

The Development of Collective Bargaining in the Toronto Printing Industry in the Nineteenth Century

Le fondement historique de la négociation collective

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[See table of contents](#)

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Article abstract

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THEORIES OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Modern analysts of the institution of collective bargaining have put forward a variety of theories, each of which posits some careful definition of the fundamental nature of this widespread social practice. In general, the stress has been upon what the theorist considers to be the predominant function of the collective bargaining process. Neil Chamberlain, in his comprehensive study *Collective Bargaining*,¹ proposed that the diverse theoretical formulations can be grouped into three encompassing categories. « These are that collective bargaining is (1) a means of contracting for the sale of labour, (2) a form of industrial government, and (3) a method of management. »² He suggested too, that to some extent these three theoretical approaches, respectively called marketing, governmental and managerial, reflect the historical process in the evolution of collective bargaining. Thus in the beginning, mainly the problems of wage rates and hours of work dominated labour-management rela-

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¹ Neil W. CHAMBERLAIN, *Collective Bargaining*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1951.

² *Ibid.*, p. 121.

tions, and therefore analysts emphasized the marketing theory. Subsequent developments brought to bear the question of between-contract arbitration, which in turn led to the governmental view. Yet a third stage introduced the managerial aspect when unions interjected labour's right to participate in a broad range of vital managerial decisions.

However, while recognizing that these different treatments all have merit in the present-day state of the institution, it remains largely speculative whether or not the development of collective bargaining pursued this historical course. Without deliberate empirical investigation of early union-management relations that graduated to collective bargaining, we are faced with the condition of inadequate test of the evolutionary process. Moreover, important insights into the nature of collective bargaining may be neglected, and to the degree that genetic characteristics influence the mature structure, the analysis may require integration of fresh perspectives gained from empirical studies.

A CASE STUDY — THE TORONTO TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION

It is obvious then that case studies of nineteenth-century union experiences should prove useful for scholarship in this field. For Canadian unions it is rare to find extant documents that span the course of the relevant period. At least one Canadian union with such records is the Toronto Typographical Union, whose carefully preserved minute books supplemented by International Typographical Union convention proceedings and some significant miscellaneous documents, provide the required source material for a case study of collective bargaining developments in the Toronto printing industry.

The Toronto Typographical Union is a familiar body in the accounts of Canadian labour history, understandably so since it has the distinction of the longest continuous history among Canadian labour organizations, and because the records of Canadian federated union developments are replete with evidence of its contributing role. The TTU was first established in what was then still the town of York on the twelfth of October, 1832.³ Except for a break of seven years, from 1837 to 1844,⁴ when the organization folded and was dormant, the TTU has performed as the

³ John ARMSTRONG, «Sketch of the Early History of No. 91.» *Convention Souvenir, 1905* (Archives, Toronto Typographical Union).

⁴ ZERKER, *A History of the Toronto Typographical Union, 1832-1925* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1972), pp. 47-8.

representative of printers in Toronto to the present day. Since the major innovations in bargaining practices were formulated through the years of the nineteenth century, this will be the focus of our interest. A significant factor during this period was the growth of the power and authority of the International Typographical Union, a parent organization of printing craft unions which was founded in the United States in 1850 and spread into Canada in the 1860's. The Toronto union became an affiliate of the ITU in 1866,⁵ and as such was to experience the impact of ITU policy changes along with its sister unions on the North American continent.

The union's early records might be taken to suggest that Chamberlain's marketing theory could be applied to the initial stage of the Toronto Typographical Union's operation. There is no question that the union's primary objective from the beginning was labour's participation in the determination of working conditions, in particular a voice in the establishment of wage rates and hours of work. However, one cannot describe early union-management relations in any sense as « bargaining » procedure. An elaboration of the actual techniques is warranted at this juncture.

In order to explain the early forms of wage determination one must examine the position of the labourer in the context of the historical development of property rights in western capitalist society. John Porter quite rightly pointed out that in Canada, as elsewhere where capitalism prevailed, the right of workers to organize and to strike was not a traditional privilege, but was won after considerable struggle, as a concession from the ruling elite.⁶ The labourer who lacked property rights in the productive instruments also thereby lacked any control over his conditions of employment. His only recourse was the withdrawal of his services. But individual, unorganized withdrawal of services could have little or no effect on the productive process, so long as replacements were available. Therefore, withdrawal of services as a coercive force became a matter of combined and coordinated measures.

It was the development and growth of unions as the instrument of combined action that made striking, or the threat of striking, a feasible, effective weapon in the determination of employment conditions. Union

⁵ *Ibid.*, p 125.

⁶ John PORTER, *The Vertical Mosaic*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1965, p. 311.

procedure inevitably depended on coercive techniques since capitalist society excluded those without property rights from decision-making power. On the other hand, the owners of capital goods were accorded absolute power in employment of their private property. Coercive elements, of course, inhered in that power. Both sides then operated in a climate of opposition with the prospect of forceful means as the sole ingredient for settlement of differences. At any given time, the ultimate determination of employment conditions became a matter of the relative power positions of the two opposing factions. This was unavoidable so long as the concession to labour and to the union as the collective will of labour was not firmly established.

WAGE DETERMINATION BY UNILATERALLY IMPOSED CONDITIONS

One can observe this phenomenon in the Toronto printing industry. For the better part of the nineteenth century, indeed until the late 1880's, wage determination was the product of unilaterally imposed conditions. It is fair to say that in the early years neither union nor management propositions were in any sense bargaining proposals. They were meant to be met in full by the other party, or rejected in full with the consequence of industrial conflict.

Among the factors that influenced the relative power positions of union and management, probably the two most important were (1) economic conditions in general and industrial conditions in particular, and (2) the degree of union control of the labour supply. When prices were rising and demand for printer labour was high, there was both incentive and prospect for union success in a bid for higher wages. In addition, the proportion of union membership relative to total labour supply was a significant consideration for both union and management.

The TTU minutes of 1850 record an exercise by the union that was meant to assess these criteria before the members were prepared to make demands for higher wages. A committee of eight members was appointed to investigate the following conditions current in the printing trade: « (1) the number of men employed in each office in the city; (2) the number of union men in each office; (3) compliance with union regulation wherever an office is composed of a majority of union men; (4) the number of apprentices in each shop. »⁷ One presumes that the results of the

⁷ *Minutes of the Toronto Typographical Union* (Archives, Toronto Typographical Union), August 5, 1850, p. 217.

survey were encouraging,⁸ for the union followed up this review of union strength with a demand for higher wages. In addition, the Toronto printing industry was currently experiencing buoyant demand.⁹

One observes that union procedure for effecting the wage raise followed the practice of one-sided action. After membership agreement to the new scale, the union ordered a printed copy of the various rates for distribution to the master printers in September, 1850.¹⁰ No allowance was made for consultation and bargaining. In that instance the employers accepted the increase without conflict. Given the current economic and union conditions, the employers in 1850 were in no position to reject the raise. However, with rising demand it was probably the case that it was also unnecessary for them to resist.

Employers, even more than union leaders, insisted on their right to dictate terms of employment. A seeming disadvantage for employers in the early years was their inability or unwillingness to form an employer coalition.

George Brown had attempted to lead the Toronto employers into an association in 1844 with the object of enforcing an industry-wide wage reduction, but the organization could not be cemented.¹¹ Again, an effort was made in 1847 to bring Toronto's printing employers into line and produce a stronger position for masters, but also without success.¹² In the first instance, Toronto employers were apparently unimpressed with Brown's argument for wage parity with Kingston. The market for local newspapers was then protected by distance and individuality. The second endeavour failed when a coalition of employers clumsily misrepresented their objectives to the union. They had implied that a joint union-management committee could fruitfully pursue the prospect of a wage increase. Instead, as reported to the members, « when the committee of the employers made known their proposal to the Delegates, it appeared that the

⁸ The union records do not include the final tally.

⁹ *Minutes*, January 5, 1850, p. 176 and p. 183. Four new news shops, including the office of the Queen's Printer had begun operations in the closing months of 1849 in Toronto.

¹⁰ *Minutes*, September 1850, p. 220.

¹¹ *Minutes*, April 2, 1845, and Zerker, pp. 49-53, for elaboration of the background to this failure.

¹² *Minutes*, March 31, 1847, p. 83.

elevation spoken of, amounted to nothing less than a *reduction* of the present rate of wages. »¹³ The deception produced the counter-effect of increasing union membership¹⁴ and thus strengthening the power of the organization. Indeed, the effect of both ventures was that of broadening the attractiveness of unionization for local printers.

Without formal agreement among employers it was difficult, but not impossible, to impose an industry-wide decrease in wages; the critical factor was the state of industrial competition. There were prominent employers, like Brown and John Ross Robertson, who rejected the representative role of the union and who were able to staff their shops at wages below union scale. One finds accusations in the union records that such establishments received poorer quality workmen. Be that as it may, the existence of such non-union, low-wage shops was extremely hazardous for union members' security during periods of heightened competition. Their effect was to drag down the general wage level to the lower rate; one such experience is found to have occurred in 1859 for workers in the daily newspapers. Neither the *Colonist* nor the *Leader* were able to compete in a tight market with the non-union scale of 28¢ per 1000 ems paid at the *Globe* in 1859, when union rates were 33 1/3¢ per 1000 ems. The union was forced to accept a wage reduction for both unionized newspaper shops.¹⁵ Thus even without formal agreement the resistant employers could influence overall employment conditions to the detriment of the union's terms.

MORE COOPERATIVE METHODS AND ITS RETARDATION

From the union's point of view the imposed method of wage determination was far from satisfactory, even when it was the union which dictated the terms. In the first place, union gains through unilateral imposition could last only as long as the employers' period of relative weakness. Secondly, with the absence of consultation, the union had no real security with respect to continued goodwill of even those employers who tolerated unionized workmen. More cooperative methods were clearly in the interest of the union, and we find beginning in that direction in the latter part of the 1860's and early 1870's. This is particularly evident in non-monetary matters. Through union-management consultation, the

¹³ *Minutes*, February 2, 1848, p. 93.

¹⁴ ZERKER, p. 64.

¹⁵ *Minutes*, Special Meeting, May 10, 1859, and June, 1859.

issue of unprejudiced distribution of advertisement copy (matter which was faster to set and therefore more lucrative for the typesetter) was satisfactorily settled.¹⁶ The recurring problem of apprenticeship ratios also was ironed out by means of negotiations with employers.¹⁷

If during this period there are signs of cooperative developments however, the movement in that direction was halted by 1872. The cause of the check was the famous Toronto printers' strike for shorter hours, which began on March 25, 1872.¹⁸ The union claimed that prior to the breakdown of production, « on three occasions the printers asked for a conference with the employers in an effort to avoid difficulties », ¹⁹ but that their invitations were rejected. The demand for shorter hours was regarded by the employers as an outrageous invasion of their rightful authority and hence it was seen as a non-negotiable issue. With this added inducement and under the guidance of George Brown, all but one ²⁰ Toronto printing employer formed an alliance, the Master Printers' Association, specifically designed to fight this fresh threat to their position and power.²¹ The net effect of the strike for shorter hours on union-management relations, a strike that was bitter and protracted, was to harden the antagonism between the opposing factions and to open old sores which required years of healing.²²

The progress towards cooperation was further retarded by the winds of depression which hit the Canadian economy with full fury through the years 1876 to 1879.²³ Towards the latter part of 1875 the effect of the world-wide depression became noticeable in the printing industry in Toronto. The first indication of a cost squeeze on publishers was a « request » to

¹⁶ *Minutes*, November 2, 1871, called « fat » copy in the vernacular of the trade.

¹⁷ *Minutes*, Special Meeting, April, 1871.

¹⁸ ZERKER, pp. 420-40, for full account of the strike.

¹⁹ *Ontario Workmen*, June 13, 1872, p. 4.

²⁰ James BEATY, M. P., owner and publisher of the *Leader*.

²¹ *Telegraph*, March 23, 1872.

²² The outcome of the strike was in part favourable to the union. The union gained its objective of a 54-hour working week; however, the gain was made at a cost of considerable initial loss of union strength. Membership fell from 190 in 1871 to 90 in 1872.

²³ E. J. CHAMBERS, « Late Nineteenth Century Business Cycles in Canada, » *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 30, 1964, p. 395.

the union from the *Mail* office management for a 5% wage cut.²⁴ The « request » of 1875 was later transformed into an ultimatum. The union was told to accept a 10% wage reduction or all men employed at the *Mail* office would be fired and replaced by « less competent workmen. »²⁵ This was merely the beginning of a period of downward spiralling wages and rising unemployment that lasted the remainder of the decade. It was clear that during this severe depression the union was impotent and strike action was out of the question.

The TTU was not in a more favourable and forceful position vis-à-vis the employers until the mid-80's.²⁶ A review of cyclical behaviour indicates positive signs of economic recovery at the turn of the decade. However, for the printers, the net result of a decade of union decline, due to a combination of industrial strife and depression, was that the TTU virtually lost control of many printing establishments in the city.²⁷ Alternative techniques to the strike weapon were tried. A secret committee was forged to work surreptitiously to reorganize men and shops.²⁸ Furthermore, a boycott of the *Telegram* and the *Mail* was called by the union in an effort to coerce publishers through threats of reduced circulation. Neither of these measures, however, produced any positive results.²⁹ Fortunately for the TTU timely developments in the International organization were to have salutary consequences.

THE EFFECT OF ITU POLICY CHANGES

In the mid-80's, ITU subordinates entered a new phase under the influence of policy measures adopted by the parent organization. Nothing altered the nature of collective bargaining in the Toronto printing industry so much as the growing trend towards centralization of power in the ITU. Within this process, the most radical institutional change was the

²⁴ *Minutes*, October 30, 1875, p. 50.

²⁵ *Minutes*, November 4, 1876, p. 179.

²⁶ *Minutes*, March 17, 1883, p. 503. At this late date, even though the union presented evidence of rising wages in other skilled trades, the TTU was unsuccessful in an attempt at imposing their own wage increase.

²⁷ ZERKER, pp. 189-90.

²⁸ *Minutes*, October 4, 1879, p. 273 ; December 4, 1880, p. 336 ; January, 1881, p. 350.

²⁹ ZERKER, pp. 190-3.

establishment of an International strike defense fund in 1885.³⁰ The significance of the ITU fund law for the local was that, on the one hand, local financing of strikes was necessarily abandoned, while on the other hand, strike relief for the subordinate union was only applicable with sanction in advance by the International Executive Council.³¹ In effect this meant that the Toronto local required the approval of the ITU president, its chief organizer, and a vice-president or state deputy, before calling for a new scale of wages. By 1888, the work of supervising local bargaining was entrusted to seven district organizers, who were elected by the delegates to the ITU conventions.³²

The decade of the 1880's also saw a second and related development that had an impact on bargaining procedures. The commercial printing employers³³ formed an international organization in 1887 called the United Typothetae of America.³⁴ Significantly, delegates to the first convention urged the abandonment of old methods of settling issues and proposed instead that wages should be fixed by conference between all employers and all employees in the city where disputes arose.³⁵ The first president of the UTA, Theodore L. DeVinne, acknowledged that

³⁰ *Proceedings of the International Typographical Union Conventions*, 1885, p. 157. Strikes, sec. 1-10. For a full account of historical development of strike fund law, see Zerker, pp. 302-6.

³¹ George E. BARNETT, *The Printers*, American Economic Association Quarterly, Third Series, Vol. X, October, 1909, p. 328.

³² *Proceedings*, 1888, p. 146 ; also BARNETT, *The Printers*, p. 329. The whole of Canada was designated as one of the seven districts.

³³ The trade had by then become separated into commercial and newspaper sectors, with distinct wage and hourly terms for each sector. In the newspaper sector, negotiations with the *News* management over rates for working the new typesetting machines produced what may be the first written labour contract in Canada, in December, 1892 (*Minutes*, January 7, 1893, p. 286). One month before, John Ross Robertson's *Telegram* was unionized (*Minutes*, November 19, 1892, p. 262) after a decade of conflict, bringing every morning and evening newspaper in Toronto under TTU jurisdiction for the first time in its history. Subsequently, the TTU bargained with all the newspapers together, and after 1902 the ITU and the American Newspaper Publishers' Association set up an arbitration agreement to settle differences that arose under contract between an Association member and an ITU local. In 1907 Toronto referred a dispute to the National Board of Arbitration, set up under the above agreement (*Minutes*, December 5, 1908, p. 102, for report of the Board).

³⁴ Elizabeth F. BAKER, *Printers and Technology*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1957, pp. 242-5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 245, citing *UTA Proceedings*, 1887, pp. 30-1.

the role of the new society was to formalize the two-sided aspect of bargaining procedures. « For many years, » he complained, « we have neglected our plainest duty . . . The rules and rates that have prevailed have been made almost exclusively by the compositors of our offices . . . We have seldom been asked to confer with these compositors as to the feasibility of proposed rates and rules. »³⁶ The need to counter the growing power of the International Typographical Union was apparent in the commercial employers' determination to unite. Seemingly, interest in bilateral bargaining by employers arose only after International centralization of power came to dominate the policy of the organization.³⁷

Thus, from the late 1880's local bargaining procedures were subsequently determined to a lesser or greater degree by policy decisions made by supervisory, or in the case of employers, advisory bodies, which were not directly involved in the local issues at stake. Furthermore, on both sides of the bargaining table the emphasis was on the avoidance of outright industrial warfare. The conservatism of the ITU with respect to strike implementation dates back to the formative years of the organization,³⁸ and after 1885 the machinery for avoiding strikes was instituted under the authority of the strike fund law. With funds in the control of the ITU it became a matter of interest for the well-being of the whole continental printer community to preserve the revenue to the best of its ability, and therefore, wherever possible to settle issues amicably. On the part of the United Typothetae, cooperation and consultation was as well a matter of official policy.³⁹

BILATERAL BARGAINING IN THE TORONTO PRINTING INDUSTRY

The stage was set now in Toronto for new approaches to the determination of employment conditions. Towards the end of 1890 we have

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 246, citing *UTA Proceedings*, 1888, pp. 22-23.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 242-244, see discussion of the rise of the United Typothetae of America and the inducement of centralization of power in the ITU in its formation.

³⁸ In part the conservatism of the ITU was related to fear of reprisal from employers. Typical of printer organizations' attitudes towards capital was the Toronto Typographical Union's slogan, « united to support — not combined to injure. » (*Minutes*, vol. 1845-51, Flyleaf.)

³⁹ In Toronto, by 1890 there was a Commercial Employers' Association operating in Toronto. TTU minutes for the years 1884-89 have been lost; therefore it is uncertain at what point exactly the commercial printers of Toronto formed their association.

documentary evidence of the first instance of bilateral bargaining taking place in the commercial branch of the trade. Procedures to arrive at a new scale began in the usual way of a draft presentation by the TTU business committee to the membership. After membership discussion and approval of the draft, the union then proceeded to present the « proposed » scale to the employers. No longer was the union decision on the scale of wages a prelude to ultimatum. Rather, it now represented a first step in employer-employee bargaining.

One of the costs of developing new, more cooperative techniques for wage determination was that settlement was achieved only through an enormously lengthy process of consultation. A resume of the protracted negotiations relative to the commercial sector was presented to the members fully nine months after the first proposal. The report to the members was as follows :

We met in Shaftesbury Hall, Dec. 23, 1890, drew up a circular to Employers which was sent, together with proposed Scale of Prices. On Jan. 10th '91, we met to receive replies from Employers and Employing Printers Association to the circular sent them. A sub-committee was appointed to meet the Association Committee, consisting of Messrs. Coultier, (Jas) Jeffers, Prescott and Temms. Sub-committee met the Association in Rosin House Jan. 18th when the time-work Sections were discussed. Conference adjourned till Jan. 19th when Sec. 1 to 11 of Weekly Newspaper Scale were defined and subjected to debate. Conference adjourned till Jan. 26th and was further postponed till Jan. 28th at request of the Association when we completed the debate on remaining Sections. The Association Committee was then prepared to lay their work before their respective body for action.⁴⁰

With it all, the meeting conferences, and delays, total agreement had still to be finalized.

On March 28, 1891, a second proposal was presented to the membership.⁴¹ The form of this document is of particular interest to the researcher of bargaining developments. Incorporated in the presentation is the complete range of alternatives open to the members. For each of thirty-nine separate sections, each dealing with specific wage rates for

⁴⁰ *Minutes*, September 5, 1891, p. 112.

⁴¹ *Minutes*, March 28, 1891, p. 57.

varied working conditions, there was included a record of the union's original motion as of December 1890, the Employing Printers Association's counter proposal, and the union negotiating committee's current recommendations.

When one examines the document carefully, one notes that prior to presentation to the membership, nineteen proposals had been worked out satisfactorily between union and employer representatives. These were in turn approved by the members present at the meeting of March 28. On nine other points at issue, the men agreed with the negotiating committee's recommendation, which was to insist on the original proposal. Significantly, these included some of the most important monetary conditions, that is a \$12.00 weekly time work rate, an overtime rate for time workers, overtime rates for piece work, and so on. Finally on three points, the union voted to compromise between the employers' and their own respective positions, and on eight other sections the union acceded to the EPA's demands.

Six months later yet a third document was submitted to the members, revealing seven remaining areas in dispute. The employers were still holding out for an \$11.00 weekly rate and for lower piece work rates for some specific composing matter, as well as the right to determine the hourly distribution of the 54-hour week on an individual basis. At this point the union agreed to accept two of the employers' demands, both of which related to piece work overtime rates and compensation for redistribution of type. The five remaining areas of dispute were non-negotiable since both sides regarded their own proposals as essential conditions for settlement. A vote was then taken on the whole wage package according to the terms the union had accepted. When the necessary three-quarters majority accepted the scale,⁴² the ITU was informed of the results of the vote so that the union could receive International sanction, should a strike become necessary.⁴³

The ultimate resolution of this case was not determined by the votes of the local membership, but by the unwillingness of the Interna-

⁴² By ITU law, a three-quarters majority vote was necessary in order to call a strike. *Proceedings*, 1876, p. 65.

⁴³ *Minutes*, September 19, 1891, p. 132.

tional Executive to sanction a strike call.⁴⁴ However, the agreement was made and the terms were accepted by the Toronto membership. Local industrial relations were indeed made less volatile but at some cost to local autonomy.

CONCLUSIONS

For our purposes, the developments described here are significant for a number of reasons. First, both union and management left behind them the method of one-sided imposition of employment conditions. It is true that an impasse between the parties could still result in an outbreak of industrial strife. But machinery was made operative to keep the potential for such disruption of the production process at a minimum.

Secondly, in considering what crucial factor contributed to the institutionalization of bilateral collective bargaining, we are impressed with the importance of the augmented power of the International, through centralization and the fund law. In effect the fund law was an instrument of continental power that was transferable to the local when the need arose. The necessity to rely on relative and temporary power superiority disintegrated because the ITU, with the weight of numbers and funds behind it, represented a stable, powerful force that could not be ignored. The clout of the parent organization, real or potential, had the effect of shifting relative power positions to labour's advantage. Accordingly, employers were persuaded to accept the presence of labour as a permanent participant in decision-making, and it became necessary to devise alternatives to the old coercive methods.

One can argue further that the development of bilateral collective bargaining was in itself evidence that the concession to labour had been won and not granted as a right. Moreover, it had been won within the framework of capitalist society only when labour's power was demonstrably clear. It was this that produced the climate of willing cooperation necessary for bargaining.

⁴⁴ This was the first time the parent body subjugated the needs of the Toronto local to demands of International policy. What was at issue at this crucial hour was a battle for a 9-hour day in Pittsburgh, and the ITU was fighting it as a test case for the continent. The Toronto union's success of 1872 was not typical of the rest of the printing community. See Zerker, Chapter VI, *Loss of Local Autonomy*, for a discussion of the damaging effects of centralized ITU power on the Toronto Typographical Union.

Finally, any analysis of collective bargaining should take note of Allan Flander's view that collective bargaining is also « a power relationship between organizations. »⁴⁵ On the basis of the case study presented here, one sees the origins of collective bargaining as a product of such organizational power relationships. That working conditions were the prime concern of bilateral bargaining in the early years, in accordance with marketing theories, is of course quite right. Moreover, governmental and managerial functions were definitely introduced later into collective bargaining activities. However, it is suggested from this study that an understanding of collective bargaining, either historically or currently, requires a reassessment of the role of power relationships between organizations.

La négociation collective dans l'industrie torontoise de l'imprimerie au 19^e siècle

Les analystes modernes de cette institution qu'est devenue la négociation collective ont mis de l'avant beaucoup de théories, chacune d'entre elles énonçant une définition appliquée de la nature fondamentale de cette pratique sociale tant répandue. En général, on a surtout insisté sur ce que le théoricien considère être la fonction prédominante du processus de négociation collective. On peut le considérer sous trois aspects : marchandage, politique, gestion. On a aussi fait valoir que cette triple façon théorique de considérer le processus de négociation collective rend bien compte de son évolution historique.

Toutefois, pour scruter à la fois son fondement théorique et sa valeur historique, il est nécessaire d'en contrôler les résultats par une investigation empirique systématique. Le Syndicat des typographes de Toronto s'est prêté à cette analyse parce qu'il est le plus ancien au Canada et qu'il a conservé ses archives pour la période du XIX^e siècle pendant laquelle les principales innovations en matière de négociation collective furent formulées.

Les premières formes de détermination des salaires dans l'industrie de l'imprimerie à Toronto furent caractérisées par l'imposition unilatérale des conditions de travail. Elles se fondaient sur les positions de force relative du syndicat et des employeurs lesquelles en retour dépendaient beaucoup des conditions économiques générales et du degré de contrôle du syndicat sur la main-d'oeuvre. Il est évident que le syndicat considérait insatisfaisante cette façon de fixer les salaires. Alors que la recherche de méthodes plus positives était en voie de réalisation, la fameuse grève des imprimeurs de Toronto en 1872 eut pour conséquence de laisser béant un large fossé entre les employeurs et le Syndicat des typographes de To-

⁴⁵ Allan FLANDERS (ed.), *Collective Bargaining*, Middlesex, England, Penguin Books, 1969, « The Nature of Collective Bargaining, » pp. 11-41.

ronto. En outre, la dépression de la fin de la décennie 1870 nuisit au projet de rétablissement de relations normales entre les parties.

Un nouvel événement se produisit en 1885 qui devait subséquemment amorcer la négociation collective bilatérale dans l'industrie de l'imprimerie à Toronto. L'Union typographique internationale dont le syndicat de Toronto était devenu une section affiliée, institua un fonds de défense professionnelle internationale. Le fonds servit de courroie de transmission de la force continentale à la section devenue dépendante lorsque des conflits survenaient. Les premières négociations collectives bilatérales eurent lieu dans l'industrie de l'imprimerie torontoise en 1890. La négociation collective véritable commença donc lorsque la puissance de la section locale fut accrue grâce au support qu'elle reçut de l'Union internationale et à la supervision qu'elle exerçait sur ladite section.

Cette analyse fait voir que l'élimination des méthodes unilatérales de détermination des salaires et l'institutionnalisation de la négociation collective bilatérale fut le résultat de concessions des employeurs aux travailleurs une fois que le transfert de pouvoir fut apparu clairement. De plus, il est important de souligner que la négociation collective constitue un rapport de forces entre organisations tout autant qu'un processus de marchandage, de décisions patronales et d'intervention gouvernementale.

L'AMÉNAGEMENT DES TEMPS DE TRAVAIL

L'horaire variable et la semaine comprimée

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