THE LOCAL UNION

I. General


An overall analysis of the union written from "the perspective of the union spokesman who is candidly describing and interpreting his own behavior." The author has deliberately underemphasized the formal aspects of unionism and has concentrated on describing "kinds of behavior which cannot normally be encompassed in formalized documents." The topics treated include: how and why unions are organized, union structure, union government, collective bargaining, unions and politics, and union leadership.


A well-organized description and analysis of the internal workings of local unions based on twenty case studies. The authors examine such topics as the grievance procedure, the nature of local leadership positions, the selection of union officers, the types of union officers, the relationships among these officers, and problems of union democracy such as the function and problems of the local meeting.


This book is concerned with the problem of regulating and improving the conduct of the labor movement in relation to members, employers, and the general public. The "faults and excesses" of unions such as discrimination against minority groups, racketeering and autocratic control, as well as failures of employers to discharge their responsibilities, are discussed in detail. The author critically examines various proposals to increase union responsibility (e.g. compulsory incorporation) and then sets forth his own recommendations.


* Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
Perhaps the most exhaustive and comprehensive analysis of union policies available. Professor Slichter examines the attitudes of workers and unions towards such problems as control of hiring, layoffs, technological change, systems of wage payment, and union-management cooperation. This book contains a rich collection of illustrative materials, most of which have been drawn from the history of craft unions.


A careful study of the internal life of trade unions. Professor Taft examines in considerable detail within a few selected unions the intricate questions of how power is distributed and exercised, to what extent there are contests for office, how unions are financed, and how discipline is administered.

2. Attitudes of Local Union Members


A very detailed investigation of the attitudes of the production workers at Swift and Company. This book is based on approximately 900 interviews conducted by Father Purcell during the year and a half he lived in the stockyards. These interviews produced interesting conclusions on such subjects as the role of the foremen and dual allegiance. Numerous quotations from the interviews enliven the book.


An intensive study of the motivations and attitudes of the workers in Teamsters Local 688. The author examines the reasons why workers feel a sense of solidarity with their union and the attitudes of union members toward such questions as the amount of union dues that should be spent organizing the unorganized, the extent of political activity the union should engage in, and the proper attitude of the unions toward racial prejudice.


The results of a recent survey conducted by the University of Illinois "to determine membership reactions to the policies and procedures of District No. 9, International Association of Machinists." This study describes the differences between the attitudes of the union members and the attitudes of the union officers towards such issues as the proper role of business agents and the political role of the union.

Seidman, Joel, Jack London, and Bernard Karsh. "Political conscious-

An appraisal of the political influence of a large local union of Steelworkers in the Chicago area. The authors report that “the inactive members of the union are far from convinced that it should engage in political activity,” that “the great majority of the inactive didn’t know what the union had done,” and that the union has not been particularly effective in the political arena.


The authors found that the reasons why men had joined a local of the Steelworkers Union varied widely and included such explanations as family background, earlier work or union experience, experience within the plant, informal group pressure, and dues inspection lines. There seems to be little connection between the various reasons for joining and the amount of participation in union affairs.


Based on a sample of over 12,000 union members affiliated with 13 union groups, this report contains the responses made by officers and rank-and-file members to a 77-item questionnaire. The 77 items probed union attitudes toward unionism in general, the local union in general, local union policies and practices, local union officers, local union administration, and the national union. A technical appendix containing a full explanation of the survey is also included.

3. LOCAL UNION LEADERSHIP AND THE PROBLEM OF DEMOCRACY


The career of the president of a local of the International Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers. This study suggests that Communist-influenced unions such as this one have much less impact at the grass-roots level than is usually thought.


A condensation of an earlier pamphlet, now out of print. The American Civil Liberties Union asserts the extreme importance of the problem of democracy in trade unions, describes certain union abuses of democratic rights—for example discriminatory restrictions on membership and arbitrary methods of discipline, and then recommends a positive program of correction.

A study of obstacles to leadership recruitment, leadership gratifications, the way in which men become union leaders, and different types of union leaders. The possible conflict between private ambitions and the group purposes of the union is also discussed.


In an effort to determine the attitudes of the rank-and-file union members toward autocratic control of their affairs, the authors interviewed a large number of members of a United Mine Workers local. They discovered that the vast majority of the workers do not resent the power of John L. Lewis, but regard centralized control as necessary for efficient operations.


Argues that to properly understand the local union it is necessary to go behind the formal meeting and study the shop society. This approach casts the problems of democracy and participation in unions in a much different light and leads the authors to conclude that "the idea of full participation... is unnecessary."


An analysis of the factors conducive to either democracy or autocracy in unions of varying size. The author also compares the possibilities for democracy at the local and national union levels and then concludes by suggesting what union members, and possibly the government, can do to diminish autocratic rule.


Attempts to discover the concepts of unionism held by a group of leaders of a local union of the Steelworkers. These leaders were asked why they joined the union, why they became active, and what role the organization plays in their lives. The authors found that "all the leaders had identified themselves with the union and believed that it had brought about substantial gains" and concluded that "convictions such as these... make it appear certain that the union is here to stay."