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James STRUTHERS : *"No Fault of thier Own". Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State 1914-1940*. The State and Economic Life Series, Mel Watkins and Leo Panitch eds, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1983, 238 pp., ISBN 0-8020-7

F.J.K. Griezic

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télématique), lui-même intégré dans l'hypergroupe à participation étatique IRI (Istituto per la Ricostruzione industriale).

Le choix du thème de cette Journée du 30 mai 1983, «Les cadres», a résulté, ainsi que l'a précisé dans son introduction l'administrateur délégué du groupe, Michele Principe, du fait que devant la nécessité d'atteindre à un niveau plus marqué d'efficacité et de productivité, et, d'autre part, de promouvoir une stratégie industrielle basée sur l'innovation technologique et sur la diversification, il était vital d'améliorer, de la manière la plus adéquate, le rôle du facteur humain, avec un regard particulier sur les cadres.

Partant d'une définition selon laquelle seraient considérés comme étant cadres les salariés qui occupent des positions de coordination et de responsabilité hiérarchique et/ou professionnelle qui se voient investis de la tâche d'accomplir les objectifs de l'entreprise, il y aurait, selon le directeur général du groupe STET, Umberto Silvestri, quelque 13 000 cadres au sein de ce groupe, dont le taux de syndicalisation moyen serait de 20% par rapport à celui global de 60%.

Giuseppe De Rita, secrétaire général du CENSIS (organisme privé qui publie, notamment, chaque année, un rapport renommé, sur l'état socio-économique de l'Italie, fit, à travers son exposé sur «Les perspectives socio-économiques et les problèmes des cadres», une longue analyse de la trajectoire des «cadres» italiens — c'est-à-dire essentiellement de la maîtrise —, avant et après 1968, particulièrement à Turin (Fiat). Le problème, selon lui, ne consiste pas à dire quelle politique des «cadres intermédiaires» (maîtrise) doit être faite, mais quelle politique de l'entreprise et quels mécanismes d'autorité en termes de capacité entrepreneuriale et de motivation de ces cadres.

Michele Tedeschi, directeur central du Personnel de l'IRI, traita de «Crise et évolution de la *middle management*: nouvelles compétences et stratégie», exposé où il évoqua, notamment, la décentralisation, la démotivation des cadres, le management participatif et

les tâches de la Direction du personnel en matière de gestion des cadres: recrutement et sélection, formation, évaluation, politique de rémunération, action organisationnelle et système de communication.

Dimitri Weiss, professeur titulaire à l'Université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne parla de «Situation et statut des cadres en Europe, avec référence à la situation générale internationale». Partant des impératifs technologiques actuels, il refit l'historique de la naissance et du développement de la notion de *cadre* en France, des années '30 à nos jours, en se référant comparativement à l'Italie, à l'Espagne, à la Grande Bretagne et à l'Allemagne fédérale.

Il appartient à Shoshana Zuboff, professeur associé de comportement organisationnel et de gestion des ressources humaines à la Harvard Business School, d'évoquer «L'impact de l'avènement des technologies de l'information sur le rôle des fonctions de direction dans l'entreprise». À travers des recherches à cheval sur les années '70 et '80, elle conclut que les *middle managers* survivant à la routinisation de leur fonction seront ceux qui pourront collaborer au mieux avec la nouvelle orientation du *senior management*, et qui seront en mesure d'utiliser la technologie pour devenir plus analytiques, complets et perspicaces dans la compréhension de leurs activités.

P. JOUBERT

Institut d'Administration des Entreprises,
Paris

'No Fault of their Own'. Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State 1914-1940, by James Struthers, The State and Economic Life Series, Mel Watkins, Leo Panitch, eds., Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1983, pp. x, 238, ISBN 0-8020-7 (cl.), ISBN 0-8020-3 (paper)

Unemployment remains a perplexing question for Canadians and for the capitalist-industrialist world. How those who are

jobless are to be cared for is a contentious issue. Struthers studies the response of the Canadian government to unemployment during the period from 1914 to 1940. This encompassed the recession of 1913-5, the mini-great depression of 1921-5, and the Great Depression (1929-1940). Emphasis is on the latter when unemployment was constantly severe, and intergovernmental disputes over responsibility for those without jobs recurred. Explored is the evolution of the implementation of unemployment insurance in 1940. With this event Canada took a giant step into the twentieth century and towards the welfare state, but, it is argued, this occurred reluctantly without any change in philosophy towards the jobless and responsibility for them. Unemployment has not disappeared; neither has the myth of individual responsibility nor the federal government's desire to make assistance as difficult and degrading as possible to obtain.

The author considers the tergiversations of federal governments toward the unemployed and unemployment insurance before it finally became part of the baggage of the Canadian welfare state. Despite having experienced serious unemployment prior to 1930 the Canadian government remained ill-equipped to cope with this problem. Liberal and Conservative administrations clung tenaciously to concepts that were derived from the British Poor Law of another century and refused obdurately to accept responsibility for the out of work. The natural purgation of unemployment, it was believed by those in power and employed, would build stronger character in the unemployed! The interminable intergovernmental squabbles are demonstrated to have been unnecessary as they did not help the unemployed and delayed considerably the implementation of unemployment insurance. The motivation and intent of Conservatives and Liberals heading the federal government is admirably questioned and their positions are shown to be obstructive rather than constructive without any understanding of the unemployment issue; thus it is a revisionist presentation.

It was a tortuous path that led finally to the enactment of unemployment insurance in 1940 and in the twenty-six year period there appeared briefly at the end of WWI a possibility that the federal government might assume responsibility for the unemployed. Sir Robert Borden's Union Government seriously considered introducing legislation but this aborted with his resignation and succession by Arthur Meighen. He did not believe in unemployment insurance. It was not revived by the King Liberal administration even though it was a plank of the party platform and unemployment increased dramatically when they came to power. Instead, a number of fruitless federal-provincial-business unemployment conferences were held; it was a curious response to the mini-great depression. Refusal to act was based on three main themes that became the *leit motiv* of the federal state refrain for the next two decades. Responsibility rested with the individual, or the provincial or municipal governments; it was too costly for the federal government to become implicated, and finally the constitution did not permit them to act. Federal Liberals and Conservatives, businessmen and agrarians, Struthers contends, preferred a cheap labour pool provided by the unemployed and even favoured immigration to increase the size of the pool. The principle of unemployment insurance appeared dead although J.S. Woodsworth, A.A. Heaps and others kept the issue alive.

During the onslaught of the Great Depression the rejection of the principle of responsibility continued. The Bennett Conservatives and the King Liberals were unwilling to recognize the profoundness of the malaise, and neither believed in the principle of unemployment insurance as a means of combatting unemployment. Indeed, their governments instead sought means of withdrawing or minimizing their involvement. As a result they became embroiled in confrontations with the provincial governments, particularly those of the West. Increased unemployment inexorably aggravated relations. From 1930-5 relations deteriorated between Bennett and the provin-

cial governments; they worsened with the return of «King or chaos». The earlier excuses for evading responsibility were trotted out as both were preoccupied with maintaining the nation's financial stability and the provinces were kept from going bankrupt. As well, the federal governments, Liberal or Conservative, did not accept Keynesian belief in pump priming to stem unemployment. Intergovernmental disputes became a depression tradition.

As politicians are wont to do, Bennett and King sought to redirect attention from their action or inaction. Favouring retrenchment or total withdrawal of support for the jobless, they sought guidelines or support for this policy from civil servants, commissions, academics, social workers, or military leaders. Earlier Bryce Stewart's reports to Borden were favourably received only to be ignored by Meighen. Incisive, critical studies by Harry Cassidy of the University of Toronto's School of Social Work were rejected by Bennett. Conversely, Charlotte Whitton's advocacy of administrative efficiency and financial restraint were favourably received. This produced a bitter dispute with the fledgling social work profession. Other proposals such as General McNaughton's para-military camps for single unemployed men were accepted. It resulted from a fear of what these individuals might do just as earlier Borden had responded out of fear. The growing anger and frustration of the unemployed had to be controlled by some means. The other alternatives of placing them on farms or in lumber camps were continued but there were never enough places. This was maintained by the Liberals who eventually disbanded the work camps.

The federal-provincial conflicts were exacerbated with King who also had to contend with internal cabinet squabbles. The Rowell-Sirois Commission was appointed to consider the larger dimensions of the relationship between two levels of governments. He appointed as well, Arthur Purvis, a Montréal businessman, to head the National Employment Commission that was charged with fin-

ding a means of curbing federal spending on unemployment. Membership included a civil servant, a labour representative, and a Liberal hack, Mary McCallum Sutherland. The Commission recommended increased expenditure with the federal government assuming responsibility for the unemployed through national universal unemployment insurance. McCallum filed a minority report encouraging restraint in spending, undermining the majority report. Relations between King and Purvis became tense as they did between King and his Minister of Labour, Norman Rogers. When unemployment worsened and demonstrations by the jobless, particularly in British Columbia, were turned violent by police intervention, King seemed prepared to consider some form of unemployment insurance.

Bennett and King changed approaches while in office. Bennett went from relief work to direct relief and the degradation entailed; then put on a reformist cap which did not save him in the 1935 election. King continued direct relief and reduced Ottawa's financial involvements in grants-in-aid, and then went to increased spending to enacting unemployment insurance legislation. It required an amendment to the B.N.A. Act, yet Conservatives and Liberals had spent two decades denying it could be done.

The new legislation was unquestionably a landmark in Canada's approach to social welfare and centralization. The project included qualifying restrictions. There was no repudiation of the «less eligibility» concept; only seventy-five per cent of the work force were included; those most threatened by unemployment were excluded; the work ethic was reinforced rather than trying to provide the jobless with an adequate standard of living. The concept of keeping payments lower than the lowest paid work obtained, and the war, not the belief in the principle of insuring against being out of work, Struthers contends, was the catalyst for introducing the legislation.

Some weaknesses are apparent in the study. The author claims that organized

labour's reaction to the unemployment question will be dealt with. It is not. To have included this aspect would have been most useful but could, as well, have been another book. While the book deals with Canada, short shrift is given to Québec and the Maritime region. The Québec gap might have been partially filled by consulting Claude Larivière's *crise économique et contrôle social; le cas de Montréal 1929-1937*.

Three other points merit mention. These are questions of qualification. Selected jobless unrest is rightly given attention; on the other hand, no mention is made of the march of the unemployed on Edmonton City Hall in 1932 that contributed to the federal government's paranoia. It is stated that the agrarians supported immigration (p. 32); unfortunately, the agrarians were not a solid bloc and most opposed immigration because of the threat it posed to the weakened farmers' position during the 1920s. In a similar vein care must be taken with figures and geography. The village of Swansea may have been one of the wealthy suburbs of Toronto and had only 5-8% on relief (p. 83). It, however, divided naturally. Probably 100% of the jobless (European origin) were in the south and between the Canada Sewer Pipe Company, the sewer pipe pond, Stelco and the Toronto city dump; thus the figure is misleading.

Then there is the question of semantics. Yet it is more than that. Even though Liberal and traditional economists are loath to use the term depression because of what it connotes; historians must use it to describe the situation. If there is a depression and a slight improvement occurs followed by a regression surely one has fallen back to the depression rather than recession (pp. 187-8).

This is a fascinating book that should stimulate discussion and additional research. The presentation is balanced, although it is clear that Struthers is a centralist. The conclusion is sound and notes that thirty-five years later the federal government's attitude towards unemployment has changed little.

The study merits a wide readership beyond the academic community. Struthers is to be commended for his investigation and solid insight into the Canadian dynamics of state intervention.

F.J.K. GRIEZIC

Department of History
Carleton University

The Nature of Work, An introduction to debates on the labour process, by Paul Thompson, London, The Macmillan Press, 1983, pp. xvi + 305, ISBN 0 333 33027 7

This is a summary of the literature dealing with management-labour relations mainly from a leftist position. Labour process is understood as the means by which raw materials are transformed by human labour, acting on the objects with tools and machinery: first into products for use and, under capitalism, into commodities to be exchanged on the market. It is in the interest of the employers, to incorporate the crafts, knowledgeable practices and elements of job control held by workers into the functions of management, or operation of machinery. Employers direct work tasks, discipline and reward workers, and supervise and evaluate their performance in production. It is in their vested interest to dominate over labour, and this domination takes more and more the form of the incorporation of science and machinery within the expanded scale of production. All this happens not only under capitalism but also in the state socialist societies. The work control in both cases remains a 'contested terrain'. In order to achieve its goods, management has to manufacture the consent, in addition to the application of power. By the process of labour deskilling, task control, displacement of production (to the places free from unions) and technical progress, management perpetuates its dominance. On the other hand, workers continue a whole variety of resistance in order not to allow their position to weaken too much.