RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF UNION DEMOCRACY**


Under the title "Democracy and Trade-Unionism," the section cited includes the following papers: "Some requirements for union democracy," by Joel Seidman; "The usefulness of law in achieving union democracy," by Clyde W. Summers; and "Some efforts at democratic union participation," by Ben D. Segal.


A statement of the critical issues and policy implications involved in the "exercise of union power as between the levels of union government." The "real political-administrative problem," according to the author, "is the capacity of the federation and the national unions to enlist the morale and the intelligence of their constituents in a democratic and constructive fashion."


This report is based upon analysis of the contents of the constitutions of seventy international unions. The author found that the chief handicap to democratic control lies in the sad state of the procedural techniques employed to guarantee a free internal life." He points out the most "potentially disturbing procedural problems."


*After stating the task of public policy with respect to the internal affairs of unions, the author discusses at length the provisions of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act with respect to the

* Compiled by H. C. Benjamin, Librarian.
** Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
performance of the fiduciary obligations resting upon union officials, internal democracy, and the preservation of individual freedom.


"The major themes of the conference were proposals for new legislation; the question of vitalizing the internal workings of the unions; and the proper relationship between organized labor and society as a whole." The papers included in the volume were presented by Erich Fromm, Sumner H. Slichter, Archibald Cox, David L. Cole, Arthur J. Goldberg, Hugh A. Clegg, and James R. McClelland.


A brief comparative study of labor union structure and practices in France, Italy, the Low Countries, Austria, Great Britain, and Scandinavia. The problems discussed were selected for their relevance to problems of union democracy in the United States, notably "unitary vs. plural unionism" and membership participation. Also of interest is the discussion of the rapid growth of white collar unionism in Sweden.

Kerr, Clark. "Unions and union leaders of their own choosing." *The next twenty years in industrial relations.* Cambridge 38. Industrial Relations Section, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. 1957. pp. 51-67. $1.00. (Also Reprint No. 109, Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley 4. 20 cents.)

Considers that the central issue involving labor at present is "the impact of the union on the freedom of the worker." Suggests ways in which the unions can become more responsive to their membership with particular reference to "local union autonomy, a new faith for the union movement, secret elections of officers, independent judicial processes, permissive rules on entry to the union and on movement within industry, and narrow limits to union functions."


A scholarly study of union governments in operation with chief emphasis upon the national unions, although attention is also given to local and regional governments and to national federations. Of special interest is the extensive discussion of the union convention.


Contrasts the conception of union democracy with that found in the government of the United States. Concludes that the political theory upon which union government is founded is less than satisfactory and
that fundamental change is necessary. "The one essential feature which must be sought is the toleration of political opposition within unions." Means of achieving the benefits of factionalism are discussed briefly.


The thesis of this article is that "it is futile to believe that union democracy can be legislated" or that union democracy is the answer to the problem of the relationship of the individual member to the union. In arriving at this conclusion, the author examines critically the assumptions and findings of such writers as Goldstein, Lipset, Allen, and Barbash.


The following factors are discussed for each of the countries studied: union growth and the influence of ideology, union structure and the extent of participation in international labor bodies, government relations and collective bargaining, and current status of the unions. In a final chapter summarizing their findings, the authors conclude that "in all of the countries surveyed, the free trade union is incontestably a major bulwark of democratic protection and an outstanding vehicle of social and economic progress."


The outgrowth of a directive by the legislature for a study of union election procedures and practices in the state with a view to possible legislation, this report is divided into three main parts. An analysis of "litigated cases involving internal union affairs which have arisen in New York State" indicates that although the courts have given substantial protection to union democracy, they have lacked definitive standards with which to decide cases. This is followed by an examination of the procedures followed by the public review boards established by the UAW and the UIU, a method considered most promising, but too new for definitive conclusions. The final portion of the report is concerned with the impact of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act upon state law and union procedures, leading to the conclusion that because of the broad coverage of the federal law, state legislation at the time would be premature.

A commentary by a well-known British labor economist on some of the issues confronting unions in the United States. These include organizational structure and democracy. American experience is compared with British and European experience and possible future trends are suggested.


Examines the state of union democracy at both the local and the national level in the light of the author's concept that "a union is democratic when the rank-and-file members have the power to affect decisions, to change the leaders and the policies with which they disagree." A concluding discussion of the conditions of union democracy covers such subjects as political opposition within the union, disciplinary procedures, and admission policies.


In this broad look at American unions, the author shows that the economic function of unions requires them to be power organizations, characteristically authoritarian in nature. However the concept, if not the practice, of democracy continues to be important. He believes that the collective bargaining relationship may be regarded as "the development of a private or voluntary constitutional framework for our economic life which is complementary to the formal constitutional framework of our political life."


The first of these three essays covers the historical background and experience of the Review Board, as well as its impact upon the union. The second is a philosophical treatment of the principle of "voluntary impartial review" as a device for controlling executive power. In the final paper the author, who interviewed UAW officers and members in various parts of the country, discusses the impact of the Public Review Board upon the local union.


Traces the historical development of trusteeship and points out its unfavorable effects upon union democracy when imposed without "adequate judicial safeguards." The rest of the article analyzes the experience of the International Chemical Workers Union with trusteeship for the purpose of showing the "probable impact of Title III [of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act] on trade union administration."