policies have augmented the economic difficulties (e.g., government borrowing contributed to the trebling of foreign debt during 1980-83, 1987: 187), and wage policies and the dismissal regulations have discouraged employment growth. The discussion now turns to an examination of government policy with respect to labour relations legislation and administration.

4.2 Labour Relations Legislation and Administration

Government's policy was that its labour relations machinery and administration would operate to benefit workers and strengthen them in their relations with employers (see Chapter 2). The performance of government in meeting this objective is assessed in this section. The discussion on labour law is largely confined to the Labour Relations Act since this brought together various legislative initiatives since independence.

4.2.1 Labour Relations Act

Little attention has been paid to the Labour Relations Act in the literature.® Herbst (1987) does not discuss it, and after briefly describing the Act Mitchell concludes

it is clear that the central objectives [sic] of the Act is to prevent strong independent unions from ever emerging. While the law does seek to defend workers from the excesses of management, it also

®Makings (1986) provides an unpublished but reliable guide to the Act, see also Government of Zimbabwe (c.1986).
seeks to defend capital from the possibility of a serious challenge from the working class (1987: 121).

Mitchell does not explain how the Act prevents the growth of strong unions, nor does he show it defends employers from "serious challenge". Sachikonye provides greater detail (1986: 259-63), and he states that the Act "represented a major advance for the working class to the degree that its fundamental rights have been ... guaranteed; and to the extent that its previous gains accumulated since independence were consolidated" (1986: 263). His final assessment, however, is that the involvement of the drafters of the Act in "interminable meetings with employers' organisations"

reflects the social reality that in contemporary Zimbabwe the balance of class power is still heavily weighted in favour of the bourgeoisie (1986: 263).

Sachikonye's approach is to assess the Act in class terms and since it has not brought about the demise of capital, like Mitchell he concludes that it favours the bourgeoisie. In Moto magazine the Act, then in draft form, was described as a "monster" which "serves the interests not of workers, but of employers", since it would not strengthen unions; indeed the "bill makes it practically impossible for workers to organise their own trade union" (No.19 1983: 19). Wood briefly discusses the LRA noting that "it inherits a great deal of the corporate control measures from the old ICA", but he states that it is not yet possible to detail the working of the Act (1988: 302). Further, he is confused about the role of hearing officers (1988: 303). This section examines the Labour Relations Act in detail. The discussion begins with the background to the Act, and a description of the collective bargaining procedures and dispute settlement mechanisms follows. After this a balanced assessment of the Act is made in terms of the benefits afforded to labour and the provisions for corporatist control.

From independence until the Labour Relations Act took effect in 1985 the labour relations framework was provided by the Industrial Conciliation Act [Chapter 267] (ICA) and the Employment Act of 1980 which repealed certain
discriminatory laws, such as the Masters and Servants Act [Chapter 268] which still regulated domestic workers (see Chapter 2). The ICA was amended in 1981 to disallow discrimination and provide minimum conditions of employment (e.g., paid vacation leave, IC Amendment Act No. 23 of 1981). On 15 December 1985 the Labour Relations Act No. 16 of 1985 was promulgated to replace previous legislation and provide the key labour relations law in Zimbabwe. It covers all employers and employees except for those whose conditions of employment are provided for under the Constitution. Therefore, the defence forces, police and public service are excluded, but parastatals are included. According to some informants, the first draft of the bill was largely the work of Professor Robert Seidman, an American lawyer then working in Zimbabwe. This was rejected and a third draft was produced principally by Dr Micah Tsomondo, then a Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. This became a public document and a seminar was held at the University of Zimbabwe to debate the proposed bill in 1983. The draft was subsequently amended many times within the Ministries of Labour and Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (there may have been eleven drafts, interview Senior Labour Relations Officer September 1986), before it was finally presented to Parliament, where it was amended slightly - an unusual event in Zimbabwe⁷ (Interviews with Dr Micah Tsomondo May 1985 and Dr David Chanaiwa, Director of Employment, September 1984, February 1985).

The Act eventually adopted is, despite claims to uniqueness by its architects (Interview Dr Micah Tsomondo, May 1985), modelled on various other laws and practices: primarily the Industrial Conciliation Act [Chapter 267] as amended and aspects of the US National Labour Relations Act (Wagner Act)

⁷s.5(6) of the bill allowed discrimination if the "act or omission was justifiable and otherwise not prohibited as to the requirements of the occupations concerned, and was not attributable wholly or mainly to the race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex of the persons concerned" (emphasis added MAS). The emphasised words were omitted from the Act, as they were discriminatory and thereby unconstitutional.
of 1935. It also codified workers' committees which had operated de facto since independence. Some parts were new to post-independent Zimbabwean labour relations, such as the provisions for paid maternity leave and the legally backed collection of union dues by employers, although the latter was a common feature in independent African countries such as Zambia, Tanzania and Ghana (e.g., Gertzel 1979).

The Act was in certain respects a significant departure from the Industrial Conciliation Act. Nonetheless, the differences between the ICA and the LRA have been exaggerated by government. In introducing the LRA in Parliament, Minister Shava described it as "both an instrument and weapon for advancing and protecting the interests of the workers as we lay the firm foundation for the establishment of socialism". The ICA, by contrast, was "an oppressive piece of legislation designed primarily for the enslavement of our workers" (Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, 22 January 1985: cols: 1314 and 1318). However, many important features of the LRA are modelled on the ICA, including collective bargaining procedures, the restrictions on collective job action and to some extent the dispute settlement mechanisms.

Under the LRA there are two types of bodies which can negotiate collective bargaining agreements for an industry or undertaking, viz, Employment Boards and Employment Councils. These are virtually identical to Industrial Boards and Industrial Councils under the ICA. For convenience I will sometimes refer to industrial boards and councils as employment boards and councils. In

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8For convenience I will sometimes refer to industrial boards and councils as employment boards and councils.
practice, a chairman and one independent member are commonly appointed plus six representatives of both employers and employees, who are usually managers and workers' committee members nominated by those they represent. This is relatively simple in many industries which have a small number of establishments (e.g., one in tyre manufacturing; two in ferro-alloys), but there are difficulties in industries with numerous establishments. The Ministry of Labour performs the major secretariat functions (but cf. S.1.368 of 1985 s.10(1)). Employment board decisions are recommendations to the Minister and he can direct that the deliberations of a board be transferred to another employment board if he considers this in the interests of the parties involved (s.78). The boards' recommendations cover conditions of service including pay, grading, hours of work, sickness benefits, vacation entitlements, protective clothing and disciplinary codes. These are gazetted as "employment regulations". In December 1984 there were 64 employment boards (Ministry of Labour records) a slight decline from 66 in 1979 (Riddell Commission 1981: 259).

Employment councils are in principle different from employment boards. They are comprised of certified trade unions and employer organisations which elect their own representatives. The council can elect a chairman from within or appoint a "neutral" chairman (e.g., university professor, retired town councillor). If the chairman elected is a trade union member of the council, then the vice-chairman must be an employer representative and vice versa (s.64(c)). The certification process is carried out by the Registrar in the Ministry of Labour, who also must approve the constitution for the formation of an employment council. Employment councils conduct their own secretariat function by collecting fees from member employers and unions to provide a full-time secretary, support staff and designated agents to enforce the agreements. Council funds can be used for purposes such as training employees, though in practice this rarely occurs on any substantial scale except in the catering and hotel industry. In May 1985
there were 16 employment councils (Interview, Oliver Takuba, Senior IRO, May 1985).

The agreements of the councils are published as "industrial agreements" and have the force of law; they must, however, first be approved by the Registrar. The Minister may direct the Registrar not to approve the agreement if the provisions in his opinion are inconsistent with existing laws, inequitable to consumers or the public, or unfair to the agreement parties. So while there is a qualitative difference between the autonomy of employment councils and employment boards, the councils may still be circumscribed by the Minister. Once again there is ample potential for state corporatist control of labour agreements. To date, the Minister has not abused these powers; agreements are usually accepted in their original form, but according to some participants this is partly a result of the councils' adjusting agreements in the light of government policy (Interviews with four employment council secretaries and chairmen May-June 1985).

In general it seems that trade unions on employment councils have not been substantially more effective in achieving pay increases than have workers' committee representatives on employment boards. There is as much variation among industries covered by councils and boards as there is between industries covered by the two different bargaining bodies. For example, in 1984 minimum monthly wages in industries covered by employment boards ranged from $65 in agriculture to $205.79 in the tyre industry. At this time the range in employment councils was from $120 in mining to $176 in banking. In 1984 the average minimum wage for all 64 employment boards was $137.12, while the average for 10 of the 16 employment councils⁹ was $137.93 (calculated from Ministry of Labour records and various statutory instruments). This reflects the impact of

⁹Figures for four municipal councils, the railways and phosphate industries were unavailable.

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government on minimum wages, which was more important than the bargaining position of trade unions. Councils, however, have provided benefits to workers that employment boards have not, including the enforcement of agreements by designated agents as well as pensions and medical aid funds. Moreover, the councils provide a training ground for unionists to gain experience in labour negotiations and administration.

On the face of it, the formal dispute settlement stages under the Labour Relations Act are similar to those under the ICA (see Figure 4.1); however, there are major differences in the operation of these procedures. A dispute or an unfair labour practice can be referred to a labour relations officer (LRO) in the Ministry by an employee or employer. If the LRO is unable to settle the dispute it can be referred or appeal can be made to a higher "determining authority", a hearing officer or regional hearing officer, who have similar powers to LROs, although they are more senior. These are all Ministry of Labour positions similar to those of IROs, senior IROs and chief regional IROs under the ICA. In both cases the Chief LRO (or Chief IRO) was senior to these officers, and ex officio the Registrar. An important difference, however, is that under the Labour Relations Act (and the accompanying regulations S.1.368 and 371 of 1985) LROs have wide powers including authority to order an employee to be promoted or reinstated with back pay up to two years, and order the payment of monies owing, compensation or legal fees relating to an unfair labour practice (LRA s.111). Under the ICA, IROs were not given specific powers to order promotion, reinstatement or back pay (ICA s.134); back pay could be ordered only by the law courts (ICA s.129-131).
Under the 1985 Act disputes may be referred by a determining authority or on appeal pass to the Labour Relations Board, and from there appeals are to the Labour Relations Tribunal, and finally to the Supreme Court. The Labour Relations Board is appointed by the Minister and its five to seven members must have "wide experience in labour relations" (s.88(2)). The Labour Relations Tribunal is composed of a chairman and deputy chairman, who are qualified to be High Court judges, and two to four members experienced in labour relations matters. In practice there has been parity representation of employers and labour among the ordinary members of the Board and Tribunal.

These bodies have counterparts under the ICA but they operate differently in some respects. While a single dispute can proceed through each level from LRO to Supreme Court under the 1985 Act, under the ICA the Administrative Court and Industrial Tribunal dealt with different matters. The Administrative Court (formerly Industrial Court) heard appeals from the Registrar's decisions relating to the operation of the Act, such as the registration of trade unions, employer organisations or industrial councils. Appeals were only on matters of law to the Appellate Division (Supreme Court). The Industrial Tribunal determined disputes from industrial councils,
conciliation boards and those referred to it by the Minister. There was no appeal from the Tribunal (s.110).

The two Acts are similar with respect to provisions for settling disputes through voluntary or compulsory arbitration, and the approach to collective job action under the two Acts is comparable - the emphasis was on prohibition. Both Acts prohibit strikes and lock-outs in essential services, and lengthy and convoluted procedures (see below), including the appointment of conciliation and arbitration bodies, were established to minimise such action.

So there is a great deal of overlap and continuity between the two Acts, though the Labour Relations Act introduced provisions which benefit workers, and government's position is that the Act is administered in a manner that assists workers to counteract employers' greater power. The discussion now provides an assessment of this legislation beginning with the provisions which benefit labour and then reviewing the corporatist components.

The Labour Relations Act was the first law to specify "fundamental rights" of employees to form and operate workers' committees and trade unions, and prohibit a range of unfair labour practices such as "to fail to negotiate in absolute good faith" (s.80(2)). These provisions are akin to those in the US Wagner Act of 1935 which aided union development during the depression years and employer resistance to unionisation (Cohen 1960: 476-82). The Wagner Act was not the only factor assisting union growth but during its operation, 1935 to 1945, it contributed to the increase in union membership from 3.9 million to 15 million in this period (Cohen 1960; Beach 1985: 413). In principle these provisions could provide a spur to union development in Zimbabwe, especially since the Act also obliged employers to collect union dues for a registered or certified trade union (s.60). This was advantageous to labour because it has been extremely difficult for black trade unions to
organise without the "check-off system". Numerous problems were encountered by unions trying to organise workers by physically collecting union dues at the factory gate. This includes the difficulties involved in organisers travelling the country attempting to collect the dues, and the temptation for poorly paid organisers to misuse the funds.

Other provisions throughout the Act identify unfair labour practices that benefit employees, for instance, the protection of "fair labour standards" such as minimum wages and work conditions (s.6); and preventing employers from hindering workers' committees from airing grievances or negotiating for employees. The Act gives very wide opportunity for employees to seek redress for their grievances by contacting a LRO: "Any employee or employer who is involved in a dispute or is aggrieved by an unfair labour practice may refer the matter to a labour relations officer" (s.109). This codified a broader role played by the Ministry of Labour after independence. Earlier the Ministry of Labour dealt with alleged breaches of agreements such as under-payment of wages. After independence IROs dealt with virtually any labour grievance brought to them by workers including unfair dismissal, discrimination, housing, disciplinary action.

Discrimination on the grounds of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex is prohibited under the Labour Relations Act (s.5), and this is reminiscent of Title VII of the US Civil Rights Act of 1963. Discrimination on these grounds is illegal on a wide range of employment matters such as advertising, recruitment, grading, wages, leave, promotion, training, transfer, retrenchment and the provision of facilities (s.5). Despite employer opposition, paid maternity leave at the rate of at least 60 percent of a woman's normal wages for 45 days before and 45 days after child-birth, and daily time off work for breast-feeding mothers was established (s.18). The Act further provides for a minimum of 22 days paid sick leave for full-time employees (s.14). Finally, the penalty for committing an unfair labour
practice or for contravening the Act was considerably strengthened in comparison to the ICA, providing for a maximum fine of $2,000 (increased from $200) or one year's imprisonment or both the fine and imprisonment.

Despite these benefits, the Labour Relations Act is replete with provisions establishing ministerial power to control labour relations in Zimbabwe. Trade unions and employers organisations are regulated by government. They are not permitted to levy dues unless they are registered by the Registrar, and they cannot form an employment council without certification by the Registrar. The Registrar, subject to appeal to the Tribunal, has authority to "vary, suspend or rescind the registration or certification of a trade union or employers organisation" (s.40(1)). The Minister's powers to regulate trade union and employer association funds, however, carry no appeal mechanisms, and provide abundant opportunity for state corporatist control. Section 61 of the Act applies mutatis mutandis to employer association funds and it is reproduced in extenso to indicate the extent of these powers:

(1) The Minister may make regulations providing for the proper and systematic collection, management, application and disbursement of union dues by trade unions.

(2) Regulations made in terms of subsection (1) may provide for-
(a) the maximum amount, and method of assessment, of union dues;
(b) the accounting procedures that shall be followed ...;
(c) the appointment of auditors and the keeping of books of accounts;
(d) the payment by trade unions of a percentage of union dues to any association or congress of trade unions recognized by the Minister as being representative of all or most certified trade unions in Zimbabwe;
(e) limitations on the salaries and allowances that may be paid to employees of trade unions;
(f) limitations on the staff that may be employed, and the equipment and property that may be purchased, by trade unions;
(g) limitations on the matters on which and the extent to which union dues may be expended (s.61).

In introducing the bill in Parliament Minister Shava said:

It has been commented upon by the International Labour Organisation at the 4th draft stage and when enacted, it will enable Zimbabwe to adopt, ratify and implement all the major ILO
conventions and recommendations on Labour matters without in any way jeopardising our national interests (Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, 22 January 1985, col: 1313, emphasis added MAS).

Yet these provisions in all likelihood are inconsistent with the fundamental 1948 ILO Convention No.87 concerning the "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise":

**Article 2**
Workers and employers, without distinction whatsoever, shall have the right to establish and, subject only to the rules of the organisation concerned, to join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation.

**Article 3**
1. Workers' and employers' organisations shall have the right to draw up their constitutions and rules, to elect their representatives in full freedom, to organise their administration and activities and to formulate their programmes.
2. The public authorities shall refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof.

**Article 4**
Workers' and employers' organisations shall not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority.

**Article 5**
Workers' and employers' organisations shall have the right to establish and join federations and confederations and any such organisation, federation or confederation shall have the right to affiliate with international organisations of workers and employers (ILO 1982: 4-5).

So Section 61 of the Labour Relations Act appears to conflict with **Articles 3 and 5** of ILO Convention No.87, and the Act's provisions relating to registration of unions and employers' organisations may be in conflict with **Articles 2 and 4** of this convention. It is not surprising then that the Zimbabwe government, as Mutandare noted, has not ratified this and other major ILO conventions (Sunday Mail 6/7/86). As noted above (Chapter 3), Minister Shava reacted sharply to Mutandare's claims, but their exchange in the media did not address the possibility of the Labour Relations Act being in conflict with ILO conventions. Government spokesmen point out that the ILO takes into account the laws and practices of member countries, and that the potential to control unions is necessary given the corruption and maladministration in Zimbabwe's unions (Interview David Chaniawa, Director of Employment, June 1986). This has some persuasiveness, but an
alternative policy might be to create an independent body to monitor unions and employers' associations, and introduce a right of appeal.

The Minister of Labour is given enormous power under Section 17 of the Act to make regulations on virtually all employment issues in Zimbabwe. Subsection (1) reads:

Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Minister may make regulations providing for the development, improvement, protection, regulation and control of employment and conditions of employment.

Subsection (3) states: "Without prejudice to the generality" of the Minister's powers, regulations can be made on a list of twenty-one provisions. These include broad categories such as:

(a) the rights of employees, including minimum wages, benefits, social security, retirement and superannuation benefits, and other conditions of employment; ...

(u) any other matter relating to or connected with employment which it may be necessary to regulate.

The possibilities for state corporatist use of these laws are self-evident. In defence, government spokespeople argue that these provisions are necessary in order to combat the overwhelming power held by capital both before and after independence. But as noted above, the government has arguably played a restraining role in terms of limiting trade unions in their negotiations with employers.

The "right to resort to collective job action" is guaranteed to all employees, trade unions and workers' committees, subject to the provisions of the Act (s.120). Following the practice in the Industrial Conciliation Act, the Labour Relations Act prohibits collective job action (e.g., strikes, lock-outs, boycotts and sit-ins) in essential services and includes convoluted procedures before legal collective job action can be undertaken. "Essential services" include any service or any service relating to: electricity supply; fire brigade; sewerage, rubbish or sanitation; health; "the production, supply, delivery or
distribution of food or fuel"; water; mining; communications; transport and services relating to the repair, driving or loading of transport services; and road, railway and other transport facilities. Further essential services can be introduced in terms of the Act (s.118).

In practice legal collective job action is virtually prevented even in non-essential industries by the nature of the dispute settlement procedures. A necessary condition for a legal strike is that the dispute pass through the dispute settlement procedures under Part XIII of the Act. This means it is highly unlikely that a strike will be sanctioned, since at some stage during the process a binding determination will probably be given (s.115-117). There are in reality only two instances when legal collective job action is likely to take place, namely, where there is an immediate threat to the health and safety of persons, or to the existence of a workers’ committee or trade union (s.120).

One example that indicates that to date legal strikes are not permitted in Zimbabwe is the housing dispute in the mining industry. This issue has been a source of conflict since Rhodesia was founded. More recently, Mutandare’s Associated Mine Workers’ of Zimbabwe in 1983 formally sought to declare this as a dispute to move towards a legal strike. Since the mining industry is deemed an essential service strikes are forbidden, but the government’s response to this dispute is indicative of its approach to avoid strikes. The dispute was referred to conciliation a number of times, and the issue was recently postponed again (Interviews, Doug Verden, Chamber of Mines, October 1984, April 1988; Jeffrey Mutandare, AMWZ, October 1984, June 1985).

As discussed in Chapter 3 the government defends its position on strikes on the grounds that they are harmful to development, and also may jeopardise national security. The argument relating to national security is less
persuasive in 1988 than it was in the early 1980s, since the internal security position is far more stable. Dissidence in Matabeleland has been sharply curtailed, and the three pre-independence armies have been integrated. ZANU(PF) has firmly consolidated its position as the ruling party, and has achieved an almost hegemonic position in most of the country; ZAPU and ZANU(PF) have signed a unity accord, and have agreed to create a one-party state. In general the country has had eight years in which to stabilise, and it is now better able to absorb a certain level of strike action without jeopardising national security. The explanation for government legislating against strikes is more likely to be found in its strategy to control labour to further its developmental goals and to prevent the manifestation of opposition to government policies.

In sum, it is argued that the Labour Relations Act provides meaningful benefits for labour, notably with respect to rights to form labour organisations, ensuring bargaining in good faith, and prohibiting discrimination and other unfair labour practices. However, the preponderant effect of the Act is to bestow upon the government enormous powers over labour relations actors and the conduct of labour relations through controls over organisations, bargaining bodies and agreements, and collective job action.

4.2.2 Administering the Labour Relations Act

It is argued in this section that the general approach or ideology of the Ministry of Labour changed markedly following independence. Whereas before 1980 the role of the ministry was basically to ensure a compliant workforce, after independence its role was still to inhibit industrial unrest but far greater sympathy for workers was exhibited.
Labour relations officers\(^{10}\) have a potentially very powerful position, especially with respect to cases of dismissal. High unemployment and minimal social welfare provisions mean that the consequences of losing a job can be disastrous. For management the process of dismissal is arduous, and many responsible employers only seek dismissal when they perceive very strong grounds. Losing an application for dismissal means retaining an "undisciplined" worker and this can impair general employee discipline. Thus the stakes are quite high on both sides of the dismissal issue. It is inevitable then that labour relations officers draw criticism for supporting one or the other party.

There is a general consensus among employers that Ministry of Labour officials and the laws they administer favour workers too greatly. Labour officials as well claim that the ministry is guided by the government's "socialism" to protect workers from employer abuse (Numerous interviews 1984-1988, e.g., Doug Verden, Chamber of Mines, October 1984),\(^{11}\) and this is symbolically reiterated in the term of address "comrade" and posters of Marx, Lenin and Mugabe on office walls. Employers maintain that LROs are lenient towards workers. There are many cases in which a litany of offences had to be accumulated before a worker's dismissal was approved by LROs (see Chapter 7). The popular reference to workers in Zimbabwe as being "fire-proof" attests to the general view that LROs protect workers from dismissal. In countless interviews employers, managers and personnel specialists maintained that the Ministry of Labour favoured workers. One manager at Standard Chartered Bank in Bulawayo became distraught when she declared, "You can't even speak to them about their work [performance]"

\(^{10}\)Labour Relations Act 1985 changed the name from "industrial" to "labour" relations officer; the new title is used in this section.

\(^{11}\)As Minister Shava told an IRO seminar: "The Government expects you to be ideologically and politically disposed to uphold the interests of the workers, promote industrial harmony and advance the cause of socialism" (Herald 5/11/84).
any more. They go off to the Ministry, and start making a crime out of nothing. I just don't know how to talk to them any more. It's impossible" (January 1988).

By the same token, labour relations officers have been attacked for favouring employers (Nangati 1984b). In a case study of a Kadoma textile company in 1983, Cheater found that a LRO sided on a class basis with management, resulting in "bureaucrats" and managers against workers (1986: 130-1). The one meeting reported which involved a LRO was described as follows:

the workers received a stern lecture about the necessity of signing all letters to the department, so as not to waste bureaucrats' valuable time and the country's scarce petrol on journeys of investigation that proved unnecessary. In management's absence, the workers were talked down to. When management was recalled into the meeting, the workers received acknowledgement of their presence from occasional words tossed over the Industrial Relations Officer's right shoulder. The two wage-workers present visibly shrank into the wall in an attempt to remove their irrelevant and possibly offensive presence, though the salaried supervisor refused to be cowed by such class behaviour. Meanwhile bureaucrat and managers conversed knowledgeably and at length in fluent English on technical matters such as foreign currency allocations, maintenance schedules and so forth. Whereas the management representatives had been uneasy, if not actually quaking, before this meeting, it was the workers' committee members who emerged from it with feelings of insecurity and their self-confidence undermined (Cheater 1986: 131).

Cheater maintains that this interaction "is certainly representative and not merely an isolated case" (p.131), and Ladley and Lan (1985) report a case study of a farm with almost identical interactions and results.

There have also been numerous reports of corrupt LROs accepting bribes from management. Labour Minister Shava was reported as saying that the Harare regional labour office building, BB House, had become known as "Big Bribe House", and he gave two examples of corruption. In one case, a trap was set and a LRO was caught receiving a cheque from an informant employer. In another case, LROs in Bindura had received land, equipment
and seeds from farmers (Herald 22/6/86). Other such cases have been reported in the media (e.g., Herald 10/12/85; Sunday Mail 1/11/87) and the National Trade Union Survey reported many other cases cited by trade unionists (Department of Research and Planning 1987: 65). The NTUS also found that while 8 unions had a "good" relationship with LROs and 21 did not express an opinion, 22 of the responding unions were dissatisfied with their relations (it should be noted, though, that 15 of these 22 unions were unregistered and one of the complaints against LROs related to their handling of unregistered unions p.64). The common drift of LROs into private enterprise (especially multinational corporations) as personnel officers is also seen as evidence of their corruption and pro-employer ideological stance. Minister Shava referred to this and noted that between July 1982 and September 1984, 42 LROs, four Chief LROs, one deputy chief LRO, and two senior LROs had moved to the private sector (Herald 5/11/84; cf. Department of Research and Planning 1987: 66; Cheater 1986: 131).

Probably, an accurate view of LROs lies somewhere between the polar criticisms. The current research found evidence of favouritism towards both employers and workers, but the balance was weighted in favour of workers (e.g., Chapter 7). Many LROs went beyond their duties and authority to assist workers. As mentioned above, even after the 1981 dismissal regulations were attenuated in 1982, LROs still demanded that summary dismissals be subject to their approval. Some employers sought to resist this and maintained they were summarily dismissing an employee under Section 8 of the Employment Act 1980, and therefore would not seek ministerial approval. If the LRO wanted to pursue the matter, this would mean mounting a court challenge. The employer was often legally entitled to this approach, but many LROs considered this to be "unscrupulous", and one boasted of how he once overcame this problem:

[LRO] I hit him. When Mr [a European owner of a sizeable, local company] said: "I'm dismissing him [the worker] under section 8 of the Employment Act". I hit him. Right in the face. His nose started bleeding, and he cried "Help! Help!" I told
him if he didn’t want any political trouble, he had better just shut up, or he would be in more problems. [Laughter]

[Interviewer] You’re joking.

[LRO] [Laughter] I hit Mr _______. Go ask him. When I went back there again, he put up his hand [to cover his injured nose] and said "No! No! Everything is all right [the employee was retained]. I don’t want to see you again". [More laughter] (Interview LRO August 1984).¹²

The assault was an unusual and extreme incident, but LROs commonly alluded to the possibility of "political pressure" through ZANU(PF) being applied. Another example of LROs exceeding their formal powers in order to further their case against employers is that they often demanded that employers yield relevant documents although the Labour Relations Act did not allow for this.¹³

It is not surprising that many LROs moved to private enterprise. Their offices were noisy, chaotic, ill-equipped and dirty, and many LROs complained of this (Interviews with numerous LROs and former LROs 1984-1987). Moreover, pay and promotion prospects were far behind those offered in private enterprise. In 1984, a LRO with a university degree received $650 per month with slim hope for advancement. Many left to join multinational and local large companies as personnel officers, starting at $900 minimum, and usually with clear opportunities for promotion. For example, one such former LRO became personnel manager of a large company and in 1987 was earning $3,400 per month with a modern company car and other benefits. Those who remained with the Ministry as LROs received $750 at this time.

¹²Two other LROs present supported the story.

¹³The ICA did give IROs power to seize documents and the proposed LRA amendment bill seeks to reintroduce these powers.
There are grounds for doubting the view in the literature that LROs administer labour laws in favour of employers. There is probably an approximate balance in decisions favouring employers or employees, and there is evidence that workers have at times benefited from strong intervention by LROs. Many employers perceive that the Ministry of Labour acts in the interests of workers and this has caused them to improve their approach to industrial relations. Moreover, unlike the situation before independence, workers now have recourse to the Ministry of Labour when faced with racism and unfair labour practices by employers. There is a view among many employers and workers that workers now have rights to fair treatment, whereas before independence they were virtually subject to employers' dictate. The case study chapters consider the variable extent to which this is put into practice.

4.3 Democratising the Workplace

Government labour policy pronounces in favour of democratising the workplace (see Chapter 2), and several observers have looked at workers' committees to assess the achievement of this policy. Two broad criticisms are made of workers' committees: that they are inadequate vehicles for participation, and that they usurp trade union functions. Nangati (1984a) follows general radical critiques of industrial democracy schemes such as those by Clarke (1977) and Clegg and Dunkerley (1980) (see Chapter 1). Nangati's argument is that government policy to create a "favourable investment climate" (1984a: 30 quoting Republic of Zimbabwe, Transitional National Development Plan, 1982b: 37), entails the maintenance of "'industrial peace' which means control of the workers in their struggles against capital" (1984a: 30). Consequently, workers' committees cannot challenge existing relations of production and this means that "the new

Parts of this section appear in Shadur (1987a).
participatory institutions serve as instruments for the exploitation of the worker" (1984a: v). Cheater contrasts workers' committees at Zimtex with the workers' councils described by Gramsci, which posed a challenge to capitalist relations of production, and she concludes that the "concern of the workers' representatives at Zimtex ... remained the very localised realities of workers' lives in individual enterprises in post-independence Zimbabwe, not the 'transition to socialism' to which government claims to be committed" (1986: 133). In addition the Zimtex workers' committee was becoming "discredited by its structural association with management", and by its conflicts with the union and party (1986: 132). In similar vein to criticisms of workers' committees in Tanzania (e.g., Shivji 1976: 129-33; Fashoyin 1986: 64), writers on Zimbabwe argue that these bodies usurp the role of trade unions. According to Nangati "workers committees in plants which are not yet organised tend to weaken the influence of [the] trade union" (1984a: 42). Cheater notes that "the rift between trades unions and workers' committees continued to fragment the interests of workers" (1988: 296). In 1980, textile union leader Phineas Sithole denounced "the use of the workers' committees by the government to divide and control trade unions for political ends of the governing party" (Press statement 22/12/80).

These commentators share the view that workers' committees have achieved little in terms of democratising the workplace, and they suggest that these bodies have undermined trade unions. The view presented here is that workers' committees have achieved little in terms of worker participation in management decision-making precisely because they were not designed or intended to achieve this. They are primarily industrial relations bodies.

Workers' committees were formed at the request of Labour Minister Kangai during the 1980 strikes since the union shop-steward system was not well developed, and in many companies unions had negligible contact with the workforce. As the Ministry of Labour Workers' Committee Guide Lines
published in February 1981 state, the broad role of workers' committees was to provide a "means of communication" between management and workers (Ministry ofLabour 1981: 1). They were not given legal backing until the Labour Relations Act of 1985, and their precise role was not made clear. Nonetheless, they were established in virtually all sizeable parastatal and private companies (as with many industrial relations practices, small enterprises frequently ignore workers' committees), and a general modus operandi evolved. It is common for one committee member to be elected for each department or identifiable work group in an organisation. Workers' committees are made up of workers only, and each committee elects representatives to meet with management on the works council. There is often parity representation between management and workers on works councils. The committees and councils can discuss general conditions of employment (e.g., rosters, canteen, safety, disciplinary codes, grading); however, the emphasis is on communication to maintain industrial peace and increase productivity. The outcomes of discussions are recommendations to management, and their decisions are subordinate to those of employment councils and boards (Ministry ofLabour 1981: 6-10). Works councils clearly have a more important role than workers' committees, but in popular parlance workers' committees are often referred to in a way that includes the works council. Workers' committees have assumed some trade union roles in in-plant industrial relations negotiations; however, they have also played an important role in supplementing weak trade unions, as is shown in the case study chapters. Their primary role is as industrial relations bodies, it is therefore inappropriate to assess them as institutions for worker participation in management decision-making.

Management committees have been discussed by government as a means of bringing about participation in decision-making. Labour Minister Shava and Prime Minister Mugabe have spoken in favour of management committees (e.g., Herald 24/5/85, 19/6/85, 19/8/86, 2/5/87). The most
detailed statement to date is a conference paper presented by the Ministry of Labour in mid-1986:

It is Government's desire that workers, together with management, be involved in decision-making so as to influence enterprise policy at micro-level and overall economic policy at macro-level. Although the form and nature of worker participation in management committees will be open to discussion between Government, workers and employers, Government would, however, want to see workers effectively participating with management in making decisions involving production targets, production levels, investment policies, disbursement of profit and marketing policies and the overall utilisation of manpower and other resources used in the production process (Ministry of Labour 1986).

This proposal is far-reaching. It would involve workers in decision-making that has hitherto been considered the prerogative of management. The idea that workers should set production levels and decide in which areas to invest and the amount of such investment would be anathema to many employers in Zimbabwe. But, despite Minister Shava's announcement that legislation would be passed in 1985 to implement management committees (Herald 24/5/85), to date there have been no concrete developments concerning their introduction. Consequently, there has been no serious attempt to implement government policy to democratise the workplace. Partly, no doubt, this is because employers would oppose such moves; partly also there is a perception within government that workers are ill-prepared for participation in management. On this last point it is noteworthy that government has not taken steps to prepare workers through training courses (Cheater 1988: 296). It is likely then that participation is not strongly supported within government. One reason for this might be that it is seen as being detrimental to economic growth, and in this regard it is also pertinent to note that workers' committees were not formed in central government departments.

4.4 Tripartitism
The final component of government labour policy to be examined in this chapter is tripartitism. In accordance with its commitment to ILO support for tripartitism (set out in the 1981 *Growth With Equity* policy statement), government created a number of institutions to deal with employment matters; these included the Wage and Salaries Advisory Board, the Retrenchment Committee and the Tripartite Consultative Sub-committee on ILO Matters. Commentators to date have argued that these institutional arrangements have worked against the interests of workers and have benefited capital. Herbst (1987) puts this view with respect to wage setting, and Nangati (1984b) argues this in the case of the retrenchment committee. These views are questioned here.

The initial statutory minimum wage rates were simply announced by government without consultation with employers or unions. In 1985 the government called for position papers from employer and trade union organisations (EMCOZ, ZCTU) and then made the decision. In 1986, under pressure from employers, unions and the ILO, tripartite consultations were extended so that EMCOZ, the ZCTU and government representatives met to discuss the position papers on the Wage and Salaries Advisory Board. The recommendations then passed to a Working Party of permanent secretaries, then to the Ministerial Economic Coordinating Committee and finally to the full Cabinet. The ministries represented in these bodies included Finance, Trade and Commerce, Industry and Technology, Agriculture, Mines and Labour (Interview, Lazarus Dhlakama, Chief LRO, February 1988; S.I. 368 of 1985).

Herbst shows that in the 1986 negotiations the ZCTU displayed "poor ... bargaining tactics" by basing its case on the poverty datum line which resulted in extravagant demands for wage increases (e.g., 174 percent increase for industrial workers, 1987: 369-70). EMCOZ was more adept by focusing on the effects of wage rises on employment and inflation. Herbst
is aware that economic recession played a role in depressing wage increases; however, he places more emphasis on the bargaining skills of the actors. He argues that the institutionalisation of wage setting "led to the direct loss of labour power because the formal structure of wage negotiations rewards the attributes labour is most lacking in: analytic skills, coordinated bargaining approaches, organisational cohesion" (1987: 375). Thus Herbst holds that labour was in a stronger position when wages were earlier set by "purely political decisions" rather than the "more technocratic basis" (pp.365-6): "Labour was at its most powerful in 1980-1981 when spontaneous strikes forced government into early establishment of minimum wages at levels that gave workers real increases in income" (p.374).

Undoubtedly the bargaining skills of the ZCTU were inferior to those of EMCOZ. Nonetheless, Herbst's analysis is flawed. To begin with, it was not simply the case that the strikes forced the wage increases of 1980-81; government's own labour policy was to raise low incomes after years of colonialism. Moreover, labour was not stronger when wages were set by political decisions. Even before the institutionalisation of wage setting in 1986, a wage freeze was imposed by government in 1982-1983, and real minimum wages declined from 1982 until 1985. As has been argued above, the economic decline was the key factor leading to depressed wages. In the buoyant years 1980-81, government was able to increase real wages, but when the economy sharply declined it imposed a wage freeze. It is not entirely accurate to see the 1980-81 strikes as signs of labour's strength. Most strike action called upon the government to play the leading role to pursue workers' interests. More importantly, wildcat strikes proved to be a fragile means for labour to exert influence, since government decisively moved to curtail such action, and it is almost certain that government would again stop strikes were they to recur. A potentially more fruitful approach would be for labour to develop a stronger position within the institutional framework, and pressure government into restoring unions' bargaining role.
In order to achieve this the unions would have to analyse the basis of government incorporation of the labour movement, which has been examined in detail in this thesis, and is a process that Herbst entirely neglects.\footnote{Herbst does not mention the incorporation of unions by party and government and, as noted in Chapter 2, he sees the "consolidation" of the five union centres into the ZCTU as "something of a worker success" (1987: 351).}

Nangati has criticised the operation of the tripartite Retrenchment Committee, by stating that workers' who face retrenchment must rely on labour relations officers to put their case, and that this is unsatisfactory since LROs appear to favour employers (1984b: 19). To support his view Nangati cites one case, which he considers "illustrative" (p.19), in which approval was given to retrench 230 workers in a transport company in October 1984 (Herald 6/10/84). This case, however, was more probably an exception since the ZCTU, then under the incompetent leadership of the first executive, failed to send a delegation. Other than this case, Nangati provides no evidence to support his claim that "workers have lost most cases of retrenchments" (1984b: 19). In other meetings many employers' applications have not been approved, or alternatives have been ordered such as a reduction in working time, rotation of the standing down of workers, or retrenchment of fewer workers than the employer requested. The committee heard reports from workers' committees in the affected company, and where insufficient evidence was available the committee often deferred consideration, and on occasion decided to visit the company concerned (Observation of two Retrenchment Committee meetings October 1984; interviews with employer and union members). Figures for 1987 show that the Ministry of Labour approved the retrenchment of 999 (38 percent) of the 2,600 workers whom 96 employers applied to retrench. Employers applied for 1,388 workers to be placed on rotation, short working hours or unpaid leave, and approval was given for 457 (33 percent) of these. In
1988, approval was granted for 744 (39 percent) of the 1,915 workers employers sought to retrench (Financial Gazette 4/3/88, 14/4/89).

Summary

The haphazard development of government labour policy with respect to wages, restricting termination of employment and labour relations machinery has been charted in this chapter. Government attempts to increase significantly workers' real incomes have not been efficacious, and the minimum wage policy and restricting dismissals probably contributed to the lack of employment growth. Moreover, unions' potential to develop was undermined and state corporatist control was reinforced by the government which assumed traditional trade union roles in wage setting and employment protection. Labour relations machinery established through the Labour Relations Act provided some benefits to workers such as prohibiting discrimination and unfair labour practices. In addition, and contrary to the general thrust of critical views, in many instances labour relations officers have administered the Act so as to support workers, on occasion exceeding their formal powers. However, the overwhelming effect of the Act is to arm the state with extensive controls over trade unions and the conduct of labour relations. Strikes are virtually illegal, collective bargaining agreements are open to government control and sweeping regulatory powers enable the minister to govern almost the entire realm of labour relations, including the internal affairs of trade unions.

Government policy to democratise the workplace has been all but dormant. A number of writers have assessed the operation of workers committees and works councils in terms of their contribution to workplace democracy and have concluded that they are very limited institutions. However, these institutions were created as labour relations bodies, and not as vehicles for worker participation in management decision-making. It is argued here that
when workers' committees are evaluated as labour relations bodies to supplement weak shopfloor trade unionism, then they can be seen as playing an important role. The committees have assumed some functions that are commonly performed by trade unions in other countries, yet workers' committees have provided needed representation for workers in many organisations which have had a negligible union presence. To date there has been only rhetorical reference to, and no practical steps toward, the introduction of management committees which would involve participation in management.

Critics claim that workers have not benefited from the participation of labour in tripartite institutional arrangements in relation to wage setting (Herbst 1987) and retrenchment (Nangati 1984b). However, these views do not provide a balanced account. Workers in fact did not gain higher wages as a result of wages being set outside the tripartite wages body, and the tripartite committee protected many employees from retrenchment.

The government's corporatist labour strategy places strict controls over trade unions by enabling government to regulate their internal affairs and restricting them from engaging in strike action. Government labour policy has militated against the growth in union strength; nonetheless, the government pursues policies to further workers' interests. Labour policy seeks to provide growth with equity (i.e. expansion of employment and wealth together with protection and enhancement of workers' interests), and this is similar to the twin objectives that Bates identified the Zambian government as following (1971).
Chapter 5 General Industries Limited

There are no industrial relations in this company. Relations in this company are in a shambles. The reason for this lies with the workers' representatives. In past years we have had good workers' committees but the current members have undergone [pause] indoctrination .... They do not give a true reflection of how ordinary shopfloor workers feel. Many of their grievances are personal issues that involve the members themselves, in relation to promotion, etc., that should have gone through Personnel.

General Manager

The Negroes were considered of absolutely no account, of no force whatsoever.

Introduction

The case of General Industries exemplifies the persistence of racist and authoritarian management practices in independent Zimbabwe. Management sought to continue colonial relations of production (Burawoy 1985) in the post-colonial setting, and when workers resisted colonial practices conflict permeated labour relations. This case shows that, contrary to Marxist views, management style and culture have important influences on the conduct of labour relations. The influences of Rhodesian culture and the chief executive, who was a member of the founding family, are prominent in this case.

A precondition for permission to study General Industries Limited was that the correct name of the company would not be used, a major reason for this being that the company was experiencing pronounced labour relations problems. Details of the company have been altered to protect anonymity, though not in a manner that would substantially affect conclusions drawn.

5.1 Background to Labour Relations at General Industries

The company was a long-standing local business that had grown into a prominent manufacturing enterprise. Annual turnover was in the $100 millions, and profits amounted to millions of dollars per annum. Growth had
led to changes in ownership and by 1984-85 the company was mostly foreign owned but - and this was a decisive factor - management remained in the hands of local whites; indeed the chief executive officer was a member of the company's founding family.

At the time of research, late 1984 and 1985, the company had approximately 4,000 employees nationally and about half this number were in the Harare area. The research focused on the plants in Harare, although Bulawayo operations and regional sites were visited for short periods. The production process included quite sophisticated technology and also conventional production-line operations and distribution systems. The majority of General Industries' employees were unskilled or semi-skilled, performing handling or machine operator tasks. Virtually all these workers were male with little formal education, and the majority earned below $300 per month. The work was strenuous for many workers, some tasks involving lifting heavy loads.

The main form of labour representation was the workers' committee. An unregistered trade union existed and, according to a union representative, had approximately 800 members within the company, less than 20 percent of the total workforce. Management considered the union unrepresentative and primarily dealt with the workers' committee. This was basically in line with government policy since unregistered unions were not members of industrial boards. There were several plants in Harare located a few kilometres from each other and each plant had a workers' committee, which in turn elected a central workers' committee of 12 members, each of whom had a deputy. The deputies attended workers' committee meetings, but did not attend Works Council meetings where discussions with management representatives were undertaken. Usually only three management representatives attended these meetings; the General Manager, the Personnel Manager and the Industrial Relations Officer. A national works
council was convened on an ad hoc basis and was chaired by the Chief Executive. It dealt with company-wide issues such as wage negotiations but, due to conflicts between workers and management, this body did not convene regularly.

Contrary to the view that workers' committees supplanted trade unions in Zimbabwe (Nangati 1984a; see also Cheater 1988) the General Industries' workers' committee supported the development of unionism in the company. Indeed, this support led to a conflict between the workers' committee and management when the workers "smuggled" a trade union official into a meeting with management without informing the meeting (Minutes of October 1984 Works Council Meeting).

5.2 Labour Relations at General Industries Limited

Relations between management and workers were very poor, even hostile. Human resource management was not taken seriously by management; instead, personnel policies and procedures (e.g., the job evaluation scheme, grievance procedure, safety policy) were established to pacify and control workers rather than to manage labour policies in good faith. On the surface, post-colonial labour relations practices at General Industries were becoming institutionalised: a formal job grading system was implemented, an industrial relations officer was responsible for dealing with disciplinary cases involving dismissal, and a workers' committee structure existed for discussions between workers and management. In reality these were a thin veneer over a mixture of discriminatory, arbitrary and paternalist practices.

As in many large organisations, disciplinary hearings were held to determine cases potentially involving dismissal. These were conducted by the company industrial relations officer, with the head of department, the accused and a workers' committee representative participating. Typically,
management retained determining authority. But General Industries differed from many other companies in that the company often attempted to mete out discipline in a severe and discriminatory manner.

In one case, a 55-year-old unskilled worker had been caught stealing material valued at 52 cents. This worker pleaded in the hearing for forgiveness, saying that this was his first offence in his 19 years of service, and begged for leniency since he would find it extremely difficult to obtain alternative employment to support his five children. The Security Manager rejected these appeals, arguing that theft was rampant, so firm action was essential. The management representatives were aware that the Ministry of Labour would probably not approve an application for dismissal in this case, so the white Security Manager attempted to intimidate the accused into resigning. Among other stratagems, the accused was given a choice between resignation and public disgrace by being arrested and brought to trial. The Security Manager demanded, "How would your children think of you then, with their father being a criminal?" The black Industrial Relations Officer played a non-committal role in the hearing, and the workers' committee representative accepted the argument that the disciplinary code entailed dismissal for theft (Observation February 1985). This contrasted markedly with workers' representatives strong defence of a worker in a similar case at Dairy Marketing Board (Chapter 7), and one factor here might be the authoritarian approach taken by the Security Manager and management generally at General Industries. The decision was made to pursue the case. However when the case came to the attention of the General Manager he ordered that the employee be reinstated with a warning.

Workers' committee members alleged that discipline was enforced in a discriminatory manner. They cited a number of cases in which senior employees, usually whites, were given lenient treatment after committing
offences. When a white maintenance supervisor became intoxicated at a social function at work and fought with a black worker, he then allegedly attempted to run down the worker with a motor vehicle. Workers claim that instead of being dismissed the offender was transferred to another region. Management claimed that discipline was enforced fairly and cited dismissals of senior whites and blacks for serious offences. But workers' committee members insisted that such dismissals occurred primarily as a result of their pressure on management.

The company experienced difficulties in having many of its dismissal applications approved by the Ministry of Labour. There were many disputed applications, and numerous cases were pending for months, even years. In many cases General Industries was obliged to conform to Ministry of Labour rulings and influence. One such case involved a driver who was found over 100 kilometres off route, with a strong suspicion that he was attempting to sell company property. Labour officials were briefed on the case and they intimated that dismissal would not be approved, so the company opted instead to issue a final warning.

Many basic personnel and labour relations systems were either not in existence or were inadequate. Top management gave little support to safety. Protective clothing was provided for many jobs, though this was often a result of workers' demands. The following response to workers' request for protective footwear typifies management's attitude:

The Chairman advised that when workers felt such a need they should research the matter obtaining costs, advantages of such equipment, this should be discussed between departments so they can work together. This must then be put on the agenda (Minutes of Works Council meeting May 1984, chaired by the white Group Personnel Manager).

Aside from apprenticeships and training for a particular technical position, no formal training of employees was undertaken by the company during the research period. This meant for the Mashonaland region, only 22 members
of the approximately 2,000 strong workforce were undergoing training. Matabeleland region provided a little more training than did Mashonaland. A previous Personnel Manager had provided workers’ committee members with labour relations negotiations training which participants lauded (Interviews, 1985) but these lasted only a few days and were not repeated after he departed in 1984. No formal performance appraisal method was in use and, as indicated below, in many cases discriminatory practices affected promotions and merit pay decisions. Despite ample personnel and accounts departments, even record-keeping for employees, especially low level workers, was

very incomplete and unreliable .... A great deal of embarrassment was caused at last year’s long service awards when people who had left the company, or who had died, had been incorrectly included in the awards list (Minutes of Works Council Meeting June 1985).

Job evaluation and remuneration were sources of serious worker dissatisfaction. The Paterson Method of Job Evaluation (discussed in Chapter 6) was implemented in 1982, and there were constant calls for regrading. The position of Personnel Manager for Mashonaland was characterised by crisis management, in that incumbents were continually engaged in resolving immediate disputes rather than planning longer-term improvements in labour relations. This preoccupation with “fire-fighting” and rapid turnover in the position led to a large back-log of claims with little effective action to re-establish a grading committee to review jobs. The Personnel Manager at the time of the research commenced the training of a grading committee, but resigned before the exercise was completed.

The high turnover in the positions of Mashonaland Regional Personnel Manager and Group Personnel Manager was indicative of the malaise in labour relations at General Industries. From independence to 1985 there had been at least three group personnel managers and nine incumbents in the regional position (two of them in an acting capacity). Many of these
occupants became exasperated and resigned; top management pursued a policy to frustrate some of them in order to engineer their resignation when it was considered they were not controlling labour relations as management required. The stint at General Industries embittered and demoralised some of these people, as one out-going regional manager put it with considerable emotion "The last three months have been the most unhappy in my life [long pause] and that is because of work and how things are run". He had held the position for one year, and prophesied that his replacement would suffer the same fate, "[he] thinks he will be able to cope with them [top management], but they will undermine him .... He's a nice guy, but they'll ruin things for him" (Interview). The in-coming manager did indeed become disenchanted at General Industries and resigned after about 18 months, turning down financial and promotional inducements to remain. Both these men, like most incumbents, were white.

Wage rates at General Industries were consistently higher than the statutory minimum wage for industrial workers. As shown in Table 5.1, in nominal terms the company's wages stayed in line with statutory increases. However, in real terms basic wages at General Industries declined from $108.25 in 1980 to $91.99 in 1985, while the real industrial minimum rose slightly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>General Industries Nominal</th>
<th>General Industries Real</th>
<th>Industrial Minimum Nominal</th>
<th>Industrial Minimum Real</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>108.25</td>
<td>108.25</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>121.90</td>
<td>107.78</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>75.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>134.09</td>
<td>107.10</td>
<td>105.00</td>
<td>83.87</td>
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<td>1983</td>
<td>144.09</td>
<td>93.50</td>
<td>115.00</td>
<td>74.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>160.00</td>
<td>86.39</td>
<td>125.00</td>
<td>67.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>184.80</td>
<td>91.99</td>
<td>143.75</td>
<td>71.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Calculated from company records and various statutory instruments, see Chapter 4 Table 4.1.

1 Calculated in 1980 prices.
2 For September.
Put another way, real wages for General Industries' workers were higher before the introduction of statutory minima. As noted in Chapter 4 many employers opposed these minima, and at General Industries opposition to wage increases intensified when relations between management and workers deteriorated. While paternalism reigned, higher wages were proffered to beguile workers, but when the government began acting on workers' behalf and workers began asserting themselves, management withdrew the inducements for passivity and resisted wage increments.

There was a convoluted saga of wage negotiations at General Industries. In 1983 labour relations were amicable enough for management to arrange meetings of worker and management representatives, both for General Industries nationally and in the other major companies in the industry, before the Industrial Board meeting. General Industries' management stated that the reason for this was that in the previous industrial board meeting conflict occurred and the Chief Executive wished to avoid this. From management’s viewpoint, the 1983 industrial board meeting was conducted without rancour and a wage increase of 12 percent was agreed. But in 1984 a number of conflicts escalated and management was no longer disposed to facilitate friendly negotiations. Without informing management, the workers' committee had invited Ministry of Labour officials and had smuggled a trade union official into an internal management-worker meeting. These actions led management to end its guise of cooperation and move to a more openly confrontational approach, as the minutes of an ensuing meeting recorded.

An Industrial Board meeting to negotiate wages was again pending and ... [the Chief Executive] stated that he had wished, as in the previous year, to complete internal negotiations with the National Works Council in advance. However, ... the elected Chairman of the Harare workers, had shown that he had no respect for management and had now involved third parties. Advance negotiation was therefore no longer possible and ... [the Chief Executive] regretted that, as a result, he would have to attend the Industrial Board meeting to fight the case of management only (Minutes of a special Harare management-worker meeting, 4 October 1984).
Underlying the ostensible issues was a fundamental schism. Both parties were responding to the incompatibility between the continuing paternalist colonial relations of production, and the demand for post-colonial relations. In subsequent discussions on wages, management continued to dismantle the facade of paternalism and maintained an inflexible policy on wage negotiations, while increasingly shifting blame onto the government. In the National Works Council meeting of November 1985 the Chief Executive adopted the following posture on wages:

Looking at the Agenda it seemed to the Chairman that it appeared workers were under the impression that they are still free to negotiate over and above the relevant Government Regulations - but this was not the case.

The Chairman then quoted section 9 of the Emergency Powers (Control of Income Increases) Regulations, 1985 .... It followed, therefore, that if the Company agreed to pay more by way of increased wages, bonuses or service awards, it would be guilty of an offence (Minutes of a National Works Council Meeting, November 1985).

As was seen in Chapter 4, this is an understandable misinterpretation of the laws on control of income. These regulations were confusing, though it would seem that they did not prevent negotiated increases being paid over and above the statutory increase. In 1984 this would have allowed a 10% statutory increase and an additional 10% negotiated increase for low income earners. The government therefore created a convenient shelter behind which companies like General Industries could insulate themselves from wage demands.

Another major feature of remuneration at General Industries was the prevalence of wide pay disparities. Many employees, especially skilled and senior staff, on the same Paterson grade received very divergent salaries. There were a number of factors involved here, including the principle of pay according to merit, seniority, favouritism, and racial discrimination.
Racial discrimination was a focal issue at General Industries, and negligible black advancement had taken place in senior positions. There was only one black director of the main Board and he was appointed by one of the multinational corporate shareholders as a non-executive member. Of the 10 directors of the operating company, one was black; however, he departed from the company during the research period, leaving no blacks on the Board. Management was similarly dominated by whites. Of 43 managers and senior staff in Mashonaland, there were 6 blacks and 1 Asian. Most of the 6 blacks occupied junior management or technical positions.

Racism was also evident in senior promotions and appointments, so white predominance was not attenuated. To begin with, the private employment agencies used by the company knew from past dealings that strong preference was given to whites and, in any case, it appeared that some employment agencies themselves favoured whites (Nangati 1984b: 28). Thus most candidates for senior jobs were white. In one case no suitable white applicant could be found and the Personnel Manager recommended the appointment of a coloured (mixed race) person as Wages and Salaries Clerk. The General Manager rejected this proposal on the grounds that non-whites should not hold a sensitive position with access to the salary profile of management. The Personnel Manager in turn refused to accept this response, and stated he was not prepared to go through another round of interviews for the position. To resolve the issue the General Manager consulted the Chief Executive who agreed to the appointment (Interviews with Personnel Manager).

When blacks did reach senior positions, as Nyoka (1987) and Burawoy (1985) found elsewhere, some of the responsibilities were pruned from the jobs. In the case of the most senior black, the Plant Manager, several major responsibilities were transferred when he was appointed, including the warehouse, workshops and purchasing. The colour bar principle, under
which blacks did not supervise whites, did not, however, operate strictly at General Industries. The Plant Manager, for example, was in charge of some white employees. But this had been transformed into a largely technical position, and in the case of the former black director who occupied a more general position, there were no senior staff reporting to him. Indeed, many blacks considered the black director a "window-dressing" appointee, for the unit had very few staff and its role was primarily to liaise with government and the public.

Blacks were treated by some white staff as though "they were still living in Rhodesia" (a common expression used to refer to a racist). Black workers were spoken to in a rough manner, and racist jokes were frequently exchanged by white employees; at times these were made in the presence of blacks. This was flagrant practice on the shopfloor, but even the less racist white staff adopted the curious Rhodesian quirk of raising their voices to an unnecessarily loud, even supercilious, tone when addressing blacks.

Another source of workers' vexation was the conduct of the company Industrial Relations Officer (IRO). This officer's functions involved handling disciplinary cases and grievances, appointing low-skilled workers, and deciding on requests for advances on pay. The workers' committee repeatedly alleged that the IRO indulged in favouritism, intimidation and chimbadzo (usury) in his dealings with workers. Allegedly, he would charge exorbitant interest for personal gain instead of granting no-interest advances on workers' pay. The IRO was an unqualified person appointed by the Chief Executive and for years management defended him, maintaining that the workers objected to him since they wanted a sycophant. He was retained to the chagrin of workers' committee members.

As relations between management and workers deteriorated, workers became unreasonable and frequently put forward issues that were not
adequately supported by argument or evidence. This appeared to be the case with their demand for the dismissal of the company IRO, and in some of their allegations relating to discriminatory disciplinary action. Many claims for job re-grading were merely stratagems to obtain pay rises. During depressed market conditions, rather than attempting to lay off workers, the company arranged with workers for rotation to different jobs. The workers’ committee then demanded "acting allowances" for workers performing different duties. At times workers’ committee members acted deliberately to provoke management, as in the smuggling of the unionist into a meeting, and in the Chairman’s hanging a poster of Lenin on the factory gate. For a management like that of General Industries, this was tantamount to a casus belli.

All these issues coalesced to create a climate of hostility within General Industries. For years workers had sought action on their grievances through the workers’ committee structures, the Ministry of Labour, and the Industrial Board. Some issues were addressed, but on many others management either demurred or rejected them altogether. Consequently, there was a perpetual list of demands from Harare workers. To convey their frustration they began a boycott of the monthly Works Council meetings in November 1984. By March 1985 this had had no effect, so the Harare workers’ committee wrote to the Minister of Labour setting out their grievances and requesting permission to stage a strike. In response to these letters, management representatives were summoned to attend a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Labour, and this created an imbroglio within General Industries. The state thus became directly involved in labour relations at General Industries.

Before the meeting with the Deputy Minister, General Industries’ workers had had experience of contact with the Ministry of Labour. This arose through the disputed dismissal cases and on occasion they urged the labour officers
to assist them in having management heed their claims. In these respects workers had mixed success. In numerous cases the Ministry IROs rejected applications for dismissal. In relation to their disputes with management, however, the state had been less helpful to workers. During one dispute both the workers’ committee and the Personnel Manager made repeated requests for the IRO to visit the company to assist in settling the conflict, yet the IRO refused. The IRO stated that transport was not available, and when the Personnel Manager offered to drive him, he replied that he was too busy (Observation and interview with Personnel Manager, February 1985).

Ministry officials did attend works council meetings occasionally at the request of workers, but with little result. General Industries’ management constituted a very artful opponent and was often able to provide a semblance of cooperation and propriety so that no particular action could be identified as warranting intervention from the Ministry. The example of the workers’ committee request for labour officials to attend Works Council meetings is indicative here, as shown in the Minutes of the National Works Council meeting held in November 1985:

The Chairman [CEO] asked which of the Representatives present at the meeting feared victimisation and it became clear that the fear was not of victimisation by management but by the workers when the Workers’ Representatives reported back.

The Chairman indicated that he had no objection to the presence of such observers and it was agreed that the Secretary would issue an invitation to appropriate senior officials of the Ministry for future meetings.

Workers also had dealings with the state when they staged a work-in in 1982. With strikes prohibited by the state, Harare workers endeavoured to demonstrate their dissatisfaction on a range of issues by continuing to work overnight and into the following day, a Saturday. The Chief IRO attended the site and persuaded the workers to end their action and promised to have their grievances examined. But little came of this apart from a promise of a wage rise which awarded at a much later date. So poor relations
In March 1985 Harare workers’ committee members again sought state assistance and gained an audience with the Deputy Minister of Labour, Robson Manyika, who summoned management to discuss the contents of their letters of complaint. Their criticisms related to wages, job evaluation, unfair disciplinary practices, the conduct of the company IRO, poor communications and low morale. At the meeting both parties presented their views. The Deputy Minister ruled out strike action and requested that the parties put their cases in writing, after which a meeting would be held with national worker and management representatives (Interviews with participants and company records).

At the subsequent meeting worker representatives did not acquit themselves well. Management delegates provided detailed responses, even if they were at times perfunctory, while workers made a number of factual errors and were unable to provide sufficiently detailed evidence to support their allegations. Nonetheless, the Deputy Minister advised that an Industrial Board meeting be convened to review wage and job evaluation issues. There was also a suggestion that General Industries’ salary structure be investigated. Priority was to be given to the Harare regrading exercise and the disciplinary code review. The Deputy Minister also urged that communication and cooperation be improved, and that the role of the company IRO be examined.

The implementation of these recommendations was largely perfunctory. Management did change their stance on the company IRO and called for evidence against him, but the workers’ committee merely reiterated unsupported allegations. In the end, to reduce conflict, the white Personnel Manager persuaded the IRO to resign by offering a financial inducement. Thus one change was effected, though even here workers’ committee
weakness was apparent. The industrial board meeting was held after the main research period ended, and the results of this are not available. Job evaluation was a matter for examination within the company. The review of grading and the disciplinary code ambled along, hampered by the departure of the Harare Personnel Manager and poor worker-management relations. Uneasy relations prevailed and frustrated workers periodically boycotted discussions with management. The review of the company salary structure apparently did not eventuate.

In writing to the Minister of Labour workers looked to the ZANU(PF) government almost as a father figure to protect them from their perceived oppressor. Their hopes for a favourable outcome were not characterised by the earlier naivety since they had experienced previous disappointments in their dealings with the Ministry of Labour. They appealed to the Minister only after exhausting all other channels rather than being driven by a sense of optimism (Interviews with workers' committee members).

While the government's role would be interpreted by writers such as Astrow (1983) as selling out the workers, this would be an exaggeration. Partly the problem was the weakness of the workers' committee; secondly, the Deputy Minister, Robson Manyika, died a few months after the meetings, thus vitiating continuity and follow-up action. Equally important was management's obduracy. As is shown in later case studies, government influence did have an impact on labour relations in companies genuinely wishing to project a responsible image to the community. Management at General Industries was less inclined to this approach. Its strategy was to obscure shortcomings by arguing that there was no problem, as in the meeting with the Deputy Minister, and by feigning propriety through various public relations exercises such as the Workers' Trust scheme.
Under this scheme the company donated a percentage of annual profits (initially $1.6 million and subsequently 10% of annual dividends) into a trust holding equity in the company up to 10 percent of issued shares. The income earned from dividends on these shares was to be used for the benefit of workers and their families, such as loans for housing and education. This was heralded as a "Workers' Participation Scheme" in line with government policy but, as many analyses of such schemes have shown, this was a very limited form of participation (e.g., Drago and McDonough 1984; cf. Chapter 1). In some ways the company benefited from the scheme, since worker requests for housing loans or for guarantor facilities, a common practice in Zimbabwe, could be channelled to the trust which had finite reserves available. Salaried employees could seek such assistance from the company rather than from the trust. The company used the scheme to great advantage, and mentioned it at every opportunity, such as in the meeting with Minister Manyika, to portray the company as a beneficent employer, attuned to the new Zimbabwe. In reality, the company was strongly opposed to worker participation in decision-making. When questioned on the company's stance toward mooted management committees, a senior manager argued that workers did not possess the level of training necessary for management decision making, and that if workers showed management ability they would be promoted to higher positions (Interview July 1985).

It is probable that management also used the workers' trust and various other strategies in coping with the prospect of nationalisation. A minister, Kumbirai Kangai, announced that the government was seriously considering nationalising the industry and summoned managers to his office to demand full financial details of the company (Interviews with company managers). Management raised many objections and points of detail which clouded the issue until support could be mustered elsewhere in government to reverse the proposal. This indeed was the outcome, for a Cabinet committee was
established to examine the matter, and this was reputedly comprised of Kangai and ministers usually considered to be sympathetic to capital, namely, Bernard Chidzero, Eddison Zvobgo, Richard Hove, and Denis Norman (Confidential newsletter). It was generally assumed that the Cabinet committee would allow the issue to die quietly, and by early 1988 there had been no action.

There was speculation within the company as to whether the poor labour relations scene influenced the proposal for nationalisation. Compared with expectations of the Mugabe government before it came to office, few companies had been nationalised. The government purchased substantial or controlling interests in a few companies, though none of these acquisitions appeared to be forced on the seller. A key factor was the companies' strategic importance in the country (e.g., media, coal) or, as in the case of Astra Corporation, because the company was seeking a local buyer to meet government restrictions on investments. It could be said therefore that nationalisation was not directly used by the Mugabe Government as a mechanism for regulating the conduct of labour relations. Without such a threat management at General Industries paid little heed to workers' demands, and conflict continued.

5.3 Management Culture: Colonialism Continued

A company history written in 1977 stressed the pioneering spirit of the founding family, and proudly proclaimed, "the sons and grandsons of the founder immigrants are Rhodesian, if not always by birth or education, then by upbringing and outlook" (Company document). This was a very apt description even after independence, for to a considerable extent the

^In order to prevent identification of General Industries this source is not cited.
company leadership maintained colonial management practices and racial discrimination.

The Chief Executive was a member of the founding family and ran the company as a family company - indeed, as his personal fiefdom. At best this involved paternalism, such as giving jobs to favourites. In one case his cook was dismissed with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, but later, after the cook personally appealed to the Chief Executive, the cook was rehired. At times management style was authoritarian and petulant. In one instance a black worker was ordered to repair the Chief Executive's car urgently and, when the task was not completed promptly enough, the Chief Executive grasped the worker by the legs, dragged him from under the car, and drove off. This type of treatment was not confined to black workers; senior white employees including managers were periodically the target of verbal abuse. These outbursts of rage had implications for labour relations. A classic case was that of the sale of goods to employees at wholesale price. Warnings had been issued against workers placing orders during working hours. The Chief Executive became incensed when he subsequently saw workers attempting to make purchases during normal working hours. He shouted at the workers to return to work, and issued an order to cease staff sales for all of Mashonaland region. This involved even smaller depots where the practice had been carried out smoothly with local management support.

Despite its size and the dilution of ownership the management of the organisation had not made the transition from a family company to a bureaucratic organisation. There was no organisational chart for the company, and this was deliberate, for the Chief Executive insisted that this was not required in a family company. Even job descriptions for middle and senior managers were spurned. When the Harare Regional Personnel Manager was requested to construct an organisational chart for the Harare
region to aid the current research project the reply was: "It's impossible. I've been thinking about this and I really don't know where people go. [Pause] And there are lots of them." The previous incumbent had given an almost identical reply. Many senior personnel reported to a number of superiors on various issues, and this had nothing to do with "matrix organisation" (Davis and Lawrence 1977). There were several instances in which managers skipped a management layer to report to a superior of their preference purely for personal, not ethnic, reasons.

During an attempted drafting of a chart it emerged that at least 18 managers formally reported directly to the General Manager. However, it was made very clear that while managers formally reported to the General Manager, they were also answerable on a day-to-day basis to the Chief Executive. One key manager stated that it was only after a year in the position that he realised he formally reported to the General Manager and not to the Chief Executive. The latter would regularly summon managers to his office to discuss minutiae and intervene directly in their affairs. Many managers did not feel at liberty to make non-routine decisions; one regional personnel manager, for instance, was ordered by the Chief Executive to redraft a letter to the Ministry of Labour four times. In the end the personnel manager refused to sign the letter, and this was one factor in his departure. In short, the Chief Executive was a domineering manager who would not accept any challenge to his authority, either from workers or his subordinate managers, whatever their colour.

When workers sought to challenge management authority, their demands were not recognised as legitimate grievances. Many of the conflicts at General Industries were defined by both management and workers as "communications problems". This implied that the conflict could be resolved simply by presenting the issue clearly to the other party. But "communications" was a protean explanation at General Industries and,
indeed, in many organisations (Clegg and Dunkerley 1980). More fundamental than communications was the hostile approach to labour relations taken by management. Management adopted a unitary perspective of labour relations (see Chapter 1), seeing the workers' committee and other labour bodies as third parties intervening to vitiate otherwise harmonious relations between themselves and the workers. The excerpt from an interview with the General Manager at the beginning of this chapter depicts this clearly, and the Chief Executive adopted a similar position, as revealed in a letter dated September 1985 replying to a workers' committee letter of complaint.

There has been numerous correspondence which has been initiated by you either to myself or the Personnel Department and I am becoming very weary with your attitude. I have also instructed my Personnel Manager to arrange a meeting for Friday 27 September 1985 at 1100 hours of which [sic] I have now been informed that you are refusing to see me. If this is how you intend to represent my wage earners then I view your approach as uncooperative, destructive and definitely [sic] not in the interests of your fellow workers. As your decision has been made not to have dialogue with me ... then may I inform you that there is no further need for you to address letters directly to me. I would like to know whether your decision in not having further dialogue with me is the feeling of all the workers at ... [General Industries].

For management, a "good" workers' committee meant a compliant one, and they were nostalgic for a subdued workforce of the colonial days. Grievances presented by the workers' committee were not considered to be genuine demands; rather they were artefacts conjured up by agitators. These views permeated the behaviour of management vis-a-vis workers. Under such circumstances, it would be plainly wrong to dismiss the role of management style in labour relations.

Contrary to most Marxist interpretations, management style patently did have a major impact on labour relations at General Industries. Countless writers on management point out that the chief executive can have a major impact on employee relations and organisational culture (e.g., Schein 1985; Bryman 1986; Lansberg 1983). This is particularly so with respect to founders of
organisations (Schein 1985), and consequently companies commonly experience marked difficulties in undergoing the transition from a family company to a more bureaucratic organisation (Beckhard and Dyer 1983). These processes are readily apparent at General Industries as seen throughout this case study.

The point can be emphasised by examining one of the company's main competitors and internal differences within General Industries. The competing company had a workforce approximately half the size of General Industries, and sales were considerably lower. Despite differences in size, there were many similarities between the two companies, for products, production techniques, location of plants, and rates of profitability were comparable. Nonetheless, substantially greater black advancement had taken place in management positions in the other company. By 1985 most senior appointments were of black personnel while General Industries continued to select whites for senior positions. Whereas General Industries provided very little formal training apart from apprenticeships, its competitor provided extensive training, including "6M courses" and workers' committee training for low level workers, supervisory and line management courses in labour relations, technical and management training for junior and middle managers.

It did not appear that this company was more compelled by structural factors to train and promote blacks than was General Industries. There was little drift of employees from one company to the other, and turnover among senior staff was higher at General Industries than in the other company (Communication with former General Industries' Personnel Manager). Moreover, training staff and promoting blacks was simply corporate policy. All companies within the group were obliged by Head Office to carry out such policies. The competing company was part of a corporation that had progressed beyond a family company approach to management, while the
management style of the General Industries Chief Executive prevented this transition.

Similarly, compared to Harare, the Matabeleland operations of General Industries experienced far less turmoil. There were problems in the region but not on the scale of Mashonaland. Partly this was the result of distance from the Chief Executive, who intervened less directly and could more easily be ignored when he did intervene. The General Manager of Matabeleland operations was less authoritarian than the Chief Executive and this assisted in creating less hostile relations between workers and management at Bulawayo. Another major factor was that the white Personnel Manager had been in the position for 17 years providing continuity which Harare lacked. Consequently there was less crisis management in Bulawayo, allowing personnel issues to be processed more gradually. With respect to job evaluation, for example, reviews were carried out periodically whenever about five cases had accumulated. The seasoned Personnel Manager needed no time to familiarise himself and train a grading committee as was necessitated in Harare; instead he promptly orchestrated the exercise. This was typical of his approach, and he used his years of experience to great advantage in talking down workers' complaints. The approach was not so much to tyrannise workers as to appear more knowledgeable about the issue in question, so that workers' viewpoints could be presented as being mistaken. (This style of "baffling workers with science" was a well-developed strategy among white personnel managers in Zimbabwe who considered themselves to be "non-racialist but firm"). So in Bulawayo the management style of the Chief Executive had less impact and the management style of the regional General Manager and Personnel Manager was of greater importance than in Harare.

Some time after the main research period the company announced that the Chief Executive requested to be relieved of his position so that he could
concentrate more on his own affairs; however he remained non-executive Chairman of the Board, retaining considerable power over broad policy. He was replaced as Chief Executive by the General Manager of the Bulawayo operations. Underlying the tensions between workers and management at General Industries throughout the research period was the maintenance of outmoded relations of production in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The Chief Executive played a major role in maintaining colonial relations, and it is likely that his persistence with colonial relations in the post-colonial setting was a key factor in his departure (Communication with former Personnel Manager 1989).

Conclusion

The case of General Industries exemplifies racist and authoritarian labour relations practices which persist in some companies in Zimbabwe. Throughout this chapter it has been argued that there was a fundamental incompatibility between management's wish to continue colonial management practices and workers' demands for reform. The worker-management divide is seen here as the pre-eminent cause of conflict, as radical organisation theorists argue (e.g., Clegg and Dunkerley 1980; Salaman 1981). However, it has been shown that management culture is also a major factor in the conduct of labour relations, so radical perspectives need to be supplemented by conventional concepts (management style and culture) in order to take this into account. It is clearly seen in this case study that the notion of a unitary organisational culture does not apply, and that it is preferable to refer to a management culture as do writers such as Louis (1985).

Critical commentators point out that racist and authoritarian management practices continue in Zimbabwe. The case of General Industries provides detailed evidence of this, and the situation at General Industries was by no means an isolated case. This is particularly so for smaller enterprises in industry, commerce and mining, and much of the agricultural industry.
However, as the following chapters attest, it cannot be concluded that this is the only approach to labour relations in Zimbabwean organisations.

There are two underlying issues in this case study: alternative explanations of conflict arising from Marxist and conventional management literature, and the question of structure versus agency. Parallels can be identified in respect of how radical and conventional approaches could analyse organisations such as General Industries. Marxists such as Burawoy (1985) refer to the clash between colonial production relations and the demands of workers for post-colonial relations. Conventional concepts refer to notions of organisational life cycle and the incompatibility between authoritarian paternalistic practices in a family company being unsuited to a company which has grown beyond being a family business (Beckhard and Dyer 1983; Kimberly and Miles eds 1980). Both radical and conventional perspectives can be used to explain the conflict that has been recorded at General Industries, but a preferable approach is to use aspects of both simultaneously. That is, radical approaches provide the starting point for analysis by identifying the fundamental conflict between workers and management, which conventional approaches tend to play down or overlook. However, conventional concepts such as management style and culture, and organisational life cycle can be fruitfully added to provide finer explanatory power.

The General Industries case also raises the question as to what extent labour relations were influenced by an individual, the Chief Executive, or by structural forces. My view is that the Chief Executive did have a powerful influence on the conduct of labour relations, but that this is largely explicable in structural terms. His authoritarian approach was fundamentally a product of his Rhodesian culture and his status as a member of the founding family. However, many other managers at General Industries, from supervisors to top managers, were imbued with Rhodesian management culture. The Chief
Executive's authoritarianism was simply intensified by his founding family status. So his removal would not be sufficient to overcome labour relations problems. A reformist replacement would probably improve the situation, but many of the white managers and supervisors would oppose major changes and would maintain authoritarian practices and racist attitudes. A major change would probably require a crisis from an external source, such as a direct government threat to nationalise the company unless labour relations were improved.

Government policy has been to use public censure rather than nationalisation to improve labour relations in companies, so at present there appears to be insufficient pressure to change recalcitrant employers such as General Industries. As time passes, however, it is likely that increasing pressure will be mounted against racist practices both by workers within these companies, and by government in response to their demands. If media attention were given to workers' claims about discrimination, then considerable weight would be placed upon companies such as General Industries to adopt reforms. This applies with respect to issues of race but it is unlikely government would seriously address the issue of uncooperative management practices (e.g., intimidating workers, continuing to treat workers as inferior, ignoring their requests). This would require a strong workers movement within companies and strong backing by the government. Both these conditions are unlikely to arise. The union movement has remained weak in Zimbabwe due in part to its incorporation by government, as has been discussed (Chapters 3 and 4), and given government policy to encourage private sector growth a major challenge to current labour relations practices in which management predominates is improbable.
All these developments made it increasingly difficult for Ernest [Oppenheimer] to keep watch on the whole organisation. But at least he could be friendly towards all his staff, greeting them in the lift, smiling as he saw them and shaking hands to wish them the compliments of the season at Christmas. For that they loved him. They could hardly believe how 'ordinary' and accessible he was.


Anglo will show you the beautiful side - they will not tell you the real story of what workers put up with.

Jeffrey Mutandare, President, Associated Mine Workers’ of Zimbabwe, October, 1984.

Don Corleone received everyone - rich and poor, powerful and humble - with an equal show of love. He slighted no one. That was his character.

Brasi’s reputation for violence was awesome and his devotion to Don Corleone legendary. He was, in himself, one of the great blocks that supported the Don’s power structure. His kind was a rarity.


Introduction

The case of Anglo American Corporation exemplifies the transition from colonial to post-colonial relations of production that is taking place in many organisations in Zimbabwe. Anglo bureaucratised its personnel and labour relations systems and practices in order to move beyond arbitrary and racist practices. These systems and practices are analysed in detail in this chapter to document the gradual transition of labour relations in Zimbabwe. Multinational corporations such as Anglo American have often been depicted as exploitative of Third World economies, and their bureaucratisation of labour relations is seen as merely a more subtle form of exploitation of labour than colonial relations (Burawoy 1985). These critiques present management as monolithic and overlook internal differentiation and management culture. Close examination of Anglo American shows that management culture influences the conduct of labour relations, and that the distinct role of the personnel department needs to be understood for adequate analysis of labour relations.
6.1 Background to Labour Relations at Anglo American Corporation

The Anglo American Corporation (AAC) of South Africa together with its associated companies (e.g., De Beers) was the largest corporation in Southern Africa. The Anglo American Corporation was also one of the largest corporations in Zimbabwe. Arrighi's description of Anglo as an "economic empire" (1966: 50) is apt; in 1985 it had over 50 group companies in Zimbabwe and substantial interests in numerous other companies. Drawing on 1976 data, Clarke lists 82 companies in which Anglo had one or more directorships (1980: 68-70). Group companies were those which came under the management control of the Zimbabwe Head Office, Anglo American Corporation Services Limited, a subsidiary of AAC of South Africa, and this could include daily interaction or direction. In 1985 the group companies employed over 23,000 people and had millions of dollars of assets.

Four of the major group companies are examined in this study: Bindura Nickel Corporation, Hippo Valley Estates, Wankie Colliery Company and Zimbabwe Alloys Limited. All four were quoted on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange. Bindura Nickel Corporation (BNC) was comprised of the Trojan Nickel Mine, the Bindura Smelter and Refinery (Trojan/BSR) and three other mines. Trojan/BSR was located in Bindura about 90 kilometres from Harare. The size in terms of turnover, fixed assets and number of employees of BNC and the other three Anglo group companies in this study is indicated in Table 6.1.
BNC was Zimbabwe’s only nickel producer, and it was heavily dependent on exports. The world price for nickel fluctuated wildly in the 1980s and BNC’s financial results also fluctuated markedly. As shown in Table 6.2, heavy losses were sustained in 1982 and 1983 and again in 1986 and 1987. In 1987 BNC was in serious financial difficulties and despite assistance from Anglo American and government there was a real possibility that operations would cease. Stringent cost saving measures and retrenchments were effected, and these had deleterious effects on labour relations. Then, fortuitously, the international nickel price rose dramatically from US$1.60 per lb to US$4.60 per lb during 1987. This rejuvenated the ailing company, but high price volatility and low grade ores entail an uncertain future for BNC (Annual Report 1987).

Trojan was a hardrock underground mine beneath a mountain, about eight kilometres from Bindura town centre. The smelter and refinery were positioned adjacent to Trojan Mine in a green, picturesque area. Some workers’ houses were located beside the smelter and the housing complex stretched around a hill behind the smelter. The production process in the smelter and refinery was capital intensive, using quite modern production
techniques. Trojan was a large mine with a clean, wide walkway under the hill to cages which conveyed miners to different levels. Drilling, blasting and lashing (loading) took place in arteries of the catacomb in the mine. Drilling and lashing is hard work, and the surroundings, with the light beams from miners' hats flashing here and there and the screeching drills, provided an almost surreal setting. The occasional rumble of a blast elsewhere in the mine was a reminder that a mountain was sitting on top of the work area. The 4,000 strong workforce comprised mostly unskilled (48%) and semi-skilled (42%) workers.

Zimbabwe Alloys' had several chrome mines which supplied ores to the refinery located in Gweru (270 kilometres from Harare on the Bulawayo road). This company also faced financial problems, recording after tax losses in 1982 ($1.0m), 1983 ($9.4m) and 1984 ($0.2m) before recovering in 1985 ($10.8m profit), and the total workforce declined from a high of 4,400 in 1982 to 2,182 in 1985 (Annual Report 1985). The mining operations were similar to those of BNC; though the refinery used different production methods involving huge furnaces so many jobs involved very hot work conditions. Union Carbide’s Zimbabwe Mining and Smelting Company (ZIMASCO) was the only other chrome producer in Zimbabwe.

Wankie Colliery Company was Zimbabwe’s sole coal producer. Hwange was a company town (the town was renamed after independence, but the company was not), located 100 kilometres from Victoria Falls in the far north west of Zimbabwe. The population of Hwange was about 40,000. Mining began in 1899 and Anglo took over the colliery in 1953. After independence the government purchased a 40 percent holding in Wankie Colliery, though AAC retained the management contract. Two mines were in operation, the underground No.3 Colliery and the opencast project. Underground mining was reduced following an explosion in No.2 Colliery which killed 427 men in June 1972 (Quénet Commission 1973). Opencast mining produced 80
percent of output in the 1980s, and was highly capital intensive, employing 270 low-skilled workers compared to 1,300 in No.3 Colliery. A huge dragline weighing 3,500 tonnes scooped out 120 tonnes of material in a single swoop to expose the coal seam for extraction again using huge machinery. In 1984 low skilled workers comprised 88 percent of the total workforce (5,000 employees). The company yielded profits in each year from 1981 to 1985. The workforce was reduced in 1985 as 330 employees accepted the company’s inducement package to resign.

Hippo Valley Estates was formed in 1956 and became the largest sugar producer in Zimbabwe. It was located in Chiredzi in the Lowveld about 500 kilometres south of Harare. Situated virtually next door to Hippo Valley was the other main sugar producer, Triangle Sugar Estate, and AAC of South Africa had a major interest in this company. Hippo and Triangle remained separate companies, however, and Triangle was not a group company of AAC in Zimbabwe. They worked closely together; for example, in a joint venture they owned and operated the third main sugar producer, Mkwasine Estate. Labour relations were managed separately though the personnel departments conferred at monthly liaison meetings. Hippo Valley’s financial results were mixed, with high profits in 1981, a small loss in 1983 and gradually increasing profits thereafter.

The production process involved the planting, tending and harvesting of cane on a vast area of land, about 10,700 hectares in 1984-85. The plantation was divided into 24 sections, on each cane was burned and cut throughout the harvesting period from April to November. From December to March the fields were planted and maintained. This allowed permanent rather than seasonal work. The cane was harvested by hand slashers and the work was onerous. Almost 5,000 workers, mostly unskilled cane-workers, were employed in the fields in 1985. An additional 1,900 employees were attached to the mill which processed the cane using fairly modern
techniques and equipment. Of the total workforce of 6,785 in 1985, 5,267 (78%) were unskilled and 1,295 (19%) were semi-skilled workers.

At independence virtually all managerial employees in the four companies were white, and only a few blacks were in senior positions. Wages were typically low, ranging from $20.80 per month at Hippo Valley to $81 for the lowest paid industrial workers at Zimbabwe Alloys (though many workers were paid above these minima). Strikes and labour unrest occurred at all four companies over a number of issues including pay, discrimination, working and housing conditions and pension funds. Wankie Colliery was the scene of two major strikes in 1980, one in May lasting for 12 days. Workers demanded an increase from about $2.00 per day to $2.00 per hour, or $16 per day. During this dispute the Rhodesian African Rifles were sent to "maintain essential services at the coke plant" (ARB-EFT 15 April - 14 May 1980: 5502). The British South Africa Police patrolled the villages and used megaphones to urge an end to the strike. At one stage the message from the back of a Hippo (i.e., armoured personnel carrier) was "[r]eturn to work or your houses will [be] taken away", and heavy police surveillance was maintained throughout the strike with Hippos and other security force vehicles patrolling the villages (Company Report on the May 1980 Strike). The General Manager met with assembled workers, but they demanded to see the Minister of Labour, hoping that he would grant far more than management was prepared to offer. A delegation of workers was transported some kilometres from the colliery to meet the Minister on 13 May and the following day the workers' representatives recommended a return to work. There was no pay increase granted but the following points were agreed:

1) workers should return to work in the national interest;
2) minimum wages were being reviewed by government;
3) the "master and servant" attitude must end;
4) the workers' "MIPF" pension contributions would be refunded and the scheme cancelled;
5) an ex gratia payment of $5 to all employees for hardship allowance was
As mentioned in Chapter 3, there was a suggestion by the Minister of Labour that the 1980 strikes were instigated by supporters of opposition parties. Wankie is located in Matabeleland North Province which elected only ZAPU candidates in the 1980 elections, and is an area populated predominantly by Ndebele-speaking and other minority tribes (e.g., Nambian, Tonga). Strike leaders later maintained that political opposition was not the cause, and given the grounds for grievances this is reasonable to believe. They said the strike was a reaction to other strikes taking place around the country, and majority rule had just been attained so workers took the previously denied opportunity to strike for improved wages and work conditions. One of the key leaders further explained:

We were striking out of ignorance. We saw in the newspapers the company making millions [of dollars profit]. To us, we didn’t know anything about investments and those things (Interview May 1985).

Workers felt that companies could afford massive wage increases and that independence would enable them to extract such increases from management.

With respect to the November strike over pension funds, again the evidence suggests it was not primarily opposition parties who were responsible; if anything, the government was as much the cause as any other factor. Workers called for the return of their pension contributions and demanded that the company should pay for their contributions for them. Minister Kangai at first supported the return of their contributions. Workers voted on this issue and virtually all voted for their return. But later Kangai changed his view. Refunding would have required a change in the law and refunding would have been detrimental to workers’ interests since they would not receive employer contribution benefits. In the end Kangai ordered the strikers back to work despite his earlier statements (Interviews with strike
Some interviewees stated that opposition parties instigated strikes at Hippo Valley by declaring that ZANU(PF) had done little to improve the situation for workers since wages were merely increased from $20 to $30 per month. The major opposition party was ZANU(Sithole) which had a strong following among the Hlengwe and Shangaan-speaking people who lived around Chipinge, 150 kilometres from Chiredzi. But opinions differ on this issue and many argue that a major cause was the pay disparity between field workers ($30 per month) and mill workers ($70 per month). A further view was that the strikers were mobilised by ZANU(PF) rallies addressed by government ministers. Strike leaders later stated that in the tumultuous times following independence "we thought we could take over the company". It does seem that ZANU(PF) mobilisation efforts contributed to the strikes, and this is supported by the fact that the strikers refused to return to work until they were persuaded to do so by Minister Kangai and ZANU(PF) liaison officers who toured the plantation addressing workers (Interviews with strike leaders and managers May 1985, and former Ministry of Labour official January 1988).

This was a volatile period in all four group companies. Meetings between managers and workers were often permeated with hostility and heated exchanges on racial issues took place. Labour unrest other than strikes also took place. One example of this occurred at Zimbabwe Alloys in July 1982. Workers in the briquette plant used to stop work 15 minutes before closing time to clean-up. This had tacitly grown to 30 minutes, and the white Furnace Manager endeavoured to return to 15 minutes. The workers rejected this and held a meeting after working hours, and the following

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1 A company personnel officer estimated that around 65% of the workforce were Shona (Karanga or Sezuru), about 25% were Shangaan or Hlengwe and less than 10% were Ndau.
morning the entire workers' committee and sub-committee for the department, about 20 workers, assembled at the Furnace Manager's office. They were in a hostile mood, and when the manager left his office the workers' committee members followed and accused him of being racist, commenting that he should "go to South Africa", "the workers' committee was firing him", and he should "be chopped into 1,000 pieces". In the Personnel Manager's office a heated exchange occurred between the manager and six workers' committee members. A workers' committee member grasped the manager's arm in order to remove him from the company premises. He was a small but volatile man and he hit out, whereupon at least 3 workers' committee members attacked him. The Anglo Group Industrial Relations Advisor in Harare was contacted and he obtained permission from Minister Kangai to suspend the entire workers' committee and the white manager. The Chief Industrial Relations Officer came and addressed workers, but they disputed many of his points and at times jeered at him. The white manager was asked to leave Zimbabwe Alloys, though the workers believed he was transferred to another Anglo company. One of the workers' committee members was dismissed and the others were reinstated (Company records and interviews with the Personnel Manager, the Personnel Officer and workers' committee members, who were involved in the incident, December 1984).

Over time tensions eased in the four group companies and most white managers and black workers displayed less animosity toward each other. Conflict, however, did not entirely cease. Labour relations became less conflictual in the Anglo companies than at General Industries; for two main reasons. Labour relations systems were developed which were designed to attenuate racist and authoritarian management practices, and blacks were appointed to personnel positions which assisted in improving negotiations between workers and management.
6.2 Personnel and Labour Relations at Anglo American

There were variations in the structure of workers' committees in the four Anglo companies, but the general pattern was for departments to elect a workers' committee which would elect representatives to a central workers' committee. Members of the central committee met management at the works council. At Hippo Valley, because of the size of the workforce, there was a three-tiered structure with workers' committees at the section, field and company levels.

Relations between workers' committees and trade unions varied. The Associated Mine Workers' of Zimbabwe (AMWZ) was well organised in terms of union structures and membership at Bindura (55% of the workforce) and Wankie (48% of the workforce) in 1984. The committee and the union at BNC established a division of functions with the union focusing on, for example, wages and housing, and the committee attending to job evaluation and village facilities. There was overlap but relations were generally cooperative; indeed, in 1985 the union branch chairman previously had been workers' committee chairman, and he worked closely with the incumbent workers' committee. Later differences emerged between the two bodies with the union taking a more aggressive stand than the committee on issues such as racial discrimination and housing. A BNC manager stated that the unionists had "more clout" with management, and "they would really do their homework and push management" (Interview April 1987). In part this resulted from a higher proportion of skilled workers among the unionists than among the committee members, and also the unionists could pursue outstanding issues through the mining union structure and the industrial council.

At Hippo Valley and Zimbabwe Alloys the situation was quite different. The Chiredzi workers strongly resisted joining either of the two agricultural unions
because this would bring them under the low agriculture award. They wanted to be under the higher industrial award and so formed the Zimbabwe Sugar Industry Trade Union. This proved fruitless since the Ministry of Labour denied it registration on the grounds that this would breach government policy of one union in each industry; in this case government policy, which was ostensibly to strengthen the union movement, in fact retarded unionisation. At Zimbabwe Alloys' there was no union for black workers. The workers' committee executive together with ZIMASCO workers strongly supported the creation of a union for the ferrochrome industry. In 1982 a person claiming to form a union collected $500 from Zimbabwe Alloys' workers and $400 from those at ZIMASCO. That was the last they saw of the unionist and their money; police investigations were unsuccessful. The workers' committee sent a delegation to the ZCTU in Harare in June 1984, and they were promised books and assistance to launch a union, but neither were forthcoming by mid-1985.

Zimbabwe Alloys and Hippo Valley workers were represented by workers' committee members at industrial board meetings since no trade union was registered in their industry. It is seen below that, as with the mining union, workers' committees had very limited direct influence over wages and government played a more important role. Zimbabwe Alloys' representatives who attended the ferrochrome industrial board meeting in 1984 were not effective bargainers. They did not caucus with ZIMASCO workers (65 kilometres from Gweru) before the meeting and they were unfamiliar with how boards functioned: "We tried to do our best, but we were not fully aware what was happening" (Interview Chairman Workers' Committee April 1985). The agreed increase was surpassed by the statutory increase awarded later.

White workers had a union before independence but it became defunct.
Common issues dealt with by workers' committees and works councils were job evaluation, discipline, company housing, managers' attitudes to workers, staffing levels, village facilities, loans and work arrangements. They were primarily labour relations bodies, and not arenas for workers' participation in decision-making as they have been assessed by some observers (Nangati 1984a; Maphosa 1985; Cheater 1986). Workers' committees were not powerful labour relations bodies, but they did serve an important representative role where no union was present. A frequent management response to demands from workers' committees that involved money was that the company lacked the capacity to pay or that it was a Head Office decision. As company-based bodies they were unable to pursue issues beyond the company works council, and government prohibition of strikes weakened their bargaining power. Within these constraints workers' committees played an important role in putting forward workers' day-to-day industrial demands. Over time they improved working conditions, and they gained acceptance from management that workers had legitimate demands. At Hippo Valley, for example, the workers' committee successfully pushed for the removal of a white chairman of the works council whom they considered to be racist, a review of the grading for all jobs, and a change in the timing of pay day. Meetings between management and workers became far more cordial in Anglo companies than at General Industries, and there was much greater commitment from management to work in cooperation with workers. At Bindura Nickel this was symbolically reinforced by the white mine and smelter managers who referred to workers on the works council as "comrade" - usually an unthinkable practice for whites in Zimbabwe.

One of the most important developments in personnel management in Zimbabwe has been the introduction of formal job evaluation methods to avoid *ad hoc* or paternalist job and pay structures. The single most commonly used scheme was the Paterson Method of Job Evaluation which...
was introduced into Zimbabwe by Anglo American after its adoption by Anglo in South Africa. All Anglo group companies and many other private companies and parastatals use this method, and most of these organisations implemented it in the early 1980s. Paterson bases his method on predominantly one factor - decision-making - in order to avoid a wage structure based on allowances for labour scarcity, work conditions and so on which lead to a "chaotic compilation of bonuses and allowances long after the circumstances for these allowances have gone" (Paterson 1974: 1). The Anglo manual on job evaluation states that four other factors (stress, tolerance, sequence, variety) can be taken into account for the third and final stage of job sub-grading, but in the first two stages (banding and grading) decision-making is the only factor (AAC Services Limited 1984). This causes problems since decision-making and the additional four factors do not differentiate well among the low-skilled jobs which are prevalent in Zimbabwean industry. Other factors such as work conditions, hazards, physical effort and consequence of error do differentiate low-skilled jobs but they are not included in the Anglo manual. Anglo companies thus "add on" to the Paterson Method the bonuses and allowances Paterson sought to avoid. Allowances are paid, for example, for working underground and exposure to intense heat, and there was a long-running dispute over the drag-line drivers' grade since there was no factor for consequence of error.

Another problem is that, despite Paterson's claim that the method is simple to understand and implement (1974: xi), in practice "decision-making" is difficult to operationalise and many workers' representatives do not easily grasp the concepts. Many managers and personnel specialists also have similar difficulties (Observation and numerous interviews 1985-1988 e.g., Nigel Turner, Personnel Consultant, November 1987), and in 1981 Anglo brought Paterson himself from Britain to Zimbabwe to overcome their

³This method also forms the basis of the Zimbabwe public service grading scheme.
problems with grading skilled workers. The Anglo manual states that the method "is internationally accepted and applied, and its acceptability to workers has been demonstrated around the world" (AAC Services Limited 1984: 8). Yet this system has not gained widespread international acceptance. According to a major ILO study on job evaluation this method is comparatively little used. One of the reasons for this may be because workers do not readily accept the idea that factors such as skills, experience, etc., should not be taken into consideration. Moreover, there may be doubts whether in practice the evaluators would be able properly to identify the scope of decision-making (ILO 1986: 63).

Similarly, Bottomley contends:

Since the method is geared to managerial discretion, the trade unions find it unpopular. Measuring the level of decision-making is often contentious and requires continued review and endless monitoring (1987: 85).

There are grounds for concluding that the Paterson Method has been adopted on a major scale in Zimbabwe as a result of the weak labour movement which has not had the expertise and strength to resist this method. The black trade unions had no professional advisors to analyse and compare the Paterson Method with other schemes. Indeed this point applies to companies and managers as well. When managers in companies other than Anglo were asked why the Paterson Method was selected a frequent response was, as one personnel manager put it, "Well, what else was there?" (Interview, Personnel Manager, Blue Ribbon Foods, June 1985). There were a few alternative schemes in use in Zimbabwe, but none was generally considered to be preferable. Of the commonly used methods, several had consequence of error as a factor, only one had physical effort and none included work conditions and hazards.

While there were genuine criticisms to be made of the Paterson Method, some criticisms were misplaced. Some workers' representatives in Zimbabwe considered the Paterson Method to be racist and "anti-worker". They claimed that white managers were given top grades while workers
were consigned to lower grades. In reality, the fact that whites occupied managerial positions in greater proportion to blacks had nothing to do with the Paterson system, and it is therefore incorrect to describe the method as "racist". Workers also complained against being graded lower than managers yet this is true of presumably virtually all job evaluation schemes throughout the world. Job evaluation schemes in themselves do not challenge hierarchy; they are designed to reflect hierarchy in accordance with the prevailing societal notions of distributive justice (Cowan 1985), and in Zimbabwe hierarchy in the private and public sectors was very much the order of the day.

Workers in Anglo companies found it difficult to criticise the Paterson scheme in principle, since they lacked detailed expertise and knowledge of other methods. There was an underlying suspicion of the method, but their objections were predominantly over technicalities in the implementation and review of the method. Workers frequently demanded that jobs be regraded, and at times they called for a review of all jobs in the company. In part these demands resulted from genuine problems of grading which required review; however, another factor was that government controls on wages led workers to seek pay increases through the upgrading of jobs. In general, the four Anglo companies were more willing to revise job grading than was General Industries; jobs were regraded periodically and a review of all jobs was occasionally agreed. Anglo's use of the Paterson Method can be criticised for neglecting important work factors and the difficulty in operationalising decision-making. Nonetheless, the scheme was useful to replace *ad hoc* or racial grading and pay practices with bureaucratic procedures.

Formal disciplinary and grievance procedures were laid down in writing by Anglo's Zimbabwe Head Office (AAC Services Limited n.d.). The disciplinary code set out in detail a schedule of offences and sanctions, and procedures
for hearing disciplinary cases, pursuing grievances and appeals. Line managers have authority over discipline and the personnel department can advise and assist in the conduct of disciplinary cases. Offenders have a right to be represented (e.g., by a trade union or workers' committee member) in disciplinary cases and hearings. Common offences were absenteeism, poor time-keeping and disobedience. Penalties depended on the nature of the offence; serious offences (e.g., theft, assault) could incur suspension pending dismissal, and lesser offences could result in two recorded warnings and a final warning. Generally, workers' committee members in the four companies reported that discipline was carried out fairly. There were instances in which workers objected to disciplinary practices, but by the same token there were occasions when the disciplinary code was side-stepped and "extended final warnings" were given instead of dismissal. Applications were made to the Ministry of Labour for dismissals even during the period when summary dismissal without ministerial approval was legal (1982-1985). There was an attempt by the personnel departments to create a cooperative labour relations climate by discouraging harsh disciplinary practices.

Extensive training was carried out at all four group companies. Each company had its own training centre and training officer, and Head Office provided additional training. Courses were provided to employees at all levels including "6M" and workers' committee training for shopfloor workers, and supervisory and management courses for more senior employees. The "6M" course was designed to provide shopfloor workers with a basic knowledge of the functioning of a business enterprise (e.g., men, money, machines). The graduate learner programme, which developed employees for senior positions, was probably the most extensive in Zimbabwe. Indeed, the Group Training Advisor maintained that "we have the best training structure in the country". The combined figures for all Anglo group companies in 1984 indicated 55,000 man-days of training, involving 11,500
people and a budget of $4 million (Interview, Group Training Advisor July 1985).

In conjunction with this staff development Anglo established policies to advance black employees. Manpower plans were developed and, as Table 6.3 shows, considerable black advancement had taken place by 1985. For the four group companies, blacks held 28% of management positions (Bands D and E) in 1985, up from 3% in 1980, and the increasing proportion of blacks in management continued into 1987 (36%). The proportion of blacks in skilled positions increased dramatically from 29% in 1980 to 70% in 1985 and slowed to 72% in 1987. Manpower plans envisaged that these trends would continue. Black advancement was most rapid at BNC, which experienced extremely high turnover (38%) among senior staff in 1987 when there were fears the company would close (Annual Report 1987: 2). Black advancement was slowest at Hippo Valley. This was due to the low turnover among senior staff, which was 4.9% in 1984, well below the average of 9.8% for companies in the Castellion Salary Survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Bands D and E</th>
<th>Band C</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1980 #</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bindura Nickel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippo Valley</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wankie Colliery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe Alloys</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean %</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Company records.

1 Paterson Band E = top management; Band D = junior management; Band C = skilled employees.

Considerably more black advancement occurred within personnel departments than in line management; for example, at Hippo Valley in 1985, 3 of the 4 personnel managers were black. As has been noted (Chapter 2), this is frequently seen as evidence of "window-dressing". In many cases this may be an accurate assessment, but this is not the case for the Anglo
companies studied here. In part these appointments are in recognition of the need to have personnel officers sensitive to the needs and culture of workers. At the most basic level this includes understanding workers who do not speak English well, and refraining from calling older workers by their first name. Black personnel officers better appreciate the importance of the extended family in African culture, such as the need to spend perhaps days at the funeral of a mainini (small-mother, aunt) or babamunini (small-brother, cousin). Rather than treating workers with disdain, as many white managers did, black personnel staff evinced greater respect for workers and treated their requests seriously. This improved the tone and atmosphere in meetings, and contributed much to the decline in confrontation and the development of negotiated labour relations. Workers at Wankie Colliery appreciated the contribution of the Personnel Department since they requested that this department have the right of veto over line managers' decision to dismiss workers.4

Racist attitudes persisted among whites and racial labour relations practices were not removed overnight. Hippo Valley workers stated that racial tensions continued and no whites were under the supervision of blacks in the fields. Not until 1985 was the personnel department restructured to abolish separate sections for salaried and non-salaried staff. Whites did not mix well with blacks, and at the May Day ceremony in 1985 the General Manager was the only white manager present. At Wankie Colliery in 1985 workers strongly objected to a white expatriate manager who assaulted two workers. This manager was suspended and his contract was not renewed. Zimbabwe Alloys' workers similarly complained about the white Chief Engineer who assaulted a worker in a minor way. Workers did not demand his dismissal, taking cognisance of the level of offence and the difficulty in replacing him, but they were angered that management treated this case

4This request was denied since the policy was, as is commonly the case, for the personnel department to have advisory authority on discipline.
more leniently than cases involving shopfloor workers. Whereas workers faced formal disciplinary hearings, the manager was apparently rebuked in a closed meeting with the General Manager. So despite company policy, strains persisted in race relations though in muted form compared to the early 1980s.

Job evaluation, discipline and black advancement were thus prominent issues in Anglo's labour relations. In addition wages and housing were major concerns of workers. Wages were undoubtedly the most pressing issue for workers yet, due to their weak representation, government controls and problems of profitability in the companies, workers had very marginal direct influence over wages. Workers at Wankie Colliery and Bindura Nickel were represented by the Associated Mine Workers' of Zimbabwe at the Industrial Council for the Mining Industry. However, the minimum wage for the lowest-paid workers at Wankie and Bindura was equal to the statutory minimum wage from 1980 until at least 1985 (see Chapter 4 Table 4.1). The minimum for Zimbabwe Alloys' refinery workers ($100) was higher than the industrial minimum ($70) in July 1980, but by 1984 this margin had narrowed ($141 and $125 respectively). In other words, the national miners' union was no more effective than the workers' committee at Zimbabwe Alloys in obtaining wage increases.

At Hippo Valley wages were a special problem. Cane workers received $20.80 per month before the agricultural minimum was set at $30 by the Mugabe government in 1980. In 1981 Hippo Valley wages were raised to $50, well above the $30 minimum for agriculture, and wage rates remained above the statutory minimum at least until 1985. Workers, however, were extremely dissatisfied with the wage awards. According to a Personnel Officer, before independence the minimum wage was the same for mill and field workers (Interview May 1985). The introduction by government of different awards for agriculture and industry led to striking anomalies at
Hippo Valley in which mill workers received $70 monthly, while cane workers received $30 monthly in 1980. In January 1982 Labour Minister Kangai declared that all sugar workers' wages should be raised to the industrial minimum of $105. This represented a 210% increase over the $50 minimum for cane workers, and Anglo made strong representations to government to change this decision (based on low local and world sugar prices; indeed the company recorded a loss in the year to 31 March 1983). The decision was altered and wages were set at $60 per month, but this angered workers and the divided pay structure was a major source of dissatisfaction that persisted until 1985. The agro-industry dispute brought the issue to a head in 1985, and this resulted in a minimum wage of $143.75 for all Hippo Valley workers (Hippo Valley Estates, *Annual Report* 1987).

The experience in the Anglo companies was that government had greatest impact on wage rates, and to the extent that workers influenced wages this was by lobbying government rather than the company directly. In the three mining companies wages remained in line with statutory increases, and real wages were therefore generally static in the period 1980 to 1986 (see Chapter 4 Table 4.3). Government policy had a pronounced impact on real minimum wages for Hippo Valley field workers which increased from $20.80 at independence to $71.55 in 1985. However, in the process of establishing this increase, government wage policy led to anomalies and protracted disagreement between workers and the company.

Housing was a major cause of workers' dissatisfaction. After independence accommodation was allocated according to skill rather than race. Nonetheless, for low-skilled workers housing was generally in a pitiable state and consisted of one- to three-roomed brick semi-detached dwellings. Some houses did not have electricity, and bathing and toilet facilities were communal. At Hwange and Bindura these facilities were overloaded and,
despite the companies' efforts to maintain them, the ablution blocks had an unpleasant odour and appearance. Unattached houses were provided for skilled workers and their families, and these were comfortable houses on at least one-third of an acre at Hwange. Managers had larger and more comfortable houses and gardens.

At the national level, the mining union, AMWZ, declared a dispute with the Chamber of Mines over what the union considered to be "'unacceptable' housing rentals where some workers were charged up to $54 a month for poor accommodation" *(Herald 28/12/84)*. The AMWZ suggested that many mine workers lived in squalid conditions, paying excessive rents, and media reports lent support to this view: "Most of the 68,000 workers in the [mining] industry were living in a variety of structures, some of which could not be fairly classified as housing because they were in a bad state" *(Herald 28/12/84)*. The Chamber of Mines sought to rebut the allegations *(Herald 3/1/85)*, but follow-up reports showed pictures of ramshackle, pole-and-dagga "shacks" for miners' housing at one or possibly two mines near Harare *(Sunday Mail 13/1/85 and Herald 22/1/85)*. In one report the earlier qualifying word "some" was substituted in the following manner: "Most of the 68,000 workers in this industry live in structures that hardly deserve classification as housing" *(Sunday Mail 13/1/85)*. Wankie Colliery was specifically mentioned:

The AMWZ had learnt with dismay that Hwange Collieries [sic] had recently negotiated with the Government to allow them to levy a charge for the maintenance of the "hovels" the miners lived in. This accommodation was built before 1963 and was supposed to be rent-free *(Herald 28/12/84)*.  

Low-skilled workers' housing at Wankie and other mines was in a regrettable state; however, the worst housing was found on the smaller mines. The

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5These charges were introduced to partially recover up-keep costs after the government removed the discount for housing and other benefits in the mining award.
larger multinational-owned mines were often more profitable and housing was not as unpleasant. As Derek Bain, the chief executive of the Chamber of Mines, stated,

the traditional pole-and-dagga dwellings were fast becoming a relic of the past for the big mining companies - although the smaller operations might be lagging behind because they lacked money (Herald 3/1/85).

The standard of housing for low-skilled workers on the multinational-owned mines was poor and higher-level employees enjoyed much better conditions; however, this is also true throughout Zimbabwe in both the private and public sectors. Many senior public servants live in opulent houses in the low-density, former white suburbs, while their office cleaners and their families might share a dilapidated, small house with two other families with one toilet-cum-shower in the high-density suburbs such as Highfield in Harare. As pointed out by the Chamber of Mines, under the formula they proposed, rent paid to the company at Golden Kopje Mine near Chinhoyi, would be $27 per month, yet the Municipality was charging $53 for "identical" housing (Verden 1987: 4). The government prevented the union from organising a strike over this dispute and conflict between the union and the Chamber of Mines continued. In 1987 the Labour Relations Tribunal determined the dispute in favour of the formula proposed by the Chamber.

Conflict between workers and managers in Anglo companies declined in the 1980s since commitment was given to the implementation of labour relations systems for, for example, grading, discipline and promotion to rationalise labour relations. In addition, appointments of blacks to personnel department positions helped to place labour relations on a negotiated rather than a confrontational basis. This was a gradual and difficult process, not without its problems and setbacks. By 1987 it was still a process rather than an accomplishment, and conflicts over issues such as wages and housing persisted. Nonetheless, the post-independence labour relations
climate in Anglo companies improved dramatically over the earlier situation in which racial antagonisms dominated work relations.

6.3 Management Culture: Bureaucratic Enlightened Self-Interest versus Colonialism

A common feature of the four group companies was the interplay between rugged individualism, or pioneering spirit, that characterised white managers in mining and farming operations, and the imposition of bureaucratic systems of management. In Zimbabwe ruggedness and pioneering spirit have racial overtones as a legacy from Cecil Rhodes' Pioneer Column and white settlers who colonised Zimbabwe by overwhelming black resistance. Most overt racism has now been removed from the group companies and the "ruggedness" of authoritarian whites was being attenuated by the bureaucratic systems and company and government policy which prohibited racism. There was more emphasis on the company as a whole community and its contribution to Zimbabwe; not just to the Rhodesian white community. Racist attitudes remained among some whites, but the prevailing social climate was that these must be suppressed and not permitted to govern whites' actions and their treatment of blacks, as was the case before independence. Many whites were socially distant from blacks and the interaction that took place was on whites' terms such as banter at work or in the clubs for senior employees, much the same as before independence (Brand 1981: 51). Whites almost never visited the homes of blacks and rarely attended activities such as political rallies and Worker of the Year Awards, as Cheater (1986) found at Zimtex. This was partly an ideological divide and not just a racial one, since many whites probably rejected these affairs as "socialist clap-trap", as one white manager at Hippo Valley put it (Interview May 1985).
At Hippo Valley the General Manager challenged racist behaviour and endeavoured to breakdown racial barriers. He developed his own policy of "management by wandering around" (Peters and Waterman 1982), by touring villages on weekends while other white managers were, for example, at their popular polo matches. In the villages he would ask people their problems; then on Monday mornings he would seek out the responsible manager and demand an explanation and remedial action. Workers' committee members and other black personnel described the General Manager as "firm but fair". He was a tough-minded manager who did not let racial considerations intervene in the operations of the company. In 1978, at the height of the civil war, as Mill Manager he sacked seven whites whom he deemed to be inefficient and too authoritarian, and, according to a Hippo manager, declared "I am not employing soldiers". In the early 1980s when he believed some white managers put forward unwarranted dismissal cases, he insisted that all dismissal cases be presented to him, and he at times ordered the managers to take back a suspended employee when they urged that the worker be transferred to another section. The General Manager was quite open about his views on race at the workplace, and in meetings repeatedly declared "Between blackies and whities, I will favour the blackie" (Interview, Personnel Manager, Hippo Valley). At Zimbabwe Alloys the General Manager played a strong role in support of black advancement, and the black personnel manager there stated that without this support white line managers would have substantially limited black advancement. General management, in short, played a major role in setting the tone for work relations, and this was often a positive contribution (Interviews with managers and workers May 1985 and 1987).

Another characteristic of Hippo Valley's culture was that the distance from Head Office allowed the company a certain degree of autonomy that some other Anglo companies did not experience. Several Anglo managers stated of Hippo Valley that, as one put it, "it is a law unto itself" (Interview
This autonomy allowed Hippo Valley to develop relations with government officials independent of Head Office, notwithstanding corporate policy to the contrary, and enabled the personnel department to be restructured outside corporate practice. Another instance of latitude was that a white employee was being trained to be Chief Engineer in two years according to the General Manager; while at some other Anglo companies this was considered to take seven to fifteen years. Similarly, at Wankie Colliery a number of managers considered distance from Head Office a blessing rather than a tyranny, and in conjunction with workers they modified Anglo’s labour relations systems by, for example, developing a distinct disciplinary code and including additional categories for unskilled workers in the Paterson job evaluation scheme. The proximity of Bindura Nickel to Head Office, on the other hand, contributed to managers there believing that they were more closely controlled than elsewhere. It is likely though that BNC’s lack of profitability was a major factor in this tighter control.

At the corporate level, the physical features of Head Office epitomised some aspects of Anglo’s culture. It was situated on the corner of a major intersection in Harare and had a solid-looking red-brick structure. The building was named “Charter House”, derived from the “Chartered Company”, the British South Africa Company which founded the settler colony in Rhodesia and was later taken over by Anglo American. The entrance had prominent pillars and the foyer had a high ceiling. A brass portrait of Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, the founder of Anglo American Corporation, adorned the wood-panelled foyer, and dignified black commissionaires took details of all visitors. The closed offices branched off the curved corridors and there was a formal, hushed atmosphere about the building. The directors’ offices on the third floor had sedate furnishings. The physical features, in short, project a solid, establishment appearance in

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6 The original Charter House owned by the British South Africa Company was on a different site (Jackson 1986: 70).
Relationships among the staff at Charter House were quite formal. One manager described the relations as "[c]old, serious, status-orientated. Everyone wants to make sure you know your place and you stay in it" (Interview December 1985). Dress was also formal; grey or blue suits were de rigueur. Many of the Head Office managers were accountants or engineers. Their emphasis on financial and technical matters contributed to a bureaucratic approach to managing the organisation.

At Anglo American systems and bureaucratic procedures were very highly valued. This was clearly evident with respect to personnel and labour relations systems such as job evaluation, discipline and promotion. Virtually all labour policies were in writing and these were sometimes lengthy documents: the job evaluation manual had 94 pages; the Disciplinary Code and Grievance Procedure had 22 pages. The general business approach was bureaucratic compared to many other companies. An Anglo manager was of the view that new business proposals were not greatly encouraged (Interview 1987). One very differing corporation was Lonrho which had a far greater entrepreneurial, free-wheeling business approach partly as a result of the personality of Tiny Rowland, the Chief Executive. Rowland, "the tireless jet-borne tycoon", travelled around Africa meeting numerous leaders, and arranging various deals (Cronjè, Ling and Cronjè 1976: 11). Lonrho negotiated a multi-million dollar agreement with Mozambique involving investment in agriculture, mining and tourism, despite the economic malaise, guerrilla war and Marxist ideology of the ruling party in that country (Financial Gazette 17/5/85). In Zimbabwe Lonrho entered a joint venture with ZANU(PF) to establish a company. Anglo American would not contemplate such ventures, preferring to keep some distance from overtly political activities of black parties. The Government purchase of interests in
Wankie Colliery was a very different case from the Lonrho venture. Lonrho was dealing with a political party, while AAC was dealing with the Government, and the Government was buying out some of Anglo’s interests, whereas Lonrho commenced a new venture jointly.

To understand Anglo’s management culture it is helpful to note the company’s experience in other countries, particularly Zambia. In 1970 the Zambian government nationalised 51 percent of the copper industry which included substantial investments by Anglo American (Sklar 1975). The company retained the management contract, but Anglo managers considered the transaction to be a setback in terms of a decline in their control over their specific investments, and they were opposed to an overall extension of state ownership of industry. A number of Anglo managers in Zimbabwe had worked in Zambia and they endeavoured to prevent a similar takeover in Zimbabwe after independence. To achieve this Anglo was presented as "a good corporate citizen", earning valuable foreign currency, making capital investments, and employing and training many workers. Similarly, the company was presented as a "responsible employer" which eschewed racist or authoritarian management practices. Hence strong commitment was given to bureaucratic systems as a means to avoid these practices, and as a defence against allegations of discrimination and unfairness. Following Schein (1985), it can be seen that bureaucracy was highly valued at Anglo as a strategy for coping with the problem of possible nationalisation. Bureaucratic procedures have now become a part of the fabric of Anglo American.

The values of the founder of AAC of South Africa, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, and his successors (e.g., his son, Harry, and Gavin Relly) have also contributed to Anglo’s bureaucratic culture. Ernest prided himself in carrying on Cecil Rhodes' philosophy of "equal rights for all civilised men" (Hocking 1973). Both Ernest and Harry were members of the South African
parliament who were opposed to apartheid, and successive chief executives of Anglo and De Beers continue to speak against apartheid and racism (Relly 1983, 1985; Ogilvie Thompson 1985). They espoused equal opportunity and this provides support for non-discriminatory bureaucratic procedures. Relly points out that Harry Oppenheimer was "[n]o wide-eyed liberal idealist"; he was not in favour of a "one-man one-vote system in a unitary form of government" (1983: 47-8). Anglo leaders campaigned for gradual change and group companies donated funds to, for instance, housing and education projects for blacks, and endowed a university Chair in Human Rights (Ogilvie Thompson 1988). The guiding principle among Anglo leaders was, as Ernest Oppenheimer stated, "enlightened self-interest" (Hocking 1973: 327).

In South Africa Anglo's corporate industrial relations personnel argued that Afrikaner mining houses saw Anglo as too "liberal" and too willing to concede pay increases and improvements in conditions of service (Interviews January 1985). Anglo has a reputation for being a more enlightened employer than the Afrikaner mining houses (Innes 1984: 15), and yet there is much evidence which contradicts this liberal image. Critical reports state that, as with other mining companies, Anglo relies on migrant labour, job reservation and the compound control system: "mine security operate like private armies, armed with dogs, hippo armoured cars, rubber bullets, tear gas and shot-guns" (von Holdt 1989: 83). Anglo dismissed at least 27,000 workers in an effort to break the 1987 miners' strike (Herald 29/8/87; Markham and Mothibeli 1987).

One explanation for this contradiction within Anglo is that the "liberal" policies are merely a public relations exercise to delude workers and the public, and that fundamentally Anglo depends upon the exploitation of workers (von Holdt 1989; Johnstone 1976). Public relations is a factor in Anglo policies and the company is driven by imperatives of production; yet
two points need to be made. Workers derive benefits from employee and community projects no matter what the motivations are, and, more significantly, this contradiction is explained equally well in terms of internal differentiation within Anglo American. Personnel departments and general or corporate management by the nature of their roles are more likely to be concerned with the community image of the corporation than is the case for line management which is more preoccupied with production. Members of Anglo's corporate Industrial Relations Department indicated that they endeavoured to accommodate workers' demands wherever possible, and this meant that they were more sympathetic to workers than were line management and government apartheid policy (Interviews January 1985).

This chapter on Anglo in Zimbabwe provides evidence to support a similar view. Personnel staff were generally more concerned than line managers to create a cooperative relationship with workers and their representatives, and some staff of general management adopted a similar approach. Company labour policies can therefore be seen as involving debate among departments, and critics who present corporations as monolithic neglect these important internal differences.

Conclusion

Multinational corporations have frequently been criticised at the economic and political levels for exploiting Third World countries in general (e.g., Barnett and Müller 1975) and Southern African countries and Zimbabwe in particular (Chimombe 1986; Ndlela et al 1986; Samoff 1978; Seidman 1977). This exploitation is perceived to include extracting resources and surplus value without developing industry, transfer pricing and undercutting state autonomy (Seidman and Seidman 1986; Stoneman 1988, 1986). Multinational corporations have also been criticised in relation to their labour practices (Seidman Makgetla 1980), and the Anglo American Corporation has been the object of specific criticisms including the "undermining" of the
mineworkers' union and repression of workers' protests and strikes in South Africa (von Holdt 1989: 85). Anglo is also specifically referred to in criticisms of "capitalist stratagems" in agriculture in Zimbabwe for the "circumvention by capital of post-1980 legislation to protect workers" (Sachikonye 1987: 81). These criticisms provide only part of the picture. It has been shown this chapter that Anglo was actively seeking to reform labour relations and, compared to companies such as General Industries, Anglo American had more progressive personnel and labour relations policies and procedures.

Labour relations in Anglo American companies in Zimbabwe were gradually placed on a relatively cooperative basis. Conflicts between workers and management persisted but these were far less bitter than was the situation in Anglo companies at independence, and the continuing hostility at General Industries. The implementation of bureaucratic labour relations systems, and the commitment of personnel and general management helped to curb the authoritarian and racist practices of white employees. These systems were not totally beneficial for workers - for example the job evaluation method was a cause of dissatisfaction - but overall workers benefited from the attenuation of authoritarian management practices. The promotion of blacks to personnel management positions meant that workers were seen as having legitimate grievances and they were treated with greater respect. Thus this was not simply window-dressing, as some commentators allege (Raftopolous et al 1987). Personnel and general management frequently played a positive role in promoting more cooperative work relations, and their distinct role therefore needs to be appreciated.

In the group companies Anglo's culture was characterised by two conflicting features: the abrasiveness of Rhodesian whites, especially toward black workers, and company policies to curb this management approach by implementing bureaucratic personnel systems. At the corporate level
bureaucratic procedures were highly valued as measures that assist the company to overcome problems relating to a negative public image and possible nationalisation. The "enlightened" values of the founder and successive leaders of Anglo American also contribute to the corporation's commitment to curb racial management practices.

Compared to General Industries, Anglo was more responsive to pressures from workers and government to reform their labour relations practices. A major difference between General Industries and the four Anglo companies is that General Industries produced mainly for the domestic market which was fairly stable and oligopolistically controlled, whereas the Anglo companies were far more reliant on exports to a competitive and at times erratic international market. This, however, could work both ways: it could provide impetus for harmonious labour relations for efficient production, or alternatively it could create pressures for more intense labour utilisation and a harsh labour relations regime.

Factors other than market competition might contribute to a better understanding of the variation in management practices between General Industries and Anglo American. Unlike General Industries, Anglo American had transformed from a family company to a more bureaucratic organisation. The size and diversity of Anglo companies meant that operations could not be overseen by one person, as the Chief Executive of General Industries attempted to do. Bureaucratic rules and procedures were established at Anglo in order to manage an organisation of such size and diversity. In addition, Anglo's management culture was conducive to adopting bureaucratic procedures to attenuate the racist attitudes of some managers, and protect the corporation from government intervention and public disgrace. Thus Anglo's programme to reform labour relations was in part the result of the management culture to present the corporation as an enlightened employer.
Chapter 7  Dairy Marketing Board

We welcome you to carry out this study. We might benefit from it, and we have nothing to hide.


Everywhere in the city, honest men begged for honest work in vain .... But the men of Don Corleone walked the streets with their heads held high .... With no fear of losing their jobs. And even Don Corleone, that most modest of men, could not help feeling a sense of pride. He was taking care of his world, his people.


Introduction

The case of the Dairy Marketing Board exemplifies that the advent of independence and the Mugabe Government’s labour policies had a major impact on labour relations in some enterprises in Zimbabwe. Before independence management practices and attitudes were typical of colonial enterprises; white managers ruled black workers with a mixture of racism and paternalism. Managers did not feel compelled or obliged to react to workers’ grievances. After independence there was hostility between workers and management as workers sought to have their pent up grievances met. Over time cooperative relations were established between workers and management. Workers’ demands were recognised as being legitimate, and management genuinely took workers' views into account. Structures were established to enable workers’ representatives to negotiate labour relations policies from the shopfloor workers’ committees through to the employment board for the dairy industry. Many whites refused to conform to the post-independent labour relations regime and left the Dairy Marketing Board, and this gave rise to rapid black advancement which facilitated the shift from racist management practices. In this chapter it is also seen that, contrary to views that workers’ committees undermined trade unions (e.g., Nangati 1984a), at DMB workers’ committees relentlessly endeavoured to strengthen union organisation.
7.1 Background to Labour Relations at Dairy Marketing Board

The Dairy Marketing Board (DMB or Dairibord) was a statutory authority established in 1952. It was virtually the monopoly purchaser of milk from dairy farmers and it was also the monopoly processor and supplier of most dairy products sold in Zimbabwe including fresh milk, longlife milk, butter, cheese, Lacto (a cultured milk product), cream, yoghurt and flavoured milk. It also produced and sold ice-cream and powdered milk, and sold fruit juices. Domestic market competition occurred with respect to these last mentioned products and butter (with margarine); although DMB was the sole supplier to private companies of the basic ingredients for ice-cream and milk powder. Over 95 percent of the dairy products sold in Zimbabwe were provided by DMB. Sales were overwhelmingly to the domestic market with limited exports (e.g., butter) to Southern African countries. In 1984 sales realised $71.5 million. The national workforce numbered approximately 3,800 people in six dairies and 48 depots located throughout the country. Thus the organisation was quite large and played an important role in Zimbabwe's economy.

As shown in Table 7.1, DMB operated at a deficit funded by government. The annual trading account deficit increased dramatically after independence, rising from 7% of sales in the year to June 1980 to over 50% of sales in each year from 1983. DMB managers stated that the Board did not operated at a loss; the deficit was the inevitable result of government pricing policy, and in particular its subsidy to consumers. Government set the price paid to producers and the price of products sold by the Board. A major factor in the deficit, then, was that the average prices paid to producers by DMB for milk increased from June 1980 to 1985 by 126%, while the price to consumers remained static from 1 July 1979 until a 50% increase in September 1983, and a 20% increase in November 1984. After independence the government decided gradually to remove the subsidies to parastatals and began raising consumer prices, though economic difficulties
interrupted this policy and deficits continued (Hawkins 1987). In addition, the Board was required to accept all milk and butterfat from registered producers, regardless of the demand for dairy products. In the mid-1980s there was a substantial surplus of milk and this contributed to the deficit. The consequence for labour relations was that funds were not available to meet workers’ demands involving money. This situation was largely beyond management’s control.

| Table 7.1 DMB Trading Deficit to Sales for Year to 30 June 1980 to 1985 |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Sales ($m)               | 36.1       | 40.4       | 46.6       | 55.6       | 71.5       | 82.1       |
| Deficit ($m)             | 2.5        | 7.8        | 18.3       | 35.7       | 38.7       | 46.3       |
| Deficit/Sales %          | 7          | 19         | 39         | 64         | 54         | 56         |

Source: DMB Annual Reports.

There were many decision-making tiers above the six dairies (see Figure 7.1). Each of the six regional managers of the dairies reported to the General Manager and other top managers at Head Office in Harare. They in turn reported to the Agricultural Marketing Authority (AMA), primarily through the Dairy Committee of the AMA.

**Figure 7.1 Authority Structure at DMB**

Source: DMB records.
The AMA was established under the Ministry of Agriculture to coordinate supervision of DMB and three other agricultural marketing boards. An additional level of authority (not shown in Figure 7.1) was later introduced to oversee the functioning of all parastatals following a government inquiry into corruption and maladministration in parastatals (Smith Commission 1986a, 1986b, 1987).

All six dairies produce milk, and other products are also manufactured at various dairies. The milk delivered from farms was pasteurised, packaged and delivered, sales were made to retail outlets and through home deliveries. The manufacturing process was capital intensive; in January 1985 at Harare Dairy 251 employees were in production while the majority were in sales and distribution (1,056), and in ancillary services (369). The main low-skill tasks in the factory involved, for example, can-tipping, loading and operating machines; in sales and distribution the main jobs were those of delivery, street sales (milk and ice-cream) and merchandising (e.g., visiting shops to ensure shelves are stocked). The plant and machinery at the dairies, except for Chipinge and the bulk milk collection facilities, were generally aged and frequently needed repair. In many cases machinery did not satisfactorily keep up with demand.

At independence, virtually all managers and senior employees were white. There were two conditions of service: those for "established staff" which roughly meant skilled and senior employees, most of whom were white, and "non-established staff" who were invariably black. There was no industrial relations officer within the enterprise, nor was there any trade union of any significance, although some black Bulawayo workers joined a union federated to the United Food and Allied Workers' Union. There was no formal disciplinary code or grievance procedure, and record-keeping for black workers was sketchy at best. Workers' representatives did exist before...
independence, but they were nominated by the personnel officer, a management representative, and employees’ grievances were not adequately answered, and very few concessions were granted by management (Interview with former workers’ committee chairman, October 1984). Industrial relations between black workers and white managers were probably no worse than in other companies; managers ruled with a mixture of paternalism and authoritarianism. Members of the workers’ committee fondly recalled one white manager who disciplined workers "like a father does"; for example, he might have given a first offender the choice between dismissal and a "clap" (i.e. a blow).

In the absence of an effective voice for workers through trade unions, and in line with government policy, workers’ committees were formed in 1980. In the early 1980s a volatile atmosphere characterised industrial relations at DMB and workers’ committees were in the forefront of the confrontations. A strike took place at Harare Dairy in April 1980. The immediate issue was that workers were not to be paid overtime for working on May Day, though underlying this was discontent with pay, white managers’ attitudes and general work conditions. Many white managers left DMB, but wages and basic conditions of employment did not improve as quickly as workers hoped. The two different conditions of service remained intact, although senior blacks now enjoyed the superior benefits in terms of pension, health and leave entitlements. Tensions built up as workers’ calls for increased wages, improved conditions and an end to authoritarian management were not met. Workers were frustrated and a black manager was beaten up by workers at the Msasa Depot near Harare in August 1982. This involved the police and a court case ensued against the workers, including workers’ committee representatives. The manager was transferred. The labour relations climate was fractious, and the workers’ committee agitated strongly for demands to be met. They could not be accused of being vatengesi (sell-outs).
Harare Dairy managers state that workers remained "heated up" and "Bolshie" until the Salisbury United Omnibus Company strike in early 1982. The Belvedere Depot, which was the centre of the strike described in Chapter 3, was situated immediately across the road from Harare Dairy. DMB workers witnessed police using batons to load about 500 workers into police vans. This signal that the Government would no longer tolerate strikes had a powerful impact in dampening DMB workers' demands. It was clear that militant action would not be tolerated by the government, to whom workers had felt they could turn to support them against management. The prosecution of workers following the Msasa assault confirmed this and workers' claims became less sweeping, and instead focused on more immediate issues, those thought to be more achievable. With moderated demands, tension was reduced between management and workers and relations slowly became more amicable. Militancy declined though workers' committees still pushed for reforms, and labour relations procedures were gradually placed on an institutionalised basis.

7.2 Personnel and Labour Relations at Dairy Marketing Board

There were numerous aspects related to personnel and industrial relations procedures that were affected by the process of institutionalisation. These included worker representative bodies, disciplinary and grievance procedures, job grading and remuneration, training and promotion. Prior to independence the procedures and practices relating to these features were haphazard at best and non-existent or racially biased at worst. Over time personnel systems were developed and implemented to replace ad hoc or discriminatory practices. This was a process similar to that which took place at Anglo American companies, but at DMB the systems were less formalised. For example, unlike Anglo, no formal performance appraisal
system was adopted at DMB at least until 1985, and personnel record-keeping was less comprehensive than at Anglo.

As at Anglo, the Paterson Method of Job Evaluation was used. This was implemented in 1982 after a government decision that all agricultural parastatals use this method. There were constant appeals from workers for jobs to be regraded. Many workers and their representatives were perplexed by the Paterson Method and, as at Anglo, without specialised advice they were unable to formulate persuasive objections to the scheme as a whole. However, unlike at General Industries, DMB management agreed to regrading exercises and generally these were carried out mutual agreement.

The disciplinary procedures at DMB were similar to those at Anglo though cases were handled more amicably at DMB. There was a strong emphasis on reaching consensus, and generally DMB administered discipline quite leniently. In many disciplinary hearings the head of department was extremely loathe to dismiss even where clear grounds existed under the code of conduct (Observation). This was in keeping with management’s policy to act as an enlightened employer. Another factor was that the Ministry of Labour had a marked influence on the outcome of disciplinary cases. As noted in Chapter 2, writers such as Cheater (1986), Ladley and Lan (1985) and Nangati (1984b) describe Ministry of Labour officials as favouring employers. At DMB there was a wealth of evidence to the contrary. Many applications for dismissal were rejected by the Ministry and, as a result of these precedents, hearing committees frequently decided not to dismiss on the basis that the Ministry of Labour would probably reject the application. In the Msasa assault case mentioned earlier the Ministry of Labour ordered the reinstatement of the workers’ committee chairman even after the General Manager had argued strongly for his dismissal and had sought support for the dismissal from the Ministry of Agriculture.
One case indicates the extent to which leniency was granted to workers. A boiler attendant had an appalling record of lateness and absenteeism. His excuse for lateness was that he slept in and missed the bus, and when DMB applied to dismiss him the Ministry of Labour requested that the employee be given an advance on his pay to buy an alarm-clock. And DMB did! He continued to receive many verbal and written warnings over a two-year period, and was transferred to three different departments. He was subsequently late by two hours on two days just after he received a final warning, and even his fellow workers were complaining about him. DMB again filed for his dismissal and finally, seeing the weight of evidence against him, the employee resigned.

In contrast with the situation at General Industries, DMB workers' committee representatives strongly defended accused workers. In a case very similar to one that occurred at General Industries a clerk with six years of unblemished service was apprehended trying to steal milk valued at 48 cents. The code of conduct stated that theft entailed dismissal but, unlike their counterparts at General Industries, workers' committee members staunchly defended the employee for over an hour, and the head of department was sympathetic to their case. The hearing committee was unable to reach a decision, and the workers' committee successfully appealed to the Regional Manager for the employee's retention. Workers at DMB felt that discipline was generally carried out fairly. Senior employees, and not just workers, were subject to dismissal; in one case a white transport controller was dismissed for misusing Board property.

Training was extensive at DMB and black advancement had taken place rapidly; much faster than at Anglo American. By 1984 most managerial and senior positions were held by blacks. Ten of the 13 senior head office positions were held by blacks, including that of the General Manager, and 3
of the 6 regional managers were black. At Harare Dairy 6 of the 14 senior positions were held by blacks in late 1984, increasing to 8 by mid-1985, including the post of Regional Manager. A major reason for the departure of whites was their racial views, and another was the much higher pay levels in the private sector. The rate of promotions for black managers was exceptional. One example is that of the Harare Factory Manager who was appointed to this position just before the present research began in 1984. After about one year in each position he received the following promotions: Harare Production Manager, Kadoma Regional Manager and by 1987 Harare Regional Manager. This rapid advancement also applied to middle-level blacks; for example, at Harare Dairy the Secretary to the Sales Manager was successively promoted to Public Relations Officer, Administration Officer (with a budget of $1 million), and Urban Depot Controller, during the period 1983 to 1985.

This high rate of promotion was beneficial for employee morale, and was a major compensation for low managerial salaries at Dairibord. There were a number of problems associated with high turnover. Most serious was the promotion of inexperienced personnel into important managerial positions. Moreover, just as appointees were becoming accustomed to their jobs they were promoted again; as one manager put it: "Well, it's great to get it [another promotion] but my feet have only just touched the ground here, and I haven't had a chance to understudy ... [his superior]" (Interview 1985). DMB was fortunate in that most of its staff coped well under these hectic conditions. There were some cases where staff were considered not to have coped, and this resulted in some demoralising demotions. This issue was complicated since no formal performance appraisal was in operation at least until mid-1985.

Another problem with rapid promotions was that high expectations were raised and senior staff tended to become frustrated as promotions slowed in
the later 1980s. The slowing down of promotions resulted in a decline in morale from the quite high level of motivation in earlier years. Nonetheless, morale among senior employees appeared to be in general positive. This rapid promotion, however, did not apply to low-level workers. Turnover there was very low and many low-skilled workers viewed the rise of the bright young blacks with a certain degree of wistfulness. This was similarly the case with some of the white senior employees who stayed at DMB during the mid-1980s. There were cases where older or more experienced whites felt passed over for promotion in favour of blacks, though whites continued to be promoted after independence; and some experienced rapid promotion. The general view remained, though, that blacks were favoured for advancement. This form of affirmative action was to be expected given the historical changes in Zimbabwe, government policy and the fact that DMB is a parastatal. While rapid promotion had its costs, it was unavoidable due to the high turnover, especially of white managers. It was also desirable in terms of placing blacks into managerial positions in this key national enterprise.

Apart from Cheater's (1986) study no case studies have been published on workers' committees in Zimbabwe. The views that have been expressed in the literature, as seen in Chapter 2, are critical of these bodies in terms of undermining trade unions and failing to provide worker participation in management decision-making (Cheater 1988, 1986; Nangati 1984a). Evidence presented here shows how workers' committees operate at DMB. It is argued that they played a constructive role in representing workers and in trying to organise workers into a viable trade union.

At Harare Dairy there were thirty members of the central workers' committee, one from each department and nearby depots. They elected six members to negotiate with management on the works council, including the chairman and secretary. Since there was no certified trade union each of
the workers' committees at the six dairies elected a member to a national committee to represent workers at the employment board for the dairy industry. Prior to the meetings of the employment board the same management and worker representatives held "Domestic Employment Board Meetings" to negotiate as many issues as they could before the formal employment board convened. In addition, about three times per year DMB provided the national employee representatives with facilities to meet and prepare for negotiations with national management (see Figure 7.2). Training for labour negotiations had been provided to workers' committee representatives at Silveira House, a respected Catholic-funded organisation that had long promoted the development of black Zimbabweans.

![Figure 7.2 Structure of Worker Representation at DMB](image)

At the dairy level workers' committees and works councils primarily dealt with day-to-day labour relations issues such as work scheduling, job grading and canteen issues. There was also some interest in the functioning of the enterprise such as promoting products that have greater return for DMB, and
questioning of appointment procedures following the embezzlement of funds by a recently appointed accountant. Executive members exhorted workers' committee representatives to encourage honest work and deprecate absenteeism and laziness. The achievements through these bodies tended to be piece-meal, like having pay-day a few days earlier in the month or having specific jobs regraded. At the national level workers' committee representatives obtained broader benefits such as requiring the consultation of workers' committee representatives before the dismissal of workers (this was in May 1981, before the promulgation in November 1981 of the dismissal regulations), the formulation and review of the job evaluation scheme and code of conduct, the introduction of shift allowances, increases in vacation leave, bonuses and long-service leave, and the provision of a basic wage for ice-cream vendors who sell on commission. Workers' committee representatives also negotiated general pay increases at employment board level (see below).

Many demands of workers were not met by management; these included calls for massive wage increases (e.g., 30 to 60 percent) and the unification of the conditions of service between established and non-established staff. This division was a legacy of colonialism under which the conditions of service for salaried staff (mostly whites) were regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture, and wage-earners came under the Ministry of Labour. Established staff enjoyed superior conditions of service (e.g., shorter working week, longer vacation leave). This division continued at least until 1988 despite persistent strong calls from workers for unification. Management correctly argued that this was a government decision and workers' had to put their case to the AMA. This they did and the AMA in turn maintained it was a ministerial, indeed cabinet, decision. This "buck passing" was largely an accurate reflection of the extensive decision-making layers controlling DMB; however, it was also a convenient means for higher authorities to avoid a difficult issue. DMB management was committed to maintaining
differential rewards, and resisted moves from workers' committees to challenge this. Furthermore, the large deficits sustained by DMB led management and government authorities to minimise wages, allowances and other costs so workers' requests that involved increased expenditure generally met with strong opposition. At times the atmosphere in meetings was very charged as workers became frustrated with management's unwillingness to agree to their proposals. In general, though, workers and their representatives recognised these constraints, and management generally endeavoured to meet workers' demands where this was possible. Workers were cheered by their periodic successes and management attempted to maintain a constructive relationship with workers' committee representatives.

Contrary to the view that workers' committees undermine trade unions, at DMB the workers' committees worked hard to strengthen union organisation. Two rival unions existed in the dairy industry, both of which were unregistered. A few hundred Bulawayo workers belonged to a union federated to the well-established United Food and Allied Workers' Union (UFAWU) based in Bulawayo, and several hundred Harare workers were members of the Dairy Industry Workers' Union (DIWU) which was allied to the Harare-based Food Oil and Edibles Industry Workers' Union (FOEIWU). The Harare dairy union was virtually operated by one man, the Secretary-General, R. Marufu. He was aligned with Alfred Makwarimba, the leader of the corrupt pro-ZANU(PF) ZCTU clique, and DMB workers supported Marufu on the basis of his association with ZANLA ex-combatants and ZANU(PF).

Marufu's DIWU consisted only of Harare Dairy workers and had 461 members as at 28 February 1983. By February 1984 this number had doubled, but his FOEIWU federation had virtually disintegrated. In an inflated claim, Marufu stated that in 1983-84 his federation had 15,000
members and 9 full-time organisers in various industries apart from the dairy industry. However his one-time ally, Abisha Kupfuma (a ZCTU clique member), betrayed him and began drawing Marufu’s staff and membership into his own fold so that Kupfuma could head both his own Catering and Hotel Workers’ Union and the FOEIWU federation. By 1984, Marufu was reduced to the 900 DMB members and 444 members at the Grain Marketing Board. The union was poor. It worked out of a single room in offices shared by other poor ZANU(PF)-aligned unions such as Ndwana’s agricultural union. The office furniture was even more scant than most other unions, and consisted of a desk, a chair, a bench and a filing cabinet. There was no telephone; the union shared one belonging to the other unions. There was no vehicle, and only one organiser made up the staff. The audited accounts for the DIWU for the year to 29 February 1984 are provided in Table 7.2. This union was the main income earner for Marufu’s federation for 1983-84; at most the Grain Marketing Board dues added $2,700.

Table 7.2 Audited Accounts of Dairy Industry Workers’ Union for the Year Ended 29 February 1984 (in $)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td>5,199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auditor’s fees</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicle expenses</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post and telephone</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationery</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry expenses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages and allowances</td>
<td>2,936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Surplus         | 165                 |

Source: Auditor's report.

The Ministry of Labour rejected an application for DIWU’s registration since the policy was to have one union in each industry and the union was in competition with Nedziwe’s unregistered Bulawayo-based dairy union. Hence neither union could represent dairy workers at employment council meetings.
Management did agree to Marufu attending the employment board meeting in 1983, and workers' committee representatives stated that he was helpful there. He also lobbied the Ministry of Labour to assist in obtaining the reinstatement of the suspended workers' committee chairman following the Msasa assault case. Apart from these two activities, the union did very little for DMB workers. This was understandable, given the union's lack of finances and other resources. The workers' committee continued to support the union, and gave its blessing to check-off payments, even though there was very little return for the workers' $5,000 dues per year. They argued that it was necessary to support the union in the hope it would eventually merge with the Bulawayo union and become registered.

The DMB workers' committees were not a threat to union organisation; indeed, for years they pushed the two rival unions to merge and then be registered, without success. The two unions gave lip-service and very little else to amalgamation. In November 1984, the workers' committee members endeavoured to pressure the unions into unifying by threatening to withhold union dues. Marufu had recently been released from hospital suffering from burnt legs as a result of an accident, and under considerable pain walked from his office to Harare Dairy, about 3 kilometres, because he had no money for transport. He persuaded the workers' committee leaders to give him more time to amalgamate and they agreed. But long after recovering from his injuries, still no progress was made, and the Harare union remained in a parlous state. In early 1985 the workers' committees decided to hold the workers' union dues in trust until a merger was achieved. When this did not eventuate the workers' committees formed a new union which was registered in October 1985, and was affiliated to the UFAWU. During this long process, workers' committees carried out the functions of trade unions.

One of these functions was wage negotiation. Nominal and real monthly minimum wages at DMB were above the statutory industrial minima during
the period 1980 to 1985 (see Table 7.3). In real terms the statutory minimum rose slightly ($1.55) during this period and the DMB minimum fell slightly ($4.06). (Although the 1985 DMB real wages ($87.15) remained above the 1979 real wages ($76.93 in 1980 prices)). Wages at DMB were lower than at General Industries throughout this period, though the differential declined considerably, from $17.04 down to $4.84 in real terms. Workers' committee representatives fought hard to obtain wage increases, but government wage policy had greater impact on wage rates, as will be seen. At the April 1985 Domestic Employment Board meeting, for example, a lengthy and at times heated debate resulted in an agreed 10 percent increase (which was slightly above the maximum management had agreed in caucus before the meeting), and this was merely subsumed within the 15 percent statutory increase of July 1985.

Table 7.3 Nominal and Real' Minimum Wage (in $) for DMB, General Industries and Industrial Minimum July 1980-1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>DMB Nominal</th>
<th>DMB Real</th>
<th>General Industries Nominal</th>
<th>General Industries Real</th>
<th>Industrial Minimum Nominal</th>
<th>Industrial Minimum Real</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>91.21</td>
<td>91.21</td>
<td>108.25</td>
<td>108.25</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>104.90</td>
<td>92.75</td>
<td>121.90</td>
<td>107.78</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>75.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>125.00</td>
<td>99.84</td>
<td>134.09</td>
<td>107.10</td>
<td>105.00</td>
<td>83.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983²</td>
<td>135.00</td>
<td>87.61</td>
<td>144.09</td>
<td>93.50</td>
<td>115.00</td>
<td>74.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>152.25</td>
<td>82.21</td>
<td>160.00</td>
<td>86.39</td>
<td>125.00</td>
<td>67.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>175.09</td>
<td>87.15</td>
<td>184.80</td>
<td>91.99</td>
<td>143.75</td>
<td>71.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: DMB and General Industries records, various statutory instruments (see Table 4.1) and CSO, Quarterly Digest of Statistics, December 1987.

¹In 1980 prices.
²For September.

The salary levels for skilled and senior staff at DMB and other parastatals were considerably below those paid in private sector companies. In 1984-85, for example, the Harare Regional Manager received $1,823.75 per month while the average salary for that job grade in a national survey was $2,258, or 24 percent higher. Consequently, there was high turnover among artisans, engineers, accountants and managerial staff, and DMB had difficulty attracting and retaining talented personnel in these areas.
Relations between workers and management were strained on several issues. One management decision that riled workers related to a housing scheme in which DMB assisted many of its low-income employees to purchase a house by acting as guarantor. Many of the houses were not satisfactorily completed by the private contractors, and workers wanted to withhold final payment until corrections were made. In order to comply with their contractual obligations and maintain DMB's respectability, the decision from Head Office was to make the payment and recoup this from workers. Management attempted to mollify workers by granting a four-month interest-free repayment period, after which interest would be 12.5%. But the memorandum from Head Office announcing this aggravated the ill-feeling when workers realised the 12.5% interest was for a period of six months, yielding a rate of 25% per annum. Conflict also ensued when the Bulawayo workers' committee chairman was suspended and then transferred to a rural depot. This case was handled by the Ministry of Labour and was unresolved at the end of the research period, and it was not clear who was at fault. But national workers' committee members strongly objected to his suspension without their being informed of the circumstances.

Workers' committee members have also at times prejudiced the working relationship with management. A prominent case in this regard was the assault of the Msasa depot manager. The Harare workers' committee chairman gave conflicting evidence to the police and the court, and management believed him to be involved in the assault. His conduct strained worker and management relations, and only gradually were trust and cooperation developed. In general this was achieved. Both parties pursued their own interests vigorously, but in so doing they endeavoured to retain the good will of the other.

It would be incorrect to argue that DMB workers' representatives have been co-opted into compliance. The co-optation argument might be summarised
as follows. Institutionalised procedures like the code of discipline locked workers into the management system and removed their militancy. National employee representatives were accommodated in hotels three times per year to buy them off; and two of the most articulate workers' committees chairmen were promoted to be industrial relations officers within DMB in order to quieten them. This line of argument is not convincing. The formal procedures were a substantial improvement on the previous arbitrary and discriminatory practices. The intensity with which workers representatives debated when bargaining with management also belies the co-optation thesis. The promotion of the two workers' committee chairmen did not quieten the next vociferous chairmen, and the workers' committee members strongly supported these appointments because they then had sympathetic officers with whom to deal. Furthermore, the election results in which a high proportion of the workers' committee incumbents were returned indicated that the workforce in general did not regard the workers' committee as vatengesi.

7.3 Organisational Culture: A Luta Continua

The physical setting of DMB premises needs to be differentiated in terms of head office and the 6 dairies. The head office is located in the Harare business centre in an unassuming, but pleasant building, while the dairies are located in the industrial sites. The plant, buildings and machinery at the dairies were quite old and were deteriorating (though this is not the case with the new Chipinge Dairy and the bulk milk facilities and tankers). Quite strong and conscious efforts were made to keep the facilities looking neat and clean, and the Board's bright colour scheme of light and royal blue on a white background helped, to present a clean and hygienic image to the public. The organisation's motto was "Dairibord Nourishes the Nation", and its logo had encircled figures of a man, a woman and two children symbolising the family, togetherness and goodness.
Relationships were friendly, but business-like. First names were used widely
or, more in keeping with black Zimbabwean culture, surnames were often
used without the prefix "Mr". The General Manager, Kumbirai Katsande,
was widely referred to as "KK" (as is the Zambian President Kenneth
Kaunda). Reporting relationships were consciously clarified in the mid-1980s
and there was a pervasive sentiment and constant explicit reference to
managing "scientifically" and "professionally", and moving away from "ad
hocery" and colonialism. The former General Manager, Eddie Cross, and
Katsande did much to achieve this. Katsande was an energetic manager
with a degree in food technology and he was continuing his postgraduate
education in business management. His management style emphasised
technical and professional competence and this had a considerable impact
on organisation members. This was cultivated through extensive training
courses and was perpetuated by frequent reference to "new", "better" or
"professional" management style in meetings.

Company anecdotes and stories were not frequently told, though reference
was occasionally made to "tough old managers who knew how to get things
done", and glorious failures. One famous story was the commissioning of
the bottle-washing machine in the early 1950s, described later by the former
General Manager, S. H. Webster, in these words:

Guests were invited to the opening of the new factory and the
highlight was the switching on of the bottle-washing machine. When
the time came and the switch was pressed, the machine started off
and the vibration and weight caused it to sink into the floor as the
foundations were faulty .... That was a terrible time (Quoted in
Arnold 1983: 3-4).

Other machinery such as the butter-wrapper and the stick-line iced-
confectionery maker were also notorious: the butter-wrapper kept placing
the labels half-way around the block of butter; and the stick-line machine
managed to produce about 3 or 4 saleable products out of 7 on each cycle.
Various epithets were used to describe many of these old machines and
equipment at Harare and elsewhere as "worn-out", "antiquated", and
"museum-pieces". But a core value at Dairibord was to carry on in the face of adversity. This value was clearly demonstrated in the case of the butter-wrapper. After spending yet another day or two trying to overhaul the aged contraption, the engineers stood by hopelessly watching the girl on the label still being wrapped half-way around the side of the block of butter. New parts were needed; indeed a new machine was needed, but unavailable. After lamenting for some time, one of them remembered an abandoned butter-wrapping machine from the old dairy at another site, so off they went to "cannibalise" the old machine to keep their present bête noir working.

In the early years Dairibord was an organisation that "could be laughed at because it made so many mistakes", but "[t]here was tremendous esprit de corps and camaraderie among the staff in those days" (Arnold 1983: 10 quoting former General Manager Webster). This same duality characterised DMB after independence and with a black management team. In the early 1980s, dairy supplies were well below demand, by the mid-1980s a combination of external factors led to an over-supply of milk, so DMB had to strive to find markets for its produce and to keep the antiquated machinery producing. So the spirit of "battling-on" or a luta continua (i.e. "the struggle continues") remained a key value in DMB's culture. A luta continua is a revolutionary slogan derived from the Mozambican liberation movement, and was widely used in the Zimbabwean nationalist movement. More recently in Zimbabwean usage it connoted the continuing, almost unwinnable struggle against intractable forces beyond one's control. Many employees, from managers to shopfloor workers, appeared to operate in accordance with this value at DMB, and it seemed sufficiently widespread to consider it a feature of an organisational culture and not merely part of a more narrow management culture.

There was a marked degree of loyalty among Dairibord staff and this is not simply due to the organisation's being the only dairy manufacturer in the
Many staff members could fairly readily adapt to other food or drink producing companies. As numerous employees stated, DMB provided many black employees with training and promotions that they only dreamt of before independence; their prospects for career development were still good, they were "treated well" by their employer, and there was generally a friendly working atmosphere in the company. There was also something of a commitment to serving the nation by working for Dairibord. Employees did not see themselves as cadres sacrificing themselves for national development, but there was a sense of pride in contributing to the production of nutritious products for Zimbabwean consumers.

Conclusion

Labour relations at Dairy Marketing Board were conducted in a basically cooperative manner. The organisation was faced with severe constraints in terms of a lack of finance, and extensive decision-making layers through which government authorities placed controls over parastatals. For workers this meant that many of their claims involving funds were opposed, as were their requests for conditions of service that were not in conformity with those in other parastatals. Despite these constraints workers and management overcame the hostilities of the early 1980s and developed a constructive working relationship. To an extent this decline in hostilities was imposed by the government to prohibit strikes and other industrial action. However, conflicts were not simply repressed, there were many ways in which management and workers developed an understanding of the other's position. Personnel and labour relations systems such as those for job evaluation and discipline were introduced and managed fairly, and rapid black advancement took place. Employee development and promotions were an important compensating factor to the low pay levels at DMB compared to private sector companies. Workers' committees played a major role in improving relations between workers and management, and at the
same time they vigorously pursued workers' interests. Contrary to some accounts (e.g., Nangati 1984a) workers' committees at DMB, like those at Zimbabwe Alloys, endeavoured to strengthen trade union organisation, and eventually formed their own union affiliated to an existing union federation.

Wages at DMB were lower than at General Industries (and indeed many other private companies), but whereas labour relations at General Industries were parlous, at DMB there was much greater cooperation. In large part this was due to management's willingness to accommodate workers on issues where this was possible. Management showed trust and reasoned with workers' committee members rather than relying on autocratic rule. A culture developed at DMB that enveloped many employees from the shopfloor to top management, and in this culture making do in the face of adversity was highly valued. This value was shared by many employees throughout Dairy Marketing Board, and not simply a part of management's culture. However, a unitary culture did not develop, since workers' values did not become inseparable from those of management. Fundamental differences remained fundamental between the two parties, and workers were certainly not prepared to forego the pursuit of their interests in favour of organisational goals. Workers and management were able to establish a *modus vivendi* to balance the interests of the organisation and the workers.

Government policy to reform labour relations was facilitated at Dairy Marketing Board by its status as a public enterprise. The government appointed senior managers, and they were answerable to government for the manner in which they managed the enterprise. Managers were conscious of their position in a parastatal and felt obliged to conform to government labour policy by genuinely dealing with workers' grievances. But DMB was not *sui generis*. Prominent enterprises such as Anglo American and Standard Chartered Bank (see Chapter 3), also undertook programmes to reform labour relations. The advent of independence and the Mugabe
Government's labour policies to improve the position of workers provided the major impetus for this reform.
Conclusion

The central thesis of this study is that the government's corporatist labour strategy has had a major impact on national labour relations in Zimbabwe. This view differs from interpretations of labour relations in Zimbabwe provided in the literature. Most accounts suggest that the Mugabe Government acted on behalf of capital to repress strikes, control trade unions and regulate labour relations to the benefit of employers. My view is that government attempted to benefit workers but its policies also took into account goals for national economic growth. Government labour policy also had an impact on labour relations within organisations. In some enterprises (e.g., Dairy Marketing Board) management policies and practices were radically transformed in a remarkably short period of time. The reform process in other organisations (e.g., Anglo American Corporation) was less rapid; nonetheless, the advent of independence led to major changes in the conduct of labour relations. Many private sector companies (e.g., General Industries Limited) have resisted pressures from government and workers to abandon colonial management practices. But the demands for change persist and there are indications that recalcitrant employers are being influenced to moderate racist and authoritarian management practices.

In presenting this thesis the major developments in national labour relations in Zimbabwe since independence, together with three detailed case studies of labour relations, have been examined. The major developments at national level can be stated briefly. The Mugabe Government was elected on a platform to end discrimination and improve living standards of black workers. Widespread strikes occurred at independence, and the government effectively curtailed strikes using a combination of carrot and stick methods: promising to promote workers' interests and repressing strikes. The government ordered the incorporation of trade unions into a single officially-sanctioned congress, the ZCTU, and the ZCTU leadership was captured by
ZANU(PF) and government supporters so that unions would assist in defending and enforcing government labour policy. The government also insisted that EMCOZ have a monopoly to represent employers on national labour relations matters. The election of the EMCOZ executive was not supervised by government; however, EMCOZ did appoint personnel who were considered able to facilitate a working relationship with government. In an effort to benefit workers, minimum wage laws were introduced. When dismissals and retrenchments took place as a result of minimum wages, poor economic conditions and unfair employer action, the government required employers to obtain ministerial approval to terminate employment. But minimum wages and the dismissal regulations worked in opposition to key government objectives to generate overall economic and employment growth. Consequently, real minimum wages generally remained static from 1980 to 1987 and, despite the restrictions on dismissals, employment declined in some sectors.

The Labour Relations Act was promulgated in 1985 to provide the legislative framework for labour relations. The government argued that this Act was designed to democratise labour relations and protect and advance workers' interests. The Act did include provisions that benefited workers: for example, the fundamental right to form unions and workers' committees; the requirement that employers bargain in good faith, collect union dues for registered unions and provide paid maternity leave; and the prohibition of discrimination and unfair labour practices. On the other hand, the Act weakened the position of workers vis-a-vis employers by virtually prohibiting strikes. Moreover, the essential purpose of the LRA was to provide extensive ministerial powers to regulate virtually all labour relations matters and to control the internal affairs (e.g., staffing and financial arrangements) of trade unions and employers' organisations. In practice, the government intervened more directly in the internal operations of trade unions than was the case for employers' associations. For example, government supervised
the internal operation of the ZCTU after corrupt leadership reduced the congress to a shambles. Employers' activities were also regulated by government since the administration of the LRA by labour relations officers restricted the manner in which employers managed labour relations. While labour relations officers were sometimes biased toward employers, in general they sought to protect workers from discrimination and unfair labour practices such as unfair dismissal and an employers' failure to comply with a negotiated agreement.

The case studies deal with the conduct of labour relations within large enterprises in Zimbabwe. Some features were common to all enterprises in the study; in particular, there was a marked antagonism between workers and management at the time of independence, when strikes or other industrial action took place. Personnel and labour relations systems, especially for black workers, were not well developed at independence, and during the 1980s considerable attention was given to implementing and reforming personnel policies and procedures (e.g., job evaluation and grievance procedures) in these enterprises. In addition, workers' committees played a major role in representing workers in negotiations with management. The most striking feature about the enterprises in this study, however, is the differences among them, and in large part the differences resulted from their differing management cultures.

At General Industries relations between workers and management were characterised by hostility. Management paid lip-service to reforming labour relations policies and procedures, and resisted black advancement. The management culture at General Industries was marked by white Rhodesian values of racial superiority and an authoritarian attitude toward black workers.
At Anglo American Corporation gradual black advancement and reform of labour relations was taking place. Much emphasis was placed on establishing bureaucratic systems to regulate labour relations so as to replace racist or arbitrary management practices. Anglo’s management culture facilitated the shift from arbitrary to bureaucratic procedures in two ways. The founding family opposed racism and stressed values of equal opportunity, and Anglo’s experience of nationalisation in Zambia taught Anglo managers that it was important to avoid a negative public image, and that bureaucratic procedures might assist in defending the company against allegations of racial discrimination. Nevertheless, some white managers within Anglo companies retained their racist or authoritarian attitudes. Consequently, there was a division within the management culture and this, along with the need to maintain efficient production, contributed to the gradual rather than rapid pace of black advancement and reform of labour relations.

At the Dairy Marketing Board, by contrast, black advancement proceeded rapidly and management reformed labour relations with the active participation of workers’ representatives. Major structural factors, such as the trading deficit and government controls over management decision-making, constrained management’s ability to meet workers’ demands, but wherever possible management sought to accommodate workers’ requests. Management and workers shared values of making the best of difficult circumstances, and they developed a good working relationship.

In presenting this examination of labour relations in Zimbabwe, I have provided an integrated and more detailed account of developments than is available in the literature. While specific issues have attracted attention, such as the early strikes (Sachikonye 1986) and developments within the union movement (Wood 1987, 1988), I have provided a more comprehensive account of national labour relations, and included three detailed case studies.
of labour relations in organisations. In addition, most commentaries have been made from a radical perspective and assume that employers are exploitative, and argue polemically that government actively assists in this exploitation (Callinicos 1981; Astrow 1983; Nangati 1984a and 1984b; Mitchell 1987). My interpretation of labour relations in Zimbabwe is based on a wider survey of the relevant evidence. The three case studies show that there is a great deal of diversity in the conduct of labour relations by employers. While some employers persist with colonial management practices (e.g., General Industries), other employers have gradually reformed labour practices (e.g., Anglo American), and in some instances rapid change has taken place (e.g., DMB). Government labour policy is more accurately seen as charting a course between promoting workers’ interests and government’s national development and political goals. Thus, for example, strikes were prohibited so that economic activity would not be disrupted, and unions were corporatised into a monopoly representative body and controlled so that they would support and assist in enforcing government labour policies. On the other hand, the government attempted to benefit workers by prohibiting discrimination, increasing workers’ incomes through minimum wages, and protecting workers from unfair dismissal and other unfair labour practices. I now review the differences between my interpretations and other accounts in relation to the curtailment of the 1980-81 strikes, government and party control of the union movement, and the role of labour relations officers, workers’ committees and tripartite institutional arrangements.

Most commentators criticise government action to repress the early strikes (e.g., Callinicos 1981; Astrow 1983; Mitchell 1987). I argue instead that the prohibition of strikes is understandable in terms of the government’s commitment to economic growth in order to finance its social development programmes, and its fears that strikes could lead to chaos and jeopardise the security of the fragile majority rule government. In relation to trade
unions, Herbst (1987) argues that the formation of the ZCTU from the competing union congresses was advantageous to workers; yet this assessment completely overlooks the process involved and the results of this corporatisation. The formation of the ZCTU involved the capturing of the union movement by ZANU(PF) and government supporters. Radical writers such as Sachikonye (1986) and Wood (1987) seem to accept the capture of the ZCTU as understandable, since the non-ZANU(PF) unions were compromised by their association with the internal settlement parties (led by Muzorewa and Sithole) and white trade unions. But the neutralisation of non-ZANU(PF) unions, by creating rival unions and ousting experienced unionists, weakened the labour movement and led to the establishment of a weak central congress. This congress avoided criticising government labour policy, and thus failed to represent workers. The ZCTU instead functioned to support and enforce government policies, as was demonstrated in the drafting of the Labour Relations Act, when union criticisms of the bill were suppressed by the ZCTU executive. In controlling trade unions, government policy was not simply a matter of finding a balance between workers’ interests and development goals. The government also sought to deny any opportunity for political opposition to be expressed through trade unions.

Where reference has been made in the literature to the role of labour relations officers, it has been to argue that they are biased toward employers (Nangati 1984b; Ladley and Lan 1985; Cheater 1986; Mitchell 1987). Ladley and Lan (1985) and Cheater (1986) each base their criticism predominantly on a single incident in which a labour relations officer dealt with grievances from farm workers and textile workers respectively. Nangati (1984b) and Mitchell (1987) prefer to rely on guilt by association, and assert that since many LROs resign from the Ministry of Labour for jobs in the private sector, then they must be corrupt and biased toward employers. I have argued that this is only a partial view of the situation. There are cases
of corrupt labour officers, and many cases are decided in favour of employers. In addition, government policy is for LROs to discourage indiscipline among workers. Yet, from observations of the handling of numerous cases within the Ministry of Labour, the three organisations I studied, and from interviews with many employers and labour representatives, my view is that LROs frequently lean more often toward workers than toward employers. The case studies show that there are many instances in which labour relations officers have rejected employers’ applications to dismiss workers. This reluctance to approve dismissal applications reached extraordinary levels at Dairy Marketing Board so that workers at times received very lenient treatment from LROs. At General Industries, too, dismissal applications were frequently rejected by the Ministry of Labour. On the other hand, the Ministry of Labour did not resolve the grievances of the General Industries’ workers’ committee relating to wage levels, job grading, and unfair discipline, and workers in the studies reported by Cheater (1986) and Ladley and Lan (1985) were similarly dissatisfied with the results after putting their grievances to the Ministry of Labour.

It can be argued that the Ministry of Labour was more successful in its defensive role to protect workers from unfair dismissal, than it was in actively taking up workers’ grievances and obliging employers’ to reform their labour relations practices. In some cases, however, particularly in relation to racial discrimination, the Ministry of Labour did stimulate labour relations reform. At Standard Chartered Bank and other companies in the finance sector employment practices, such as job evaluation and promotion procedures, were reformed as a result of pressure from the Ministry of Labour (Chapter 3). The Ministry of Labour, then, charted a course between advancing workers’ interests, and maintaining labour discipline under existing management practices so that production of goods and services would not be disrupted.
My findings from the three case studies differ from views in the literature on the role of workers' committees. Nangati (1984a) and Cheater (1986) assess workers' committees in terms of their performance as institutions to enable workers to participate in management decision-making. According to Nangati, since workers' committees do not challenge capitalist relations of production, they merely "serve as instruments for the exploitation of the worker" (1984a: v). Workers' committees are also criticised for usurping the role of trade unions as representatives of workers at plant level, thus fragmenting the labour movement. My view is that it is inappropriate to assess workers' committees as institutions for workers' participation in management decision-making since they were not designed for this purpose.

Workers' committees were formed as industrial relations bodies. The experience from the three case studies is that workers' committees have been in conflict with trade unions when the union is well established at the plant. When a union is well organised at plant level then it can be argued that workers' committees are unnecessary or even divisive. But unions are generally poorly developed and only about 20% of Zimbabwe's formal sector workforce is unionised.

Only two (Bindura Nickel and Wankie Colliery) of the six enterprises I studied had well organised, registered trade unions, and thus little need for workers' committees. In the other four enterprises the workers' committees played a positive role as representatives of labour on a wide range of issues, from shopfloor complaints to bargaining at industry level for wages and conditions of employment. In these four enterprises the workers' committees acted as spurs to the development of trade unions. Hippo Valley provided a minor exception in that the workers and the workers' committee strongly resisted joining the agriculture union. This resistance resulted from workers' reluctance to be classified under the low-paying agriculture award, and was not due to opposition to unionism per se. Indeed the Hippo Valley workers' committee endeavoured to form a union for
the sugar industry. The Dairy Marketing Board workers' committees strove hard to have the two rival union federations in the food industry merge so that they could be represented by a registered trade union. When this failed they formed and registered their own union affiliated to one of the existing federations. So while there may be grounds for disbanding workers' committees in plants which have a well developed registered union in operation, there is a continuing need for workers' committees in the majority of plants where this is not the case.

Tripartite arrangements have also been the subject of criticism in the literature. Nangati (1984b) argues that the Retrenchment Committee operated in favour of employers. Nangati provides insufficient evidence to support this view, and I report evidence that suggests that the majority of retrenchment applications were not decided in favour of employers. Figures for 1987 and 1988 show that approval was given to employers to retrench less than 40% of those workers they applied to retrench. My observations of two Retrenchment Committee meetings in 1984, and interviews with employer and union members of the Retrenchment Committee, lead me to conclude that the committee only reluctantly allows retrenchments when alternatives such as reduced working hours have been tried or when no alternative is feasible.

With respect to wage setting, Herbst (1987) argues that labour was at its strongest position during the wildcat strikes of 1980 and 1981, and that the institutionalisation of wage setting under the tripartite Wages and Salaries Advisory Board weakened the position of labour. According to Herbst, labour's position was weakened since formal negotiations require attributes which employers are more likely to possess such as bargaining skills and organisational unity (1987: 375). In fact, before the institutionalisation of wage setting, in 1986, real minimum wages declined from 1982 to 1985. Herbst correctly points out that EMCOZ evinced negotiating skills superior to
Those of the ZCTU; however, more important than relative bargaining skills and tactics was government labour policy and the state of the economy. Government labour policy was to increase minimum wages, taking into consideration the capacity of employers' (including the state as an employer) to pay and the effects on unemployment. Wildcat strikes are a fragile means for labour to influence government labour policy, since government strongly opposes strike action and it would curtail strikes should they recur. It is by no means certain that labour can increase its influence over wage policy, but its chances are better within the institutional framework. If bipartite negotiations at industry level were to re-emerge, then trade unions would have a more significant function to fulfil, and they might be able to attract greater membership and build stronger organisations.

There are signs that government is accepting the need for greater industry-level collective bargaining, and a reduced role for government regulation of national wage setting (Financial Gazette 14/7/89). For some time pressures have been developing for a move in this direction. Unlike the first ZCTU leadership, the ZCTU under the presidency of Jeffrey Mutandare criticised government wage policy as being too restrictive, and the government had come to bear the blame for depressed wages in the economy. A shift toward collective bargaining would allow the government to avoid some of these criticisms. If the nascent moves toward collective bargaining at industry level proceed, it is likely that trade unions will increase their membership and strengthen their organisations and bargaining power.

Having briefly recapitulated the major developments in labour relations and set out how my interpretations differ from those in the literature, I offer an overall assessment of the government's policy as seeking to balance the advancement of workers' interests with its goals for national development. My view is that in broad terms the government's labour policy was an understandable and appropriate response to the situation it faced. However,
particular components within this broad policy can be criticised. The government endeavoured to support workers by increasing minimum wages and protecting workers from unfair dismissal, but these two policies had a negative impact on the investment climate and employment creation. Nonetheless, given workers' pent up demands for improved living standards and reform of labour relations (e.g., to end discrimination and allow workers a meaningful role in labour negotiations), it is difficult to see how an alternative policy could have succeeded unless it was based on open repression of workers and trade unions. It would have been untenable for the ZANU(PF) government to ignore completely workers' demands, and not endeavour to increase their wage levels. The party fought the liberation war and campaigned on the basis of improving incomes and life chances of Zimbabwe's peasants and workers. To renege on these goals on obtaining office would have undermined the legitimacy of the government, and workers' opposition would have had to be contained by force. In the politically fragile period after independence such a policy would have been fraught with dangers of internal violent conflict on a much larger scale than occurred in Matabeleland. Open violent conflict in the country would have been fuelled by South Africa, and the possibility of a military coup or a recommencement of the civil war could not be dismissed.

By the same token, massive increases in wages and far-reaching policies to support workers, such as rapid black advancement through affirmative action or the introduction of Yugoslavian-style self-management giving workers ultimate control over management (Miller 1980), would have bankrupted many businesses, especially small enterprises, and discouraged private sector investment. Consequently, the government's objective of economic growth to finance its social development programmes would have been blighted. Similarly, the government could not allow widespread strikes to

1Indeed South Africa has supported armed dissidents in Matabeleland (Martin and Johnson 1986).
continue in 1980 and 1981 as this hampered economic development and might have led to political insecurity.

Within this acceptance of broad government policy, however, a number of criticisms can be made. The first relates to the capture of the union movement by ZANU(PF) supporters, resulting in a sycophantic and corrupt union leadership which became discredited. The government defended its creation of the ZCTU as the monopoly union congress in terms of strengthening a divided labour movement, and this argument has plausibility. But the government went further to ensure that the ZCTU leadership was controlled by ZANU(PF) supporters who would support and assist in enforcing government policies. This political control, I have argued, is typical of African governments' attempts to prevent any potential source of political opposition from developing a power base (Gertzel 1975). How then do we explain the Mugabe Government's action to facilitate the replacement of the corrupt leadership it earlier installed? Did the government object to the ZCTU leadership because it was corrupt or did the government want a leadership that would build a viable and more effective union movement?

The replacement of the capricious Minister of Labour, Kangai, by Shava, who took a more technocratic approach, needs to be noted. More importantly, in my view, the government did not want the union movement to constitute an autonomous centre of power in opposition to the government, but nor did it want an ineffective union movement. The government, in other words, acted to end corruption and also foster a ZCTU leadership which would more effectively represent workers. I accept that the government endeavoured to promote workers' interests, and when the ZCTU failed to fulfil this role and became a source of embarrassment to the government, then the government took steps to rejuvenate the congress. But the government still made it clear that the union movement should work in conjunction with and not in opposition to government. The ousting of
experienced non-ZANU(PF) trade unionists just after independence was thus detrimental to the government's policy of promoting workers' interests, since it resulted in a weak union congress that government felt the need to replace after 3 or 4 years of dismal performance.

My second criticism is that the extensive ministerial powers in the Labour Relations Act, to regulate virtually all employment matters and control trade unions and employers' associations, were excessive and had detrimental consequences. At a normative level, these powers can be viewed as being in conflict with democratic values of freedom of association since they would enable a minister to exercise authoritarian control over the conduct of labour relations and labour relations actors. Yet the government asserted its commitment to democratise labour relations. In pragmatic terms, too, the control provisions are open to criticism since they were an obstacle to the ratification of major ILO conventions relating to freedom of association. The government's failure to ratify ILO conventions created a dispute between ZCTU President Mutandare and Minister Shava which weakened the government's argument that it championed workers' interests.

A third major criticism of government labour policy relates to the prohibition of strikes. I have argued that it was necessary to prohibit strikes in the period immediately following independence, since this was a politically volatile period in which the security of majority rule government was far from assured. However, by late 1987 the Mugabe Government had strengthened itself against threats from whites in the country and, with the unity agreement between ZANU(PF) and ZAPU, the ZANU(PF)'s hold on government was virtually unchallenged, and the dissident problem in Matabeleland was contained. Under these circumstances occasional strikes would not pose a threat to political security, and therefore the government could afford to relax the restrictions on strikes. It could be argued that it is necessary to prohibit all strikes in order to prevent occasional or isolated
strikes from escalating into widespread wildcat strikes such as occurred in 1980 and 1981. But wildcat strikes could remain prohibited and strikes could be limited by only permitting strikes to take place under the provisions of the Labour Relations Act. Given the tortuous procedures that have to be followed for a legal strike to be held, it is unlikely in the extreme that many strikes would occur, and it is very likely that the LRA provisions could be relaxed without resulting in a major outbreak of strike activity.

I have argued that government labour policy in Zimbabwe is the outcome of balancing workers' interests with the government's goals for national development. The government considers that private sector investment is necessary for employment and economic growth; consequently government labour policy seeks a balance between workers' and employers' interests. The attempt to balance interests is very similar to labour policy in other African countries, and this similarity is remarkable since at independence ZANU(PF) espoused a more forthright commitment to "socialism", "Marxism" and "revolution" than did ruling parties in Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya. Zimbabwe also follows a pattern similar to that of other African countries with respect to controlling trade unions. Labour legislation restricted strikes and enabled union activities to be controlled, militant unionists were detained, and the government and party took steps to establish a single trade union congress and have one union in each industry. On the other hand, trade unions benefited from the check-off system for the collection of union dues, and minimum wage laws were established. In Ghana under Nkrumah, and in Tanzania, the trade union congress was virtually a wing of the ruling party (Ananaba 1979). In Tanzania at one time the minister of labour was also leader of the union congress (Lynd 1968). There was no formal relationship between the union movement and government or party in Zimbabwe, but under the first ZCTU leadership the congress was for all practical purposes a wing of government and ZANU(PF). Many unionists objected to this status and sought a position more independent from
government. The ZCTU President, Jeffrey Mutandare, was willing to criticise government labour policy, but this was cautious criticism and unions were careful to avoid any suggestion that they were politically opposed to government and ZANU(PF).

My characterisation of labour relations in Zimbabwe as a corporatist labour strategy goes beyond the superficial level provided by writers on corporatism in Africa such as Shaw (1982) and Higgott (1985). They fail to elucidate the structures and processes which characterise corporatist strategy in specific African countries, and their conceptions of corporatism are weak. Higgott, for example, sees corporatism as a framework for political analysis and an economic system (1985: 26). I have provided a close analysis of the structures and processes of corporatist labour strategy in Zimbabwe. Corporatist structures have been discussed in relation to the government's establishment of monopoly representation for union and employer bodies, the tripartite bodies for labour policy formulation and implementation for wages and retrenchment. The government has established for itself extensive administrative and executive powers for the implementation and enforcement of state corporatist labour strategy. The Labour Relations Act establishes sweeping ministerial powers, and the Ministry of Labour provides an extensive administrative structure to implement and enforce labour policy. Close attention has been paid to the processes through which the monopolisation of trade union representation was established, and the operation of tripartite bodies and the Ministry of Labour.

I have not adopted the approach taken by O'Donnell (1977), linking corporatist political strategies with phases of industrialisation. While Zimbabwe has, unlike many African countries, achieved import substituting industrialisation, this was achieved under colonialism, not under populist political regimes as O'Donnell found in Latin America. In addition, the post-independence scene in Zimbabwe cannot be periodised in terms of populist
and authoritarian phases as in Latin America. The Mugabe Government has maintained a combination of populist and authoritarian measures throughout its term of office. Unions have been encouraged to participate in labour policy formulation through tripartite bodies, and workers were encouraged to participate in workplace labour relations through workers' committees. These inclusionary strategies are characteristic of populism, and the government's measures to control unions and detain militant unionists are typical of state corporatism. Deyo (1981) refers to Singapore's combination of policies to benefit labour and control unions to ensure smooth capital accumulation as paternalistic authoritarian corporatism. Despite the differences in political ideology between the ruling parties in Singapore and Zimbabwe, paternalistic state corporatism is an apt description of Zimbabwe. The extensive government controls over unions and labour relations mean that Zimbabwe tends toward state corporatism, but the policies aimed to benefit workers temper this authoritarianism with benevolence.

Analysis of corporatism in this thesis is not based on phases of industrialisation. The approach has instead been to follow Schmitter (1974), Crouch (1984, 1985) and Cawson (1986) in identifying two key features which characterise corporatist arrangements: the monopolisation of interest representation and the participation of monopolistic bodies in enforcing public policy. Schmitter's approach over-emphasises structures. He sees corporatism as a "system" of interest representation (1974: 93), and his attempt to operationalise corporatism resulted in a static view of the structures of corporatism by focusing on union density and centralisation (Schmitter 1981). Like Crouch (1984), I see corporatism as a "strategy", and this emphasises the dynamic processes involved in corporatist arrangements. My approach has been to carry out a detailed examination of the development and operation of corporatist structures such as the role of government and party in establishing monopoly union representation, and the administration of labour policy by the Ministry of Labour. In doing so I have
avoided Schmitter's preoccupation with structures and have stressed the processes and relations between the state and trade unions.

With respect to my approach to labour relations in organisations, I take a perspective which sees organisations as sites of conflict and control. Radical organisation theorists maintain that there is a fundamental conflict between workers and management and that management style and techniques to improve work relations (e.g., group dynamics) are of little consequence (Burawoy 1985; Clegg and Dunkerley 1980). Labour relations, however, are not influenced only by this underlying conflict. The degree of conflict between workers and management in different organisations varies immensely, and factors such as management culture, leadership and the role of personnel specialists can have a major influence on labour relations. At General Industries the colonial culture of management and the management style of the Chief Executive were major factors in the animosity and disputation between workers and management. At Anglo American the corporate culture and personnel staff had a substantial impact on labour relations by establishing and operating bureaucratic procedures so as to attenuate the influence of racist and authoritarian management practices.

My conception goes beyond superficial treatments which suggest that culture is unitary and malleable (Peters and Waterman 1982; Deal and Kennedy 1982). Workers at General Industries totally rejected management's colonial culture, and at Anglo American there was a clash of management cultures with many white line managers retaining a colonial management culture and many top managers, personnel staff and black managers adopting a reformist culture.

Far from being malleable, culture is extremely difficult to change (Schein 1985). The case of the Dairy Marketing Board shows that cultural change evolved over time with considerable conflict between workers and management along the way. Labour relations improved as a result of the
bona fide commitment of workers and management to develop an amicable working relationship. In the process, many white managers who could not accept the new management culture of working in conjunction with black workers departed from DMB. The development of an organisational culture and management style that responded to black workers' demands were key factors in improving labour relations at DMB, but underlying conflicts between management and workers persisted. As in all organisations, culture, management style and personnel policies can improve labour relations, but cannot eradicate the underlying conflicts between workers and management.

The Mugabe Government's corporatist strategy in relation to trade unions and workers was similar to a patriarchal approach to the family. The aim was to work for the benefit of family members but in so doing the patriarch sometimes used dictatorial methods. Great emphasis was placed on unity within the family structure and dissent was not tolerated. Efforts were made to meet the immediate needs of members and protect them from external threats. Where possible the immediate position of members was improved, but sacrifices were required now so that in the longer term sustained benefits could be obtained. The goal was to work for the benefit of children and grandchildren.
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