TRAINING THE FOREMAN AND THE
SHOP STEWARD TO ADMINISTER
THE UNION CONTRACT*

DISCUSSIONS OF PROBLEMS AND PROGRAMS


The first of these two chapters contains a description of what the Steel Workers have been doing to develop trained leaders among their members. It also points out that: “The handling of management’s side of union-management relations is an all-determining factor: industrial-relations heads, departmental superintendents and foremen, symbolize the company to workers and their union representatives. What they do, and how they do it, is the only way the union becomes acquainted with management's policies, since a changed policy does not become effective until adopted by the operating personnel. Management has the biggest responsibility in the development of leadership; its personnel must first administer a co-operative policy before the union leaders can follow suit, aided or unaided by a union training program.”

The second chapter emphasizes the necessity for “participation of workers, union representatives, and management at all levels” if a contract is to be successfully administered, discusses the importance of prompt settlement of grievances on their merits, and points out the importance “of an effective system of communications for both management and the union, in bringing complaints from the bottom up and relaying decisions and policies from the top down.” In this latter connection, a description of the methods of communicating union policies from union headquarters to the locals is given.


This report includes suggestions to both employers and the union as to desirable educational programs. For the employer’s supervisory

* Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
staff, the union recommends a course of instruction including "such subjects as the following: 1. An outline in detail of the company's labor relations policy. 2. The handling and treatment of men as human beings. 3. A complete and detailed study of the labor contract and full instructions on the proper interpretation thereof. 4. A study of government laws and regulations that affect management-labor relations. 5. Necessary instructions covering any clerical work they are required to do that affects the performances or pay of employees."

On the union's side, recommendations include instruction programs "for local union officers to guide them in the conduct of their duties," "for local union members, particularly new members," "for the guidance of grievance committees and shop stewards," and "for the guidance of local unions in the conduct of their relations with the International Union."


The author discusses what he feels to be three essentials in preparing foremen to handle competently relations with a union after a contract has been signed: "first, the definition in black and white of the labor policies, practices and procedures which shall obtain within the company; second, the definition in writing for the foremen of a set of principles to govern them in handling industrial relations situations; and third, specific training of the foremen for the handling of adjustments under the agreement, in cooperation with the union."


The core of the author's argument is that "...the task of preparing foremen and stewards for the strategic functions they must discharge in administering the agreement cannot be framed only in terms of what they must know. It must reckon also with what they themselves feel." This development of relationships "that will foster observance of the agreement" may, the author believes, be accomplished through both a guidance and counseling relation between the foremen and stewards and their respective "bosses" and by the use of conference procedures for both groups. The value of worker training by the union, of ceremonials to stimulate loyalties, and of constructive attitudes among top leaders are also stressed.

TRAINING MATERIALS


Manual distributed to foremen to guide them in their relations with shop stewards.


Includes general instructions and the text of the contract with the company's interpretation of each clause.
A comprehensive guide to union relations with the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation under the contract.

In addition to the usual type of information given to stewards about their relations with companies under contract, this manual includes the text of the contract and interpretations agreed to in subsequent collective bargaining.

Discusses relations with management, including foremen, under the union contract.


Intended to assist union officers in developing manuals, this pamphlet discusses the general make-up of such a manual and suggests the type of material to be included under the following headings: the steward’s job, union policies and procedures, labor legislation and government orders, and keeping a grievance register.

Explains to the foreman his place as a representative of management in applying company labor policies. Stresses basic principles in getting along with the union.

Covers the functions of the various bureaus in the United States Department of Labor, basic federal labor laws, wartime emergency legislation and agencies, veterans legislation, and labor branches of wartime procurement agencies.
EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

“Factory union school; Paraffine Companies graduate first class in labor executives’ course.” pp. 25. 28. 20 cents.

——— March 16, 1940. “College in a factory; labor relations are studied in course for promoting employee-management cooperation.” pp. 37-38. 20 cents.

A company project, begun as a training course for union officials who had recently started negotiating with management, which was so well received that it was expanded into a 40-week course for both management and union leaders. The motive for establishing the course was said to be “the lack of understanding shown by the company’s older shop foremen of how unions function and what they are trying to accomplish” and “the arrogance of some of the younger union men toward management’s problems.” It was thought desirable “to establish a common ground on which both extremes could meet and learn the strength and limitations of unions and management.”


A discussion of collective bargaining experience in the steel industry and of union efforts to train personnel for local leadership. The author includes a brief description of an experiment involving the holding by the union of “regular joint monthly meetings of foremen and other supervisory officials and local union officers and committee men from 23 different firms under contract with the SWOC. The tangible result of these joint meetings, where problems of seniority, discipline, production efficiency, safety, etc., are discussed, has been a better understanding between company and union representatives.”


On request.

Describes a supervisory training program in the Wagner Baking Corporation designed to help the foremen to handle relations with union representatives.


This article describes the program of the John B. Stetson Company which was begun in 1937 with the following aims: “1. Develop and put into effect a practical labor relations policy. 2. Establish improved industrial relations. 3. Strengthen the enterprise principle. 4. Integrate collective bargaining with sound economic operation.” The conference method is used and subjects discussed are directly related to company problems. With reference to the labor situation in the company, Mr. Purves comments: “At all times we attempt to keep our supervisors better and more currently informed from management sources than they can be from any other source.”