

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
Institute for African Studies

CONSTRAINT AND MANIPULATION IN INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

A Comparison of strikes among Zambian workers
in a Clothing Factory and the Mining Industry
by

MICHAEL BURAWOY



A Zambian Mineworker..... A drawing by Judy Seidman

COMMUNICATION

NUMBER TEN

Price K1.50 (£1.05) Net

1974

331.89296894

B 89 C

894

B 89 C



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF
ADVANCED STUDY
LIBRARY * SIMLA**

CONSTRAINT AND MANIPULATION IN INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

A Comparison of strikes among Zambian workers in a Clothing Factory and the Mining Industry

by
Michael Burawoy

'Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past'. (Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*).

COMMUNICATION No. 10

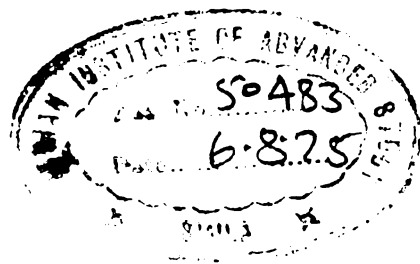
1974

DATA ENTERED

 Library IAS, Shimla



00050483



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The contribution of Nat Tembo with whom I worked while I was a student at the University of Zambia is clear. Without his persistence and endurance at one of the most arduous jobs in the mining industry and his perceptive observations this research would have been impossible. The description and analysis of lashing presented in Chapter Three rests largely on his field notes. Though the anonymity of the study prevents me from thanking officials at the mine by name, nevertheless I would like to express my gratitude for all the cooperation we received while making the study. Chapters Three and Four are abbreviated and modified versions of a paper I delivered at a seminar of the Institute for African Studies in September 1972. I should like to thank the participants and in particular Richard Bottomley, for their comments, some of which have been included in the revised analysis. I should also like to thank Professor Edward Laumann of the University of Chicago for his comments on the original paper. I am indebted to Terence Halliday for making careful criticisms of the draft of the first two chapters and for the use of his critique of Blau's theory of exchange. I was fortunate to be able to discuss the contents of the paper with Ida Susser whose comments and criticisms helped me clarify many points. As ever I am indebted to my teacher Jaap van Velsen who extensively commented on the various drafts of this paper and who has always guided my thinking in the area of industrial sociology. I would also like to thank Eileen Haddon for help in preparing the manuscript for publication. Naturally I am responsible for all the inadequacies of the paper.

Michael Burawoy

C O N T E N T S

		page
I	INTRODUCTION	1
II	THE MANIPULATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK	6
III	THE MANIPULATION OF CONDITIONS OF WORK	24
IV	THE LASHERS' STRIKE	39
V	CONCLUSION	49

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the fields of sociology and anthropology there has been an increasing trend away from a rigid 'structural functional' view of social systems towards a less determinate orientation. Sociology works inspired by Georg Simmel and more recently by writers such as Erving Goffman have stressed the 'room to manoeuvre' within the constraints of the social structure. In the field of anthropology writers such as Van Velsen (1964) and Vince (1971) have pointed to the significance of the 'manipulation' of norms, values and social relations where behaviour is not explicitly defined by established structural parameters. An imaginative combination of these and other trends finds its expression in Bruce Kapferer's book, *Strategy and Transaction in an African Factory* *

The 'post-structuralists' (van Velsen, 1967) perceive the social structure and normative systems as flexible, ambiguous and inconsistent. Rather than looking upon conflict as exceptional or pathological it is viewed as endemic to the social structure. Where the social structure expresses a complex of competing and alternative norms and the individual selects from among these, then the emphasis is placed on *choice* rather than *constraint* on human behaviour. At the same time the line between choice and constraint cannot be drawn simply on the basis of theoretical framework or ideological predisposition. It should emerge from the empirical case under examination. If sociological analysis is to develop and not to be subjected to the vicissitudes of fashion then a constant reference to 'reality' and explanatory power must guide us in stressing choice or manipulation¹ here and

1. In this paper I will speak of manipulation in three contexts. With reference to the social structure I will speak of the manipulation of norms, values and social relations by which I will mean the purposeful selection amongst alternatives. Manipulation of the work process refers to the strategic selection amongst alternative modes of industrial behaviour. Third, I will speak of the powerful manipulating the weak when the former selects modes of behaviour for the latter.

* Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1972. 366pp. £3.60 net.

constraint there. Thus some situations permit greater 'manipulation' than others. Taking the work context as an example, manipulation of the work process or social relations is more difficult with assembly line technology than in Kapferer's clothing factory. Yet even in the former there is some scope for manipulation². Simusokwe and Pandawa (1971) noted how workers on the Zambian copper mines, engaged in casting anodes using assembly line technology, developed an elaborate sign language to overcome barriers to social interaction posed by steam, fumes and noise.

Manipulation not only varies according to physical and social context but also within the same context. Some men are freer than others. The greater the power - be it political, social or economic - the greater the capacity to manipulate relations and ties, to define the relevant norms and to impose such definitions on the weak. The dominant values system may be ambiguous but the interpretation of appropriate values is biased towards the interest of the powerful. Manipulation by the powerful is perceived as constraint by the weak. In this case manipulation is an expression of dominance. To the extent that we consider relations and interactions between 'power equals', it is an expression of 'factionalism'.

Given that manipulation takes place within the constraints of the social structure, what significance does it have for social structure? Recent studies of communities in East Africa (Vincent, 1971; Van Hekken & Van Velzen, 1972) have looked at the impact of outside forces on process and manipulation within the community. Following Barth's study (1959) they use the 'Big Man' approach to the analysis of political processes. Their main concern is to show how the manipulation of resources and social ties upholds the status quo. Van Hekken & Van Velzen, for example, refer to 'levelling' and 'suppressing' coalitions which offset tendencies towards changes in the distribution of power and resources. Although there may be changes in incumbents of roles, the structure itself is preserved. In his study of the cell

2. For a description of some of the manipulations that are possible with assembly line technology, see Walker and Guest (1952).

But too often we pass over what I regard as a necessary adjunct to successful analysis. This is, given that in any society individuals are provided with a number of alternatives for action, why on specific occasions should these individuals choose to behave in one way when they could have behaved just as legitimately in another? (Kapferer (1969), pp. 182 – 3).

Though such an approach is an important contribution to our understanding of human behaviour it cannot be conducted without *continual* reference to structural constraints. In his more recent study of the Indian owned clothing factory (Kapferer, 1972) he attempts to show how manipulations within the factory may affect the social structure through attempts to 'change the system'. Under what conditions can manipulation at the individual level dislodge the structural constraints? Kapferer argues that some participants are more likely to want it to change the system than others and when the former control the latter, then system change is more likely to occur. Collective behaviour in the industrial context is perceived as the unintended consequence of struggles for power.

Underlying Kapferer's analysis are two assumptions. First working conditions, or what I will refer to in this paper as the reward for effort, are assumed to remain relatively constant or, insofar as they don't, they are viewed as residual and secondary influences. Though he recognises the underlying importance of the reward for effort, this in itself is not considered the important variable that accounts for strike action, and consequently is given little attention. The second assumption follows from the first. Having stated in the second chapter the importance of working conditions he never seriously considers them in dynamic interaction with his major independent variables, viz., the emergence of solidarity and the struggle for leadership. Much of the standard literature on strike behaviour makes similar assumptions, though it focuses on structural constraints such as the nature of the occupational community, the institutionalisation of conflict etc. rather than manipulation at the shop floor level. (See, for example, Kerr & Seigal, 1954; Ross & Hartman, 1960; etc.)

In making these two assumptions and focusing on social interaction not directly related to the work process, Kapferer is making a daring return to the Western Electric Studies (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939).³ At a time when it has fallen into disrepute Kapferer resurrects the informal group to a central place in his analysis. Though he does not regard informal social interaction as being based on sentiment and custom, nonetheless the informal group is viewed as an independent causal factor. The empirical foundation of the Western Electric Studies has been seriously questioned and subsequent analyses of industrial behaviour have indicated that the supposed 'irrational' behaviour is no extraneous intrusion but emanates directly from and as a 'rational' response to the work process (Roy, 1954; Lupton, 1963: Chapter 15). In a similar way I will re-examine Kapferer's study to see whether his conclusions are consistent with his data and whether alternative explanations are possible.

In attempting to reconstruct Kapferer's study I will apply a model of collective industrial behaviour derived from my own work on the copper mines. The interpretation of strike behaviour, as presented here, draws inspiration from Baldamus's argument (Baldamus, 1961) that there exists a normative definition amongst workers of what is an acceptable relationship between effort (conceived as the total deprivation incurred at work) and reward (including monetary remuneration, promotion, social rewards, control over work, etc.) This approach may be classified as a 'balance theory' (Alexander and Simpson, 1964) and springs directly out of exchange theory. Blau, for example, refers to 'fair exchange' (Blau, 1964 : 151 – 60)

3. For a re-analysis of these studies see Homans 1951) and Carey (1967).

between social benefits and discusses the manner in which equilibrium rate of exchange is reached. Perhaps better known is Homan's concept of distributive justice (Homans 1961 : 72 – 8). A situation of distributive justice pertains when rewards are proportional to costs and investments. When faced with distributive injustice the individual attempts to restore the balance between rewards, costs and investments. A further parallel between Baldamus's theory is to be found in Barnard-Simon model of organisational equilibrium, summarised in March and Simon, *Organisations* (pp. 84–110). Under this theory of motivation participation in organisations takes place when inducements are as greater (measured in terms of the participant's values and in terms of the alternatives open to him) than the contributions expected. When effort (costs or contributions) and reward (inducements) are out of balance, the worker will try and restore the balance initially through the manipulation of the work process. When it becomes impossible for workers to achieve an acceptable reward for effort then, either the participant can leave the organisation or the constraints limiting manipulation may be threatened by a form of collective behaviour. Like all exchange theory unless the two sides of the balance can be measured independently then it reduces to a tautology.

In view of the importance Kapferer attaches to exchange theory in social relations it is surprising he does not extend the paradigm to the relationship between costs and rewards of participation in the factory work process. It is this aspect of industrial behaviour that I shall focus on throughout the paper. Where Kapferer stresses the importance of leadership and control in facilitating and stimulating collective behaviour, I will look upon such behaviour as a response to structural constraints limiting the ability of the worker to attain through manipulation what is normatively defined as equitable.

The paper is divided as follows. In the next chapter I discuss Kapferer's study of the clothing factory in the light of this introductory section. In the following chapter I analyse Tembo's observations of unskilled workers on the copper mines (Tembo, 1971a). A strike by the particular type of workers he observed - lashers - is the subject of the fourth Chapter where factors outside

the work context are seen to shape the expression and development of industrial conflict, Finally in the conclusion I combine the results of the two studies in an assessment of the wider implications of and responses to industrial conflict in Zambia. Throughout the interpretation of industrial behaviour will be in terms of the 'reward for effort' paradigm.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MANIPULATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK

The culmination of Kapferer's book (Kapferer, 1972) is a strike staged in a small clothing factory of around fifty employees⁴ situated in the Zambian town of Kabwe and studied for a period of eight months in 1965/66, a year after the country gained independence. His analysis revolves around his non-participant observation of the 'informal' interactions of workers, i.e. those interactions occurring during working hours (though he does consider interaction in the township) but which do not emanate directly from the work process and are in that sense voluntary. He combines an elaborate network analysis - using concepts of 'span', 'density' and 'multiplexity' - with a version of Blau's exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to examine the process leading to strike action. Kapferer's objectives are two-fold. First, he tries to explain why at the end of September 1965 the skilled workers' attempt to stage a strike was unsuccessful while a similar attempt in February 1966 was successful. Second, he is concerned to explain why a strike took place at all.

I propose to present my understanding of Kapferer's model, then to raise some of the problems with his interpretation and finally to construct an alternative interpretation based on his data.

4. The number of employees increases from forty-three during the first period of observation to fifty-eight during the second period. Kapferer does not attach much importance to the change.

The Study

Two underlying factors are regarded as inclining the workers to take strike action. The first refers to the changing political environment which, Kapferer argues, led them to perceive themselves in strengthened position as compared with pre-independence days. (Kapferer, p. 125).

The change-over to African government raised the expectations of the factory employees. This led them to attempt courses of action which were largely untried. (Kapferer, p. 160)

The second factor predisposing the workers to strike action is the action of management which operates on the principle of 'maximum return for lowest cost'. This particularly affects the skilled workers (tailors) for whom 'constant dispute is endemic' (Kapferer, p. 144).

Moreover the factor manager (Patel) presents to the tailors no clearly defined set of output expectations on which they can base their own behaviour beyond that of expecting the tailors to work hard and with as few breaks as possible. This leads to 'sweat shop' conditions, with the factory manager continually urging the tailors to maintain a fast rate of work and threatening to dismiss those who slacken the pace. (Kapferer, p. 37).

Until September employees worked a 45 hour week paid at an hourly rate, which varied, with the exception of the three supervisors, from one shilling to one shilling and three pence.⁵ Most of the tailors (approximately half the employees were tailors of varying skill) received the same rate of pay as the unskilled workers. Before September only seven received more than a shilling an hour and after September sixteen received a penny increment.

Like Kerr *et al.* (1964 : 145 *et. seq.*) Kapferer distinguishes between workers who are committed to the factory and those 'target' workers (Kapferer, p. 48). who are less committed to one particular job and tend to move from one employer to another. The skilled employees normally fall into the first category while the unskilled usually belong to the second category. The nature of their commitment has a direct impact on their work behaviour, in particular the mode of industrial protest.

5. For some time after independence the Zambian currency remained sterling (twenty shillings to the pound). The new currency of Kwacha and ngwee was introduced in 1966.

But the factory workers have basically two choices open to them by which they can increase their earnings. Either they can work according to the current factory system and maximise to the limit the system will allow or else they can change the system. The first choice is consistent with management interests, the second, as seen by management, is against its interests. The degree to which the factory employees take either one of these choices is *dependent on their skill and/or importance in the production process*. If an employee has one of these attributes he has control over a resource which is valuable to management (more so because it cannot be easily replaced) and a degree of security from the threat of dismissal. Those who have neither of the above qualities are disadvantaged in relation to management. As can be expected the former tend to be involved in action which seeks to change the system, whereas those to whom the latter applies behave in a manner consistent with the system. (Kapferer, p. 60. Italics are mine)

While Kerr et al. (1964 : 145 et. seq.) see absenteeism and strikes as typical of the 'uncommitted worker', Kapferer argues the opposite, viz. that those with a high 'investment' in the factory will use industrial protest to 'change the system'. The extent and nature of industrial protest is intimately linked, in Kapferer's view, to the relative power of the worker vis-a-vis management; the more powerful the worker the more he can engage in open industrial protest. In stressing the element of choice Kapferer's analysis is analogous to current system and organisational theory based on decision 'functions'. March and Simon (1958), for example, synthesise the literature on organisations around a three factor decision-making model. Organisational behaviour is seen in psychological terms of 'preferred outcomes' (goals), 'perceived consequences' and 'alternative possible courses of action'. Choice and decision making is stressed but at the expense of structural constraint.

Though Kapferer's treatment is an advance on Kerr's evolutionary model, nonetheless they both attempt to link the nature of protest to the attributes of the worker, rather than to the working conditions.⁶ This assumption leads Kapferer to argue as follows:

6. Kerr et al do in fact relate industrial protest to other factors besides commitment such as the nature of the industrialising elite.

Should an unskilled and uncommitted worker be isolated in his social relationships from, for instance, skilled workers committed to the factory who are interested in changing their wage and work conditions, it is likely that his behaviour will conform to most of the expectations of the factory manager. But for such a worker to be caught in the social relationships of workers who are skilled and committed gives these the opportunity to control some of his behaviour, particularly behaviour which would normally operate against the interests of those employees interested in changing the factory system. (Kapferer, pp. 60 – 1).

Furthermore Kapferer used the same argument to explain why the February strike was a success and the previous attempts resulted only in partial withdrawal of the labour force.

The importance of the extension of a set of ties embracing both senior and junior workers alike is highlighted when the state of affairs at the time of the 'February strike' is contrasted with that at the time of the 'Five Day working week dispute'. One of the major reasons for the failure of the senior workers effectively to sustain their strike in this latter dispute was their failure to command support and control the action of the less skilled and unskilled employees. This was directly related to the fact that at this time the senior workers had entered into few transactions with the junior employees. They had few personalities through which they could pressure them to conform to a specified chosen line of action. Viewed from another perspective, the absence of ties binding the junior workers more closely to the senior employees meant that the junior workers were not afforded the protection against dismissal which the involvement in a set of ties which included the senior workers could bring. After September the senior workers began to extend their relationships into the ranks of the junior employees. This process was not, I argue, so much in response to the general need of senior workers to control the actions of the workers junior to them so as to be more effective in militant action against Patel (the manager), as it was a response of each of the senior workers to consolidate their positions of power and leadership. (Kapferer, pp. 317 – 8).

The parallels between Kapferer's approach and recent models of rural change, based on the concept of the 'Big Man' as innovator and director of change, are so close that they invite comparison. What follows, therefore, is an examination of Van Hekken & Van Velzen's (1972) model of Tanzanian village society in relation to Kapferer's description of change in a factory. The penetration of outside forces into village life, they maintain, is mediated by the rich and powerful peasants, and change is controlled by them in their own interests. Kulaks (rich peasants) compete amongst one another for the favour of the government representatives who enter the village, i.e. the staff. While the staff control the distribution of attractive resources, such as the flow of goods and services from outside, legal protection, appointments to government and party bodies, the kulaks own land and possess the power to secure the compliance of poorer peasants. A coalition between kulaks and staff is to the advantage of both. In competing for the favours of the staff, a kulak will augment the number of patron-client relationships he has with the poor peasants so as to be more attractive to the staff. In consolidating their position in the village the kulaks develop a following of clients through a further exchange relationship, viz. by loaning out land to poorer cultivators who thus become dependent upon them and render 'compliance'. In response to changes brought about by penetration from the centre, 'preserving coalitions' arise to resist change. These take two forms: the 'levelling' coalition in which weaker elements combine to prevent the accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of a few and the 'suppressing' coalition in which the strong combine to prevent the rise of weaker members into their own ranks. Though Kapferer's analysis is more detailed and his theoretical conclusions less clear, the above model fits Kapferer's study amazingly well. In the factory an exchange relationship develops between Patel, the manager, who controls such resources as 'indulgency', promotion, remuneration, loans, etc. and those who possess the resources to secure the compliance of other workers. These are not necessarily the supervisors (chiefs or headmen in the rural context) but can be workers with resources contracted from other social systems (such as the political party - UNIP). The competition for power amongst the skilled employees takes the form of

establishing patron-client relationships with unskilled workers (see above quote, Kapferer: 317 – 8). Possessing relatively fewer resources than kulaks in the village setting, described by Van Hekken & Velzen, in order to mobilise support amongst the unskilled, the senior employees had to present themselves as effective representatives and protectors of the interests of their prospective ‘clients’. This increasingly led to militant action.

With the intense competition for power and leadership it was expected, therefore, that increased pressure would be placed on management to grant certain concessions (Kapferer, p. 294).

Or again:

.....the competition which revolved about the reallocation of power and status was connected with the growth of increased militancy on the part of some senior workers towards management. This found its most frequent expression in the form of more active demands for wage and work improvements. (Kapferer, p. 250).

At the same time patterns of exchange developed which reinforced the emergence of new ‘big men’. For those who could consistently secure the compliance of the workers were rewarded by Patel with, amongst other things, resources which enabled them to exercise even greater control. However, this entrenchment of power and leadership profiles was upset by the emergence of preserving coalitions. A ‘levelling’ coalition developed amongst the majority of workers in opposition to those who formed an alliance with Patel. Unable to invoke severe sanctions or dispense substantial rewards, the new leadership found its support withdrawn and as a result became increasingly less attractive to Patel. Kapferer also describes the appearance of a ‘suppressing’ coalition amongst skilled workers which obstructed the rise of junior workers to higher levels of the social power hierarchy of the factory. Under such conditions leaders found it almost impossible to consolidate their position and factionalism and changing alliances became endemic.

At this juncture I am only interested in one aspect of Kapferer's analysis, namely his explanation of strike action, which he sees in the same way as Ross and Hartman (1960, p. 63), namely as the outcome of a power struggle. The strike was a leadership initiative taken to attract support from the rank and file, which in turn was necessary for the consolidation of leadership.

If Lyashi⁷ were to maintain his power and to consolidate his position as leader instead of only criticising the behaviour of others, it was necessary that he now should propose a positive strategy for action which would result in the rectifying of some of the employees' grievances. (Kapferer, p. 267).

Yet, paradoxically, according to Kapferer, the junior employees did not wish to strike and only took part in the strike because of the greater control the senior employees could exert

.....over the activities of those junior to them than at the end of time I (September) when the latter showed an unwillingness to acquiesce to the line 1 tailors' demands to support strike action. (Kapferer, p. 188).

Strike action was the consequence of a leadership struggle and was made possible by the extension of ties across occupational boundaries. Changes in the working conditions only played a minor role in causing the strike.

This unity of opposition to management (engendered by the power struggle) was *intensified* with Patel's withdrawal of other elements of his transactions with his workers, exemplified by the tightening up of the indulgency system. (Kapferer, p. 330. Italics are mine).

In the following sections of this chapter I shall consider five separate problems raised by Kapferer's study; the methodology used, the theory of causation and the role of external forces, perceptions of unskilled workers, the factory as a plurality of social systems, and the notion of industrial conflict.

7. Kapferer describes events in the factory through the eyes of Layshi - a 'big man' who was not a supervisor.

Finally I shall attempt a reconstruction of the study. In presenting the critique I hope to show that Kapferer takes over assumptions implicit in many anthropological studies of *villages*, which are not only inapplicable to the factory in an urban setting but are increasingly being questioned as to their ever having been applicable to villages⁸.

Methodology

In the first three chapters Kapferer introduces and examines the factory and its participants in their social setting. The last three chapters represent the core of the book where, in a series of events, Kapferer describes the processes leading to strike action. In the middle of the book are two chapters which replicate the analysis of later and earlier chapters. Here we are presented with an elaborate documentation of all the 'voluntary' interactions the participants enter into during working hours. The interactions are condensed into two matrices: one referring to the period June to September and the other to the period September to February. The matrices replicate what is apparent from the events - that there is greater interaction across skill boundaries in the second than in the first period. He makes further use of these matrices to rank order the participants in terms of their personal networks. On the assumption that the structural properties of 'span', 'density' and 'multiplexity' are an index of social power and influence, Kapferer is able to place the factory workers in a hierarchy of social power.⁹

To arrive at his matrices Kapferer categorises relations into those which are not directly occasioned by the work process and those which are, 'sociational' and those which are 'instrumental' and finally those which are 'unilateral' and those which are 'reciprocal.' How he accomplishes this we are not told. All we know is that it was done for forty employees interacting for eight months for seven hours each working day from field notes collected by himself and an assistant which were not specifically designed for extracting such data. Extraordinary though it may seem, nowhere does he refer to the problems of operationalising his field notes in this manner. In fact all these problems are concealed in the apparent objectivity and precision of the matrices and the mathematical operations performed on them. Though he must be congratulated

8. See, for example, van Velsen (1967).

9. For a general discussion of personal networks and the various structural properties, see Mitchell (1969).

for the painstaking efforts involved in analysing his field notes in this manner, one must be sceptical of the underlying subjectivism applied to what was probably insubstantial data. Apart from the problems of operationalisation, what does the quantification of observations, presented in the last three chapters in the form of events, add to the work? Nothing new appears from the matrices and a great deal is concealed. The ranking of employees according to the structure of their networks seems to bear relatively little relation to the hierarchy of dominance as it appears in the events. Lyashi, for example, appears twelfth and twenty-third in the two rankings yet he is clearly a dominant figure in the events described by Kapferer. Either the 'network' measure of social power is very approximate and operates only on the basis of 'other things being equal' (they never are) or Kapferer's description of events is misleading. The former explanation is more likely. Quantified data can only validate conclusions drawn from observations if gathered from a source independent of the observations. To extract interaction matrices and present a description of events from the same field notes are merely two ways of saying the same thing. Both chapter four and chapter five repeat what is said better elsewhere in the book and would have been better replaced by an examination of the work process and the way it is manipulated.

Causation and Description

Kapferer (p. 160) implies that strike action was an 'untried strategy'. Thus to explain such behaviour by reference to changes internal to the factory system is inadequate. The only external impulse for change within the factory considered by Kapferer is enhanced 'expectations' consequent on the attainment of independence. Kapferer never discusses in any detail how rising expectations are linked to worker behaviour or indeed that they have such perceptions at all. As far as his analysis is concerned strike behaviour is a response of senior employees to the struggle for power.

Nevertheless it is plausible to infer that Kapferer would regard willingness to take strike action as contingent on the perceived likelihood of greater support from outside agencies. This Kapferer refers to as

the false consciousness of the workers of the strength of threats based on an extended field of action including various agencies outside the immediate work context. (Kapferer, p. 159).

In the events described it was always the United National Independence Party (UNIP) officials amongst the workers who threatened to take the issue to the Resident Minister, and yet those very same officials were the most likely to know that the government would not support the worker in strike action. Indeed it appears that the decision to strike was taken *after* it became clear that the workers would not receive support from outside. Strikes were resorted to in response to the *refusal* of the union or party to offer support. In this sense, independence brought no change that affected strike action.

Alternatively one might argue that in taking more militant action the workers were responding to the expectation that independence would mean a more equitable distribution of wealth, in particular increased wages. This is normally referred to as the 'revolution of rising expectations'. As applied to workers or poor villagers in newly independent states, this thesis is difficult to prove. I have shown elsewhere (Burawoy 1972a: 243–56 and 1972b: chapter 5 and 6) that restraint tended to characterise the labour force while rising expectations prevailed amongst incumbents or prospective incumbents of the 'elite'. It might well be argued that the notion of rising expectations amongst the ruled classes is as much an ideology of the ruling class as a reality. For, in explaining the persistence of opposition and conflict within the newly independent states in terms of rising expectations, the leadership directs attention away from its own behaviour and style of life which is as likely a source of dissension as frustrated expectations. In short Kapferer neither demonstrates the existence of 'rising expectations' nor shows explicitly its relevance to changes in the work context. Rather, he assumes both on the basis of their plausibility and their dissemination as conventional wisdom.

As pointed out above Kapferer tends to focus attention on change generated within the factory social system through persisting disequilibria amongst the senior employees. His analysis suggests that if Patel had supported his supervisors by awarding them more resources (authority) then the events leading to the strike, and by implication the strike itself, would have been avoided. In other words it was bad 'human relations' or 'organisational strategy' that was the cause of the strike. (See also Kapferer, p. 142–3). In this respect his analysis resembles that of Scott & Homans (1957)

who account for strikes in terms of 'poor' communications and the nature of supervision. In both cases the *contents* of the grievance assume negligible significance. Rather than viewing bad 'human relations' as a symptom or consequence of industrial conflict, it is regarded as the cause.

At a more general level, does Kapferer explain the occurrence of events or does he merely describe them? Does exchange theory present a framework of causal analysis or an interpretation of process? He freely admits that this exchange theory has little predictive power.

Because fieldwork ended shortly after the strike very little can be said about the implications of the event for subsequent action...What might have happened after the 'February strike' therefore would rest on pure supposition. (Kapferer, p. 324).

Thus he is not analysing the constraints which *determine* behaviour but *describing* the choices people make in terms of exchange theory. Insofar as it is used to stress the indeterminateness of human behaviour so Blau's theory is an important heuristic device. It is quite another matter to show that people actually do behave according to the exchange paradigm; if one could then it would become a powerful tool of predicting human behaviour. For example an explicit assumption of Kapferer's analysis is that a person will engage in transactions if 'costs' of so doing are less than 'gains' (p. 189). If Kapferer had introduced some independent measures of costs and gains (he does not and probably could not do this) then he would be able to predict when people will interact, and the transactions which are most likely to take place. Kapferer himself writes:

Whether the approach is tautological, and the real danger to sociological explanation of this, rests on the empirical use to which such a theory can be put and its utility in generating hypotheses which can be tested on observed material. (Kapferer, p. 5).

Because he cannot operationalise such concepts as 'gains' and costs he is in fact reduced to tautological statements of the nature – why did X interact with Y? Because it was in the interests of X. Why was it in the interest of X? Because that is what he did. Blau himself uses exchange theory (Blau, 1955: Chapters 7 and 8) in an empirical situation as an instrument

of description and interpretation. Kapferer's study illustrates its limitations as an explanatory device.

In conclusion Kapferer treats the factory as unaffected by any external change. Whereas this may be justified in the study of villages which do not show signs of change, it is not legitimate when explaining innovatory behaviour. Unlike Gouldner (1954a) Kapferer does not trace the origins of the strike to factors external to the factory. Rather he creates the impression that a strike occurs as an accident rather than in response to changing conditions of work.

Who Controls Whom?

Kapferer's description of the rise and fall of 'big men' reminds one of Pareto's circulating elites. Both see changes in leadership as the inevitable outcome of the internal dynamics of the 'elite' structure. (See Kapferer, p. 202 and 204). Like Pareto, Kapferer sees the social system from the point of view of the elite. The senior employees manipulate the unskilled workers for their own ends and in so doing compromise those ends. The stress on the importance of leadership and submission of the junior employees as an explanation of collective behaviour is akin to the analysis of Kerr & Seigal (1954). There is a correspondence between the 'isolated mass' which is cut off from society and easily mobilised (Kerr & Seigal, 1954: pp. 193-5) and Kapferer's portrayal of the junior employees.

Throughout the analysis Kapferer emphasises the manipulation of the junior workers by the senior workers. Little attention is given to the manipulation of the senior workers by the junior workers. Such a description appears one-sided, as Crozier has written:

Such a scheme of interpretation is no longer founded on the passive reaction of the human factor, offering resistance to certain kinds of interference and manipulation. It is based on the recognition of the active tendency of the human agent to take advantage, in any circumstances, of all available means to further his own privileges. (Crozier, 1964: p. 194).

Since the crux of Kapferer's argument is that the strike was made possible by the greater control exercised by the senior employees over the junior employees in the second period relative to the first period, it is necessary to answer two questions. First, what was the basis of the control existing in the second period but not in the first? Second, why was no control exercised in the first period? Apart from protection against dismissal little mention is made of the nature of the 'debts' the unskilled employees owed the senior employees during the second

period.¹⁰ Other than saying that the senior employees extended their social ties to include the junior employees, Kapferer does not inform the reader on what basis the control was exercised. In answer to the second question, Kapferer argues (pp. 197–201) that control was not exercised in the first period because the social costs for the senior workers were too high. He does not consider as particularly relevant the costs experienced by the junior employees, yet as he remarks at one point (p. 284) it was the hostility of the junior workers towards the line one tailors that prevented the extension of ties.

Only data presented in the matrices suggest the dominance of the skilled over the unskilled. From the events it is equally plausible to argue that junior employees controlled the behaviour of those struggling for leadership roles. Unlike the kulaks of the Tanzanian village, the skilled employees did not have a monopoly over the scarce resources upon which the unskilled depended. The one scarce resource in great demand amongst the senior employees was compliance with their wishes and that rested with the junior employees. I would argue that in taking the initiative for strike action the leaders were not exercising control over the unskilled but on the contrary were responding to pressures from the unskilled. If in staging a strike, the the purpose of the leadership was to attract support from the unskilled workers, then this tactic must have been in accord with the wishes of the junior employees.

The factory as the intersection of a plurality of social systems.

Though Kapferer is acutely aware of the existence of social systems apart from the factory social system, such as the party, kinship systems, union, etc., he assumed throughout the analysis that for all participants in the context of informal social relationships on the shop floor commitment to the factory social system takes precedence over commitment to all other social systems. Furthermore roles in other social systems are perceived as resources to further interests and achieve goals in the factory social system. Very little attention is given to the constraints imposed by commitment to alternative social systems. Wider normative constraints deriving from non-membership groups such as reference groups which would account for 'deviant' behaviour in the factory are almost totally precluded from the analysis.

10. This seemed to operate equally in the first period. He does suggest that the senior employees might teach the junior employees the skills of tailoring but no examples of this are given.

As Burns has argued, the work organisation must be seen as the intersection of a plurality of social systems each pulling the participants in different ways.

.....the commitments of the individual member of the concern are not limited to those which enlist him as a resource of the working organisation. In addition, he is a member of a group or a section with sectional interests in conflict with those of other groups or sections, and he is also one individual among many to whom the position they occupy, relative to others, and their future security or betterment are matters of deep concern. (Burns, 1969: 246).

All this has a direct bearing on Kapferer's analysis. First, he repeatedly refers to the supervisors 'mismanaging' their own behaviour (pp. 234–5, p. 245, 254, 257, etc.). Attributing 'error' or 'mismanagement' to a participant implies prior knowledge of the participant's goals and the consequences of pursuing a given set of means. In the specific instances of 'mismanagement' Kapferer is assuming that the supervisors derive their goals from *the* factory system, whereas in fact his analysis unambiguously shows that one supervisor attaches greater importance to the party social system (UNIP) while the other attaches greater importance to the managerial sub-system rather than the employee sub-system. When faced with the necessity of making a choice between commitments to different social systems they do not choose the social system of workers. To assess the behaviour of either supervisor in terms of goals derived from the worker sub-system is therefore misleading. Non-conformity with the demands of a social system may and usually does imply conformity to the constraints of another conflicting and more salient social system.

In a similar way Kapferer's examination of the behaviour of Patel is inadequate. Little attention is awarded to the constraints which commitment to roles in different social systems places on his behaviour. There are numerous illustrations of the way he 'uses' resources derived from external social systems such as his relationships with his partner Badat, the labour officer, the union official, etc., but there is little mention of the constraints imposed by these people or by the commodity market, the profit margins of the clothing factory, the relative proportion labour costs are of total costs, competing enterprises, etc., all of which must enter into the determination of his behaviour towards his employees. Rather Kapferer takes over the stereo-typical image of the Indian entrepreneur as

a shrewd manipulator, 'maximising gains and minimising costs in the short run'. By focussing exclusively on Patel's behaviour in the context of the factory social system, Kapferer implies that he 'mismanages' the factory with the further implication that Patel has some significant choice in the way he regulates behaviour in the factory. External forces and constraints are not included which was the point at issue earlier when I discussed the problem of change.

Again Kapferer's attempt to operationalise Blau's exchange theory throws up a further limitation of the latter, viz., the multiplicity of exchange systems and therefore 'logics' an individual is engaged in.¹¹ Kapferer's portrait of the factory is reminiscent of the anthropologist's treatment of the village as a single all-pervasive social system. But as Van Velsen's study (1964) suggests, the village can be seen as the intersection of a number of kinship systems which constrain individuals to behave in 'deviant' ways. Non-conformity to one kinship network may imply conformity to another network. If the village can be analysed in this way, how much more important is it for the factory embedded in a multiplicity of different social systems?

The Nature of Industrial Conflict

Kapferer is explaining the emergence of a particular expression of industrial conflict - the strike. The workers adopt the strike, as the form of protest, in an attempt to restrict the field of action to the factory and exclude external intervention. Yet why of all the factory confined modes of protest is the strike adopted? The strike is but one manifestation of industrial conflict and should not be considered apart from other manifestations such as labour turnover, absenteeism, restriction of output and other forms of withdrawal of effort. But Kapferer offers no data on the variation of these forms of industrial protest from time one to time two. At no point are they considered as integral to the process of industrial conflict and therefore intimately related to one another and to strike action. Reduction of the hours worked by the unskilled workers in the second period is explained in terms of their subjection to control by the senior employees. An equally plausible explanation would be that junior workers were withdrawing effort as a form of industrial protest. In other words it was an independent response to an intensifying of industrial conflict.

11. Merton's treatment of the different commitments of the individual in terms of role relations remains a classic in sociology. (Merton, 1968, Chapter XI).

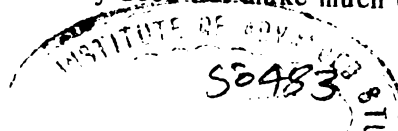
As Kapferer points out strike behaviour is costly for *all* employees, though some may be more affected than others. Therefore, it would be reasonable to suppose that workers would attempt to withdraw effort in other ways before resorting to strike action. This was the case in Gouldner's study (1954a) which in many ways assumes very close parallels with Kapferer's.¹² However, there is no mention of attempts by senior or junior employees to manipulate the work process to secure a reduction in effort.

Reconstruction.

In pulling together the comments presented in this section, I shall attempt an alternative explanation of the strike in February 1966. The question of why all employees supported the strike in February and only the senior employees in September and the question of why there was strike at all are intimately related. The cause of both may be attributed to Patel's response to market pressures which led him to intensify effort controls while at the same time either reducing or maintaining existing levels of reward. In the first period only the senior employees were affected by these pressures and therefore were the most militant in demanding wage increases. In the second period all employees were equally affected by the intensification of effort in the tightening up of the indulgency pattern and also by the reduction in earnings brought about by the introduction of a five-day week. The declining reward for effort was countered by manipulations of the work process aimed at restoring a more acceptable balance between effort and reward. Failing this a strike was staged to increase the official value of rewards. Under this interpretation the strike was not brought about by the competition for power amongst senior employees interested in mobilising support from the unskilled. Nor were the junior workers drawn into the strike against their will by the senior workers. The senior workers, in fact, had little control over the junior workers. Rather the strike was a response to a relationship between reward and effort which was unacceptable to *all* employees. What Kapferer describes as being of causal significance are in fact expressions of the conflict and would not have occurred were it not for Patel's response to external pressures.

In this light the behaviour of the supervisors becomes more intelligible. The intensification of industrial conflict stimulated by Patel's lowering of the

12. Kapferer acknowledges the parallels between his own study and that of Gouldner (footnote, p. 309) but significantly does not make much of it.



ward for effort placed the supervisors at the centre of increasingly contradictory role expectations. On the one hand Patel was demanding that they extract greater effort from their subordinates, while on the other the workers expected the supervisors to persuade Patel to relax the pressure. Only by emphasising one or other role relation could they resolve the conflict. Thus one supervisor leaned toward Patel while the other, acting in terms of his position in the UNIP social system, tended to side with the workers. As the power of the supervisors declined so a leadership vacuum was created and a competition for power ensued. Insecure in their newly-won status and with little support from Patel, the leaders had to prove themselves capable of furthering the interests of the workers but, even more important, of being responsive to the demands of the led. In the context of an intensification of conflict with management the result was strike action.

What evidence is there for these assertions, namely the existence of external pressure being applied to Patel, that only the tailors were affected in the first period, that in the second period the unskilled workers wanted to strike and lastly that the workers attempted to manipulate the work process before resorting to strike action? Because Kapferer is not concerned with the work process in any detail there is relatively little evidence.

However, he does write:

Recently another Indian store in the town opened a rival clothing factory and this new competition has caused some concern to Patel and his partners. (Kapferer, p. 28).

Though he never mentions this elsewhere in the book, it is plausible to presume that Patel was driven to make more exacting demands on his workers. In particular, competition would lead him to demand improved *quality* in the clothes produced and this would be translated into pressures on the tailors rather than the unskilled workers. Because there is virtually no description of changes in work behaviour which occur concurrently with changes in social relations and threats of strike there is little evidence for such a view. Nonetheless in the one event that is related to 'output', viz. 'The case of the badly stitched trousers' (pp. 242-4) occurring at the beginning of July (though the Appendix p. 344 has a different date in June), does seem to suggest that Patel was becoming more concerned about the quality of output. One other remark enters the description incidentally, which may also be of significance, '... in July and early August a number (three) of tailors left the factory' (p. 261). During the eight month period of observation eight tailors left

employment. That three left within a month suggests that Patel was applying some pressure to the tailors prior to the September walk-out.

There is much evidence to suggest that all employees were affected adversely in the second period. In September a dispute broke out between Patel and the workers over the interpretation of a new Government Act which aimed to reduce the working week to five days. The outcome was a reduction in the length of the working week from six to five days but with a commensurate drop in earnings. In combination with the enforcement of a stringency pattern exemplified by the searching of employees for stolen goods (pp. 309-10), the reduction in earnings led *all* workers to perceive an escalation of industrial conflict. Though manipulations of the work process are not discussed it would be reasonable to suppose that the continuous tightening up of the indulgency system was Patel's response to worker manipulations (restriction of output) as well as market pressure from outside. The inability to reach an acceptable reward for effort through the manipulation of the work process generated the move towards strike action eventually precipitated in February.

I have already questioned Kapferer's view that the unskilled workers had to be manipulated and controlled before they would strike. Though junior workers may be prepared to tolerate greater imbalances between effort and reward before adopting strike action, they too have a well defined tolerance limit. When this is surpassed they will not necessarily move to another job, since this may in any case be impossible, but will resort to strike action.¹³ In the following section I present a study conducted on the Zambian copper mines of unskilled workers who are also uncommitted to the sub-system of the industry where they work. Nevertheless they too will resort to strike action aimed at changing the sub-system when they cannot achieve in some other way a satisfactory reward for effort. In precipitating a strike the manipulation of the work process is likely to be more important than the manipulation of social relations. Further, I would argue that the possibility for manipulating social relations or of one group of workers controlling the behaviour of

13. The very transient commitment of students to their student role does not stop them from staging 'strikes' on a considerable scale against the conditions of the university.

another group is dependent on how the employee views and is placed in the work context. Changes in the work process such as the intensification of effort more or less determines changes in social relations amongst workers rather than the other way round.¹⁴

CHAPTER THREE

THE MANIPULATION OF CONDITIONS OF WORK

Though Kapferer is aware of the importance of seeing the 'endemic disputing' as an expression of management-worker conflict (Kapferer, p. 60), he pays little attention to the form this conflict takes during working hours. In the following study of mineworkers performing unskilled work, the central focus will be the manipulation of the work process and reward system to achieve an acceptable relationship between effort and reward.

When the Zambian copper mines were first commercially exploited in the late twenties of the present century they relied on unskilled black migrant labour and a very much smaller number of migrant whites from South Africa. The organisation of the industry labour force scattered over six or seven mines with a preponderance of unskilled workers and an intensive division of labour at the lower levels still persists.¹⁵ As in all mining industries the regulation of work is a particularly important feature of the work organisation. Usually mining industries are characterised by self-regulating and relatively autonomous task groups whose members set their own targets and control their own work behaviour through the enforcement of group norms and the creation of informal leadership. Management provides services, such as equipment, safety inspection and advice, and administers the system of remuneration (Trist *et al.*, 1963; Gouldner, 1954b: Chapter VI).

14. Cunnison (1966) shows how social relations are affected by the arrangement of work in a garment workshop in Manchester.

15. There are approximately 50,000 employees in all. 10% are expatriate; about 40% are employed in unskilled jobs. The persistence of the organisational form over time despite changes in the labour force experience, literacy, political structure etc., is an interesting illustration of Stinchcombe's thesis concerning organisational persistence. (Stinchcombe, 1965).

In the Zambian copper industry work is regulated through close supervision in a punishment-centred bureaucracy (Gouldner, 1954b: Chapter XI). In the following I shall confine my attention to one mining task - lashing.¹⁶

Lashers are engaged in shovelling copper ore into wheelbarrows and carrying them to a 'tip'. They are organised into 'gangs' of about fifteen supervised by a 'section boss' (sometimes referred to as a 'ganger') who is assisted by a 'crew boss'. The section boss is responsible to a shift boss who in turn reports to a mine captain. In the particular case we are investigating all the shift bosses are Zambian and recently (1971) the mine captains were 'Zambianized'. On each 'shift' (eight hour working period) there is a single mine captain and he spans the gap between those who spend their working time continuously underground and those who very rarely move out of their offices on 'surface'. The assistant underground manager supervises the mine captain and the underground manager takes responsibility for the entire 'shaft'. On the mine at which we conducted our research there were three shafts and the underground managers were separated from the General Manager by two further organisation layers. In all, seven organisational layers separate the General Manager from the lashers. Production at each shaft is organised around a system of monthly targets which are compulsively pursued. Directives for lashing targets originate at the mine captain level and progress towards their completion is inspected at this and lower levels. Authority flows in one direction - downwards - and tasks are accepted unquestioningly except at the lowest level, the lashers themselves. There are no reliable channels for information to flow upwards, for, as will become clear, the formal apparatus for upward communication is often blocked. Punitive sanctions are applied to those held responsible for failing to meet targets unless a 'legitimate' excuse is also presented.

In mining technology lashing is known as 'sub-end development' in contradistinction to haulage or main level development. Mining of the ore body proceeds by the excavation of what are known as 'stopes' - sections of

16. The following piece of research was supervised and organised by myself. The participant observation was conducted for four months by Nat Tembo, of the University of Zambia Sociological Association. This entailed going underground on night shift and lashing with a particular team for anything up to eight hours. Participant observation would take place on alternate weeks. It was followed by a week of interviewing and spending time in the township with the lashers. His role in the gang was that of a student participant observer interested in the problems of working underground. I went underground on a number of occasions but normally accompanied by the mine captain. The excerpts that follow in the description and analysis of lashing are taken from Tembo's field notes. Where reference is made to 'I' then it is Tembo writing in the first person.

rock which may extend up to 300 feet up the ore body, at a distance of 45 to 90 feet along the ore body. Such stopes are blasted out into 'boxes' day by day until the stope is empty and only a pillar separates it from the next one which is then begun. The main development provides tunnels along which trains run to carry the ore blasted out of stopes. Sub-end development on the other hand enables drills to gain access to the stopes to make holes for placing charges to blast out the rock into the 'boxes'. Sub-end development is normally well ahead of stoping and therefore does not hold up production. The relative unimportance of lashing as a 'production bottle-neck' is a contributing factor to management's casual attitude towards lashers.

The process of hand lashing is archaic and not likely to be found in many parts of the world.¹⁷ However, to eliminate and replace it by machines would require the restructuring of mining processes in the shaft, which were originally designed on the assumption that there was a plentiful supply of cheap labour. Under the present system it is impossible to find machines small enough to get at the 'sub-ends' and that is why they are still excavated by human labour. Miners refer to lashing as one of the most arduous and physically strenuous jobs. Though it involves the expenditure of considerable physical energy it is nevertheless very simple. Using picks, shovels and wheelbarrows, lashers transport ore blasted out of the small ends on the previous shift (afternoon shift) from the ore body to the tip which may lie at a distance of anything up to three hundred feet. The gang is divided into work teams of two, three, four, five, etc. men according to the size of the end and the distance to the tip. There are schedules which specify the number of men required for a particular size end. Though formally all of the same status, the lashers develop an informal differentiation into shovellers and barrow men, the former having usually spent longer on the job.

The hand lashing operation always takes place on night shift which begins at 6 p.m., when the lashers 'go down'. They remain at the appropriate station underground until their ganger appears about an hour later. The time

17. The organisation of mining on the Zambian copper mines is very similar to the organisation of gold mining on the Johannesburg Reef. This suggests that the exploitation of black labour in a colour bar society leads to particular forms of work organisation. For a description of mines, see Wilson (1972: 66, 115-7) and Horwitz (1967: 178-9):

spent waiting is wasted. The lashing sheet prepared by those who did the blasting on afternoon shift indicates the ends to be lashed and their size. The ganger allocates the men to the ends accordingly. Following the distribution, the ganger, assisted by his crew boss, ensures that every end is fit for working in before lashing can begin. This involves 'watering down' (with a hose pipe) the ends to make sure there are no traces of gas from the explosion and 'barring down' to see that there are no loose pieces of rock which might fall on the lashers as they work.

The system of payment is, in theory, relatively simple. Each lasher receives a basic wage for each shift completed - a shift lasts from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. When a team of lashers has completed its assigned end, i.e. has 'cleaned' all the ore away, the members *share* a bonus calculated on the basis of the area of the end, the footage advanced into the ore body and the distance to the tip. On the other hand if the team fails to complete the assigned end, then they may work overtime and receive an overtime payment if the ganger is satisfied that they have been working efficiently. However, a worker cannot receive both overtime and bonus for the same end. This is how the system is supposed to operate; how it actually operates and how it is manipulated by different parties will become apparent later in the paper.

The policy of the mine requires all Zambians recruited for the production departments underground and on surface to first undergo a period of lashing. New recruits sign a contract in which they state their willingness to lash for a period of up to three years. They pass out of lashing as vacancies appear elsewhere on the mine. At the time of our study most were spending between nine and twelve months lashing. Mobility is based on seniority alone unless a man's disciplinary record is particularly bad, in which case he remains on lashing for a longer period. Company 'policy' dictate that the lasher be paid at the lowest underground rate, while on the basis of the industry job evaluation scheme it deserved higher pay.¹⁸ All new recruits to the mine

18. The recent reorganisation of the job evaluation scheme has been worked out to ensure that the lashers appear in the lowest job (pay) category.

have achieved Grade IV of primary school education which the company tests through its 'educational attainment grading'.¹⁹ Though many lashers have had two years secondary education very few have higher educational qualifications. Nonetheless they are normally youngsters more conversant with English and numeracy than their supervisors who are often long-service employees.

The following analysis of work behaviour will be based on the assumption that a worker enters into a contractual relationship with his employer to sell his labour power - effort - in exchange for certain rewards of which the monetary ones are the most important. There is a normative definition of the acceptable relationship between effort and reward arrived at by a process of bargaining between worker and management. I hope to show that the employee tries to honour the rate of exchange (effort for reward) insofar as the employer does. In addition I try to show that the worker acting as a group will impose sanctions on fellow members who deviate, either above or below, from the norm. When management makes it difficult for workers to establish the normative relationship between reward and effort, then they will try and manipulate the work process or reward system to uphold the norm. The importance of such an approach can be seen in the persisting notions of management, trade union leaders and government or party officials in Zambia, as much as elsewhere, that the worker is inherently lazy and irresponsible and not prepared to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. I have suggested elsewhere that this view must be seen as an ideology of a certain economic class rather than a portrayal of reality (Burawoy, 1972a). I hope the following examination of industrial conflict at the work face and the management-union negotiations following strike action will illustrate the misrepresentation of worker behaviour by those who appropriate the profit extracted from industrial labour. In so doing an alternative to Kapferer's view of strike behaviour will be presented.

The operation of Group Norms.

The operation of *group norms* in controlling effort is not a universal feature of industrial behaviour even when workers are part of intricate informal

19. There are seven grades in the primary school and five 'forms' in the secondary school before Cambridge Ordinary Level of the General Certificate of Education.

networks (see Lupton, 1963: Chapter III). When bargaining over effort contribution is an ever-present feature of the work situation then group norms and controls are more likely to appear. This was the case with lashers despite their geographical isolation, continual changes and transient commitment to do the job. Nor was the operation of group norms necessarily in opposition to management's interests. Though the weaker lashers incurred greater deprivation at work, nevertheless they were compelled to accept the group's definition of the relationship between effort and reward. Thus Mwila, the weakest man in Ojukwu's gang,²⁰ became the object of ridicule when, one day, he defecated in his overalls out of exhaustion. A few nights later Simfukwe, one of the stronger and more experienced lashers, again put Mwila to shame.

...Simfukwe was already re-telling the story to everybody at the station in a joking manner. He was imitating Mwila carrying the wheelbarrow and letting it sway from side to side and then going to Ojukwu to tell him he had no more power left in him to lift or push any more barrows. That was immediately after two o'clock and Ojukwu tried to persuade him to do some more work so that they could finish the little end that was left. He refused to do some work so that everybody else had to be sent out from that end and it was left unfinished.

Thus it might appear at first sight that the group norm is an expression of manhood, reflecting an informal value system of the workers independent of reward and managerial expectations. But it is clear that the failure of one worker to work according to the expectations of his team mates affects them adversely.

I went back to my crew and found the wheelbarrow man quarrelling with Simfukwe. 'Come on take the barrow', Simfukwe shouted. 'You are putting too much stuff on. What do you think I am - an animal? If you continue to do this, I will leave it - I will go home. I am not an animal'.

Insofar as they are allowed, the worker will fulfil managerial expectation embodied in the normative relationship between effort and reward. When a fellow worker frustrates this process, then sanctions will be applied to him by other members of the group. On the other hand, when management frustrates those objectives then the workers will resort to manipulating the work process in a manner which may often

20. Ojukwu was the nickname the lashers of the first gang Tembo joined gave to their section boss. His appearance and manner gave rise to association with the legendary Biafran figure. The names given to the participants who appear in the following pages are fictitious, or nicknames.

be against the interests of management, as we shall see in the following paragraphs.
Remuneration for Effort.

There are two elements to the monetary remuneration of the lasher - a fixed element of K63 per month²¹ and a variable element of bonus and overtime payments relating to the effort expended during the shift. An incentive scheme based on bonus or overtime payments can only be effective if the marginal monetary reward is worth the marginal effort. In regard to lashing both overtime and bonus payments fall below the value of marginal effort. Thus overtime is paid at a rate of 1.56 times the normal rate and bonuses will average at about 20% of basic earnings.

I joined the men and we went out. I asked Mulenga about the bonus and he said, 'He (the ganger) is going to give us some bonus'. I asked him why he did not ask how much. 'We shall ask tomorrow. What we want is to go home now'. This was the feeling of everybody. They did not care about their bonuses. They were talking about having a long sleep and boozing in the morning. Mulenga said, 'I will look for my girl in the morning when I wake up'.

These remarks are typical and reflect the greater concern to leave the mine and return home rather than maximise earning through greater effort. After eight hours, marginal effort becomes increasingly costly in terms of physical deprivation. When the lasher returns home so exhausted that he is unable to partake in leisure time activities then the cost of extra effort far outweighs the monetary remuneration.

We are forced to work overtime. They are keen on finishing ends. If we were not forced we would not work overtime. People become so tired after finishing an end that they would not start another one.

The incentive scheme fails to operate effectively not only because the incentives are not considered worth the extra effort but because of a fundamental incompatibility between the prevailing emphasis on discipline and the operation of a group bonus scheme based on work completed. A group bonus will be effective when the members of the group are able to regulate the amount of effort and its translation into output themselves.

21. K1 - pounds sterling 0.58 or U.S. \$ 1.40 (in 1972).

On the other hand it will not be effective when confronted with the disciplinary and bureaucratic practices of a supervisor directing operations.

Manipulation of Effort: The Conservation of Energy or Time.

On the assumption that bonus and overtime payments are a secondary consideration, the lasher will approach his job with a view to stabilising effort at an acceptable level. With regard to lashing, effort is characterised by two main forms of deprivation, viz. expenditure of physical energy and expenditure of time underground. From the worker's point of view there are also two types of tasks: those which can be finished before the end of the shift and those which can't. In the first type the lasher will attempt to minimise one form of effort - time - and in the second type he will try to minimise the expenditure of energy.

If the lashers think they can finish their end before 2 a.m. they are more likely to work hard in the hope that they will be able to leave early.

The men went to their respective ends. I was to join the two men in a smaller end. I discovered one of the men was my 'informant' Stone. He was happy and told me we would be out by 11.30 p.m. 'I will make sure we finish early, because I did not sleep yesterday after knocking off late,' Alex said. Alex lashed while Stone pushed the wheelbarrow. At about 11 p.m. the ganger came and when he saw that we were nearly finished, he said, 'When you have finished I shall need you for the end near here. You will help the two guys I have put there'. 'But it is not our fault if they don't finish. That has nothing to do with us. When I finish, personally, I'm going out'. The ganger mumbled something and left. 'That's not Humanism', Stone said. We continued until by 11.35 we had completed the end and Dennis (the ganger) came to have a look. Satisfied, he told the two to join the next group. Stone completely refused and asked, looking at me, 'Have I not finished, Sir?' I fiddled around looking for my cigarettes pretending not to hear. When I got my packet the two were still looking at me and waiting for an answer. I agreed we had finished but did not mention how they had worked. I was saved by Alex who capitulated quickly and led the way to the next group of workers. We found a big heap still being lashed and the men were not looking happy at all. We joined in and lashed for an hour. Alex and Stone were working very slowly and I realised that they were very angry indeed.

In attempting to intensify one form of effort so as to minimise another form, Alex and Stone found themselves maximising both. Management had succeeded in

extracting out of them more than the normal amount of effort.

It is less risky for the lashers to adopt the alternative approach, viz. minimising energy. This is particularly likely if there is no possibility of completing the end before 2 a.m. The lasher can only lose if by working slowly he could have left at 2 a.m. Indeed, when given a large priority end to lash after a delayed start Alex insisted on being allowed to leave at 2 a.m.

He (the ganger) told Alex to lash the end but Alex refused to lash if it meant finishing it. He was prepared to lash if Ojukwu allowed him to go out at 2 a.m. However, Ojukwu insisted on the two lashers finishing the end or they go out and be charged.

Co-operation and Conflict.

The two types of end elicit different types of work behaviour and social relations between lashers. When there is a realistic possibility of leaving before 2 a.m. then the lashers co-operate in an attempt to finish early. When it is clear that an end cannot be finished before 2 a.m. then the lashers may compete amongst themselves for the effort-conserving jobs. This is most clearly brought out in the division of labour between shovellers and barrow men. The lashers preferred to shovel rather than carry the ore to the tip because the former usually involved less effort. Only when the tip is very close to the end does the distribution of effort possibly favour barrow men rather than shovellers, since the former may be able to rest while his wheelbarrow is being filled.

In the first gang Tembo visited (Ojukwu's gang) there was an almost inflexible division of labour between the lashers who shovelled and those who pushed the wheelbarrow. The most senior (long serving) lashers normally took the shovel, while the new recruits took the wheelbarrow, with very little exchange of roles. Often there was conflict between the shoveller and barrow men where the former were stronger than the latter. The lashers in Ojukwu's gang tried to minimise energy expenditure rather than time spent underground. Therefore, the shovellers were not prepared to assist the barrow men in carrying ore to the tip. Rather they preferred to take advantage of their position to conserve physical energy and minimise effort in this way. Sinkala's gang, on the other hand (the second gang Tembo visited), was very different.

While Ojukwu's gang is very particular about job demarcation, Sinkala's gang is unconcerned about this. When the one pushing the wheelbarrow becomes exhausted the shoveller says, 'O.K., you come and shovel and I will push the wheelbarrow now'.

There are a number of reasons why the members of Sinkala's gang might wish to minimise time underground rather than physical energy. Sinkala's gang was composed of older men with families rather than predominantly young and single men of Ojukwu's gang. The former, having greater financial obligations, were more likely to want to maximise earnings through working harder and getting more bonuses. The single men, on the other hand, prefer to conserve energy for leisure time activities and find money less important since they have fewer dependents. A second factor related to the relative experience of the members of the different gangs; Ojukwu's gang comprised lashers with only two or three months service, whereas many in Sinkala's gang had been lashing for as long as eight months. They would, therefore, have become more accustomed to the effort incurred and the deprivation correspondingly diminished. The bonuses were more easily attainable and more of the ends could be completed before 2 a.m. There are a number of other reasons, relating to the way management organises labour and technology, why workers should wish to minimise energy rather than time.

Organisation of Labour and Technology

One factor compelling the lashers to save physical energy rather than time is the delay before they begin work. At 6 p.m. the lashers go down to their level where they may wait for as long as an hour for their ganger. When he arrives he distributes the ends amongst the workers and together with his crew boss sets about preparation of the ends. Only when each end has been 'barred down', 'watered down' and the cool air supply is functioning, can lashing begin. Rarely does work begin before 8 p.m. and it may start as late as 10 p.m. with the result that the working shift is almost automatically reduced to six hours. The mine regulations require the lashers to wait until the end has been prepared by the section boss before starting work. However, though Ojukwu adhered to these regulations, Sinkala tended to bend them by encouraging certain members of his gang to prepare the ends themselves and he would then come and inspect. This gave Sinkala's gang more time in which to complete their ends before 2 a.m. and they would therefore be more likely to work as a team in order to finish early.

Shortage of labour is another factor which leads to the conservation of energy rather than time. Because gangers feared to question the targets handed down from above, they had to distribute the available labour sparsely amongst the ends, which meant it was even more difficult to finish before 2 a.m. After Dennis, the ganger, had put two men at an end which measured seven feet by seven feet (normally manned by three or more men) Tembo asked him how many men were required at such an end.

He explained that he had certain priorities to complete. 'I do not have enough labour, but I am expected to finish the job. If I do not finish the tasks stated on my work schedule I will be in trouble with my shift boss and mine captain. The mining company says it has no money to increase the labour force. So what do I do in such a situation? I am expected to do a job so I try to make sure it's done. Whether in the process I hurt some people is not my worry'.

Yet another source of frustration for those who wish to intensify effort is the failure of management to provide equipment in sufficient quantity or in good working order.

Two teams from Sinkala's gang were lashing, one from a winze and the other from a haulage. There were three wheelbarrows. The normal number would have been five, three in the haulage and two for the winze. Of the three available two were in good working order and a third was defective. This last one had been given to the winze lashers who wanted to exchange it for one of the two good ones that were in the haulage. But the haulage lashers refused. The wheelbarrow men from the different teams quarrelled over who should have the defective barrow. The conflict nearly developed into a fight but the winze team finally lost the argument and the haulage lashers retained both the good barrows. The significance of the quarrel lay in the willingness of the workers to do a good job but being frustrated by inadequate tools. A broken wheelbarrow not only makes you slow and therefore likely to knock off late but may also involve you in a charge for not completing the end. It is very exhausting pushing a wheelbarrow with a loose wheel for 250 feet to and fro.

Technology may interfere in the pursuit of the completion of ends in other ways. A technical fault in the cooling or water systems that occurs unexpectedly tends to favour those who try to minimise energy while working against those trying to minimise time and finish the end.

At 9.45 the fresh air went off at all levels in the shaft. Some lashers with small ends cursed the Devil, while those with big ends thanked God for having listened to their prayers. The shift boss telephoned the surface and was told that the trouble lay with the big compressor. We waited until 11.30 p.m. but still there was no smoke. (Underground, fresh air is referred to as 'smoke'). All lashers were now waiting for 2 a.m. to knock off. Nobody seemed disappointed – even those with small ends. They all hoped there would be no air until 2 a.m... Everybody was sitting and talking. 'Even if smoke comes now, I won't lash', they were saying.

Initially, when the stoppage was expected to be short, those with smaller ends, trying to finish quickly, were annoyed while those with big ends, trying to save energy, were delighted. When it became clear that the stoppage was to be long those trying to minimise time switched to energy conservation and the longer they had to wait for 'smoke' the happier they became.

The organisation of lashing was originally designed in the context of the colour bar dividing a white section boss from black lashers. With the rise of the colour bar to higher levels, why has such an apparently wasteful and inefficient use of labour persisted? There are a number of reasons. I have already mentioned one – the relative unimportance of lashing in the production process since no other operation is *immediately* dependent on lashing. A second reason is the function the lashers perform as an internal labour reservoir which may be drawn upon by any section of the mine as it requires more labour. Such a use of labour is very important in a mine of several thousand employees and given the relative 'cheapness' of labour (in relation to total production costs) it is only a minor expenditure. Finally the lashers are serving an apprenticeship to the mining organisation. The peculiarly harsh treatment meted out to them serves as an initiation rite to prepare the new recruits for their role in a punishment-centred bureaucracy.²² Certainly management openly believes that hard work is therapeutic and that miners must undergo great hardship on recruitment so that they will be more productive and better disciplined. It is interesting to note, however, that this form of apprenticeship only applies to blacks, presumably based on the view that blacks are more irresponsible, lazy,

22. The initiation rite which the lashers experience is similar to the processes of 'mortification' and 'stripping' which inmates undergo when they first enter the 'total institution'. (Goffman, 1961, pp. 1 – 125)

indisciplined, etc. than whites, and in the knowledge that whites would not accept such jobs.

A second conclusion that may be drawn from the foregoing description is that social relations are largely determined by the exigencies of the work process. They cannot be divided up, in any meaningful way, into those directly and those 'not directly occasioned by the production process'. Social relations at work are essentially dependent on the organisation, distribution and performance of work. However, there are external influences that have an effect on work behaviour such as age, physical build, family commitments, educational level, etc.; in other words, commitment to roles in social systems outside the work context modifies behaviour underground.

Finally we have seen how workers decide whether to apply greater or less energy to a task (end) on the basis of the likelihood of leaving before 2 a.m. But such manipulations as I have described take place within very definite constraints and managerial controls. To every manipulation by the worker there is a counter-manipulation by management (section boss) and it is this interactive process which constitutes industrial conflict.

Industrial Conflict at the Work Face.

Because the lashers regard rewards such as earnings and promotion as being beyond their control, bargaining at the work face revolves around the application of effort. Both management, represented by the section boss, and the lasher manipulate the controls they have at their disposal to achieve their respective goals. The following events highlight the form such industrial conflict or effort bargaining takes.

Nothing happened until we arrived. With the exception of my two 'informants' the rest of the gang had worked until 5.45 a.m. on the previous shift and they were bitter about it. The whole gang was now against the new ganger – Dennis – because of the longer hours they had to spend underground. Ojukwu (the usual ganger) had not made them work up to 6 a.m. The complaint was that Dennis put two men to lash an end that measured 7feet by 7feet and yet the companies stipulated that such an end should be lashed by four men. While waiting for Dennis the gang decided to refuse to work an end 7feet by 7feet if it were given to two men.

The ganger arrived at 7 p.m. and there was complete silence. His greeting was resentfully answered. He called two names and told them that they were to lash a 7feet by 7feet end. Simfukwe, one of the two men, argued that two people would not finish. The others agreed but nobody was bold enough to back Simfukwe and finally he

and his friend went. ...At about 1 a.m. I found Dennis in a big row with Simfukwe. 'You are not sick. You must complete your job first and then go to see the medical people'. 'I told you I am sick and I am going out because you can't force me to work when I'm ill'. 'Well, go then, but make sure you see the first aid people because if you don't then you will be in trouble'. Simfukwe quickly collected his shovel, chain and plastic water bottle and left.

Dennis and Simfukwe bargained over the amount of effort Simfukwe should expend. The ganger used his authority derived from his position in a punishment-centred bureaucracy to threaten Simfukwe with a 'charge',²³ while Simfukwe appealed to the managerial code which permits the sick man to leave his work. Absenteeism can be seen in the same light.

'It is difficult for us to come to work on Saturday because some of us have been drinking and you can't just leave your friends in the tavern', said Mulenga. 'Saturday should be an off day', Chola said and continued 'I have K10 and when Ojukwa comes I will pretend to be sick and go out on surface'. He was not serious about it but that's what actually happens when one wants to go home. This Saturday drinking might be the reason why some lashers always fall sick on Saturdays.

On a Saturday or Public Holiday the deprivation incurred by going to work rather than remaining in the township is much greater than on other days. Therefore withdrawal of labour is more frequent on such shifts. Here again there is conflict over effort. Management penalises the worker who withdraws his effort by failing to turn up for work while the worker tries to manipulate the managerial code to his advantage by pretending to be sick.²⁴ Management also penalises the worker who withdraws his effort permanently (e.g. through resignation) by taking away such facilities as housing. Management wishes to avoid labour turnover since replacing experienced labour increases costs in terms of reduced effort and recruitment operations.

There are some techniques of reducing effort at which the ganger might wink an eye – 'fiddles'. For example, each end has a designated tip whose distance is recorded on the lashing sheet. It is this distance that the ganger uses to calculate bonus payments. However, it might happen that there is another tip nearer the end than the official one and the lashers will then 'steal' the nearer tip to dump the ore.

23. An accumulation of four or five charges over a period of less than a year can lead to dismissal from employment. A 'bad' disciplinary record for a lasher means a delay in being transferred to another section of the mine.

24. For an extended statistical treatment and case study analysis of absenteeism using the idea of manipulation, see Burawoy *et al.* (1971).

Management also adopts illegitimate techniques which are aimed at extracting greater effort from the worker.

I took some measurements of various ends. One raise where Jacob was later put measured 4feet 8inches by 5feet 2inches. The official measurements were 5feet by 3feet. The main haulage was 8feet 3inches by 8feet 4inches but it was officially 7feet by 7feet. A winze measured 6feet by 5feet 4inches but officially it was 5feet by 3feet.

Tembo took the measurements while he was underground. By 'overblasting' in this manner or underestimating the size, management could justify the use of fewer men and the payment of smaller bonuses.

Internal Dynamics of Escalating Conflict.

So far I have shown that the workers offer management effort in exchange for rewards but that this effort takes two forms, namely the application of energy and remaining underground for longer than the eight hour shift. Lashers tend to prefer the latter on many occasions because management is inefficient in translating physical energy into output, because the incentive schemes are unattractive and because they are forced to work overtime even if they have been working hard. To minimise energy lashers must manipulate the work process in opposition to their ganger. The geographical separation of the ends facilitates manipulative behaviour since the ganger can only observe one team at a time. The ganger is limited in the controls at his disposal and he must use them sparingly if they are not to lose their effectiveness.

Observing a decline in output or a failure to complete assigned ends, management (on surface) automatically assumes the worker is deliberately frustrating managerial expectations. Management responds by increasing targets, i.e. number of ends to be completed. The burden of responsibility for ensuring the increase in output is passed down to the ganger who intensifies controls (insofar as he can) and distributes men amongst the ends more sparsely. This in turn makes it more difficult for the lashers to complete the ends before 2 a.m. which leads them to conserve their energy even more. The lashers also find themselves spending more time underground, but without completing any more ends than before. Management's expectations are even further frustrated. Such an internal dynamic leads to an escalation of conflict which is resolved by some readjustment on the part of the management such as the redistribution of labour, changing the ganger, moving the gang to a different section, transferring the lashers to another part of the mine, etc. On the other hand, if management fails to make such a readjustment the lashers may stage a go-slow, a walk out or some other form of collective protest which brings management's attention to the problem. In the next chapter I analyse one such protest – a strike taken by lashers at all the shafts of the mine.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE LASHERS' STRIKE

The following strike took place before Tembo began his participant observation of the lashers, but given the content of the negotiations, as stated in the minutes taken at the meetings between management and the union, it is clear that the situation was similar to the one Tembo observed.

On Tuesday, four lashers went underground on night shift at Big Shaft.²⁵ They next appeared on surface at eleven o'clock the following morning. Part of the delay had been caused by a four hour wait for a cage to take them to the surface. Not only had they spent seventeen hours underground but they had also been charged for failing to complete their end. On the Thursday of the same week lashers at Big Shaft refused to go down the mine. They complained about the non-payment of bonus and overtime and the excessive charges given to them for not completing ends. The strike at Big Shaft continued through Friday and Saturday but on Monday all lashers returned to work. But on the same day – Monday – lashers at a second shaft – Old Shaft – came out and stayed out for a whole week until the following Monday. The reasons given were the transfer of seven lashers back to night shift after being on day shift, staying on lashing for longer periods than at the other two shafts and the non-payment of overtime for work done after normal hours. The day after lashers at Old Shaft struck, lashers at New Shaft came out in sympathy and stayed out until the following Monday. In its public statements and in its negotiations with management, the leadership of the Mineworkers' Union of Zambia (MUZ) expressed sympathy for the lashers' grievances but condemned them for going on strike and exhorted them to return to work. The personnel department was also actively engaged in persuading them to return to work throughout the strike period. Neither the party (UNIP) nor Government made any open attempt to interfere with the workers' action, though in a number of public statements they condemned the strike. At various stages through the strike workers were dismissed (nine in all). Government and party officials strongly endorsed the action taken by the mine. In the following analysis I will focus first on the views of the union leadership,

25. To conceal the identity of the mine I have given the shafts fictitious names, and dates have been omitted.

management and Government and then proceed to link these with the perceptions and interests of the workers.

The union leadership puts its case.

Management met four times with the union leadership to discuss and negotiate over the lashers' strike. Participants during these meetings included national leaders of MUZ, underground managers at the shafts, manager mining or mining superintendent (two men who mediate between the underground managers at the shafts and the general manager) and officials from the personnel department. The following comments are all taken from minutes prepared by management and circulated to all concerned including union officials.

The union's case is summed up in the following:

Although they deplored and condemned their members' action they were fully convinced that the lashers had good reasons for going on strike and that management was to blame.

The union leaders complained that the system of remuneration was not executed in accordance with rules laid down by management. Overtime payments were often not made. Bonuses, when they were paid, were often less than overtime and did not provide the worker with any incentive to complete his end within the eight hour shift. Referring to the four men who came out of the mine very late, the union leaders remarked:

...There was something wrong somewhere. The supervisor knew he had four lazy men on a priority end but still allowed them to remain there and continue after normal hours. This was encouraging laziness in a way, because the men would start thinking that if they did not complete their job in time, they would be allowed to stay on and thus score on overtime. This would encourage them to work slowly.

The manager mining countered by arguing that bonus was worth more than overtime and that lashers would be encouraged to work harder to finish the end before 2 a.m. so as to win bonus. But the union denied this explicitly:

If standard payments had been adhered to, there would have been no trouble. Section bosses were being allocated less men than their tasks warranted. To complete these they had to work their men for longer than normal hours, but they dared not pay any overtime for extra hours done for fear of being disciplined. This also applied to extra hours worked on additional work where their members shared a very small bonus between several of them. When they compared this small bonus with what they would get had they been booked overtime, they saw quite clearly that they were losing.

When overtime was booked for them, less hours than those actually worked were given. Also men waiting for the cage for up to two hours after work were not paid for this. All this was causing unrest.

Management assumed that bonus payments were an incentive to complete ends. In the union's view, not only were the bonus payments too small to act as an incentive, but other unfavourable conditions, for which management was equally responsible, such as shortage of labour and defective equipment, frequently made it impossible to complete the assigned task within normal hours. In respect of the four lashers who sparked off the strike, the union claimed:

...that the men had completed their initial end and were charged for not completing an additional end. They had started late, not because of loafing, but because they had no tools. If they had been loafing they would have been sent out of the mine.

In other words management was thwarting the translation of effort into output and then penalising the *workers* for not completing their ends. The union went on to attack the mine's recruitment policy, which was organised around educational criteria rather than experience or physical strength.

There were plenty of experienced people looking for work. This was the type of labour management should go for, rather than inexperienced youngsters who were being overworked.

Perhaps the most revealing comment came from the union, expressing a management perspective, at the end of the first meeting. The manager mining said that the company was thinking of hiring at least 50% of lashers from the 'uneducated' group: men who would be professional lashers on short term contracts. The union replied as follows:

...This had been raised before at the M.J.I.C. (Mines' Joint Industrial Council) but the proposal had at that time been turned down. Lashing was a difficult job and if people were prepared to be there permanently wages would have to be attractive enough to create the feeling that 'it pays to be lashers'.

The union leadership explicitly acknowledged that lashers, as new recruits, were being exploited and that the remuneration for effort was below what other miners would find acceptable.²⁶ Yet the union was *not* complaining about the official

26. They were probably unaware at the time that lashers deserved to be on the next pay scale up according to management's job evaluation scheme.

remuneration for effort. It was only accusing management of failing to execute and organise tasks underground according to the rules management itself laid down. It was this failure which brought the remuneration for effort to a level even lower than the official rate.

Management's Defence and Counter-Attack.

Management did not accept responsibility for low output. It did not consider the conversion of effort into output through the system of remuneration as defective, nor did it place any importance on other anomalies such as the labour supply, faulty equipment, etc. The responsibility for falling output lies beyond management's control, in the nature of the Zambian worker. Speaking of the four men who had spent seventeen hours underground the manager mining commented:

The unfortunate part was that the men had been unable to complete their task in the normal eight hours. They had obviously been working slowly and since they were on a priority end, there was no option but to prolong hours until it was cleaned.

The manager ignores the possibility that the end may have been too big for the four men to complete the task before 2 a.m. or that conditions were in any way unfavourable to the completion of ends within the period of the shift. This is implied in the next statement:

...disagreed with the union's statement that lashers were being overworked, saying that some of them were just loafers who were not prepared to work because they thought that underground work was not good for them. What an average man could accomplish in eight hours was established by Work Study investigations.

But are the conditions under which the Work Study investigations took place the same as those which prevail under normal conditions? The union leaders clearly denied this.

In accounting for the strike, management placed the blame on irresponsible trouble makers.

People being signed on had attained Grade V²⁷ educational level or over. These were mainly youngsters who thought that they were very highly educated and expected to rise to a high position overnight. They were not prepared to work under less educated supervisors who had many years of mining experience which these youngsters lacked. A few of them were stirring up trouble and pressure had to be exerted in the organisation.

27. According to the data I collected there were many lashers of Grade IV educational level.

The cause of the strike was, therefore, not management's failure to reward effort fairly or translate effort into output effectively but on the contrary was due to the 'indisciplined' worker.

The quality of the lasher had to be considered too. What was considered a fair amount of work as done by lashers sometime back was suddenly too much for lashers of today. It was quite obvious that their attitudes towards work must change.

Rather than regard the previous management as excessively exploitative, management prefers to speak of previous lashers as being well disciplined. The corollary is not that management is less powerful but that the workers are more indolent. Indiscipline is the source of all problems of productivity, justifying any punitive action management might wish to perpetrate against the lashers. In the following extract the managerial view of the work differs little from the entrepreneur of nineteenth century Britain.²⁸

He agreed that lots of charges were being put in against their (union's) members. This was occasioned by the lashers' general indiscipline which was on the increase... They displayed no respect for their supervisors, whom, they claimed, were uneducated. They were not prepared to take instructions from them. Some crushed 'on' and 'off' through the check point without going to work. Others absconded from work or even disappeared before being allocated tasks. Absenteeism was the highest ever experienced, while loafing at work, refusing to carry out instructions, sleeping on duty and other serious offences were also on the increase. The lashers just did not have regard for anybody. Lashing was too tough for them and they were anxious to get clerical jobs or be pushed into training for high jobs before even acquiring the basic rudiments of mining... Lashers who could not get things easily resigned when they realised that they all had to go through the mill like everyone else. Others were either discharged for indiscipline, or went on medical grounds when soft jobs were available. Some were discharged as deserters. We are a copper-producing concern and the union was only too well aware of what would happen if discipline were relaxed. The problem was one which affected both management and the union.

28. See Bendix (1963: Chapter II) for an examination of managerial ideology in nineteenth century Britain, as well as in other countries. I have discussed the validity of slurs on the mineworkers elsewhere (Burawoy, 1972a) in connection with Robert Bates' study which presents the managerial picture of worker indolence. (Bates, 1971). See also pp. 45-48 of this manuscript.

Significantly the union leadership concurs with the managerial image of the worker:

...The problem of educating today's youth in the facts of life was real, and they would continue in their struggle to make them realise that paper qualifications alone did not make them a useful citizen.

The union leadership also acknowledged the importance of discipline and conceded:

that indiscipline was a problem, in fact so big a problem that it might be found to be affecting other mines. They wanted to examine it properly and would come back later to management with proposals.

While the union leadership attached importance to management's failure to convert power into output effectively, nonetheless it conceded that indiscipline was a major factor seriously affecting output. It was quite prepared to castigate its members as lazy and undisciplined at the same time as purporting to defend and further their interests.

Governmental Perspectives.

In its daily utterances the Government portrays the Zambian worker in the same way as management, as undisciplined and slothful. That the Government castigates the worker in the same way as management reflects their common interests as sections of a ruling class. Though also members of a ruling class, the trade union leadership (at the national level) must at least present some appearances of representing the interests of the rank and file and so they tend to hold somewhat contradictory views. The higher up the trade union hierarchy and the closer to governmental pressures the more the union leader tends to openly oppose the interests of the workers. Thus the Secretary General of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions attacked the striking lashers in Parliament.

In the first place both the Mineworkers' Union of Zambia and Zambia Congress of Trade Unions do not support the strike of young people on the mines. It is unconstitutional, it is irresponsible. It is also unofficial in that it has not been taken in accordance with the constitution to which they belong.

After the strike had ended he was reported in the press as saying:

Disciplined members are an asset to the union, just as disciplined soldiers are an asset to their commander...

But undisciplined members cannot expect protection.

Mr... congratulated the branch officials for their part in the negotiations for 'an acceptable solution' to the lashers' strike. He further thanked mine management for the 'good spirit' adopted in the negotiations.

The Cabinet Minister for Copperbelt Province was reported as saying:

...that the government fully supported....'s action in dealing with the strikers and considered the strike to have ended.

Though the lashers returned to work the conditions underground remained unchanged as Tembo's study makes very clear. They won no concessions but the realisation that they had few allies who would consider their grievances.

The Causes of the Strike

I will now try and answer two questions: first, what were the changes that made it impossible for the lashers to secure an acceptable relationship between effort and reward and second, why did the collective protest take the form of a strike?

We have already examined the internal dynamic inclining the lashers toward collective protest. However, it cannot be assumed that the lashers have always been on the verge of strike action as they seemed to be when Tembo worked with them.²⁹ There are two sets of reasons which may explain the changing relationship between reward and effort. The first concerns deteriorating managerial practices underground and the second concerns changes in the type of worker recruited to lashing.

Managerial inefficiency accounted, to a considerable degree, for the difficulty the lasher experienced in translating effort into output and the resulting unacceptable levels of reward for effort. It is possible that the inefficient practices stem from the lack of influence the black shift boss has over his superiors to modify managerial behaviour. The white shift bosses who previously ran the underground operations had greater influence over the mine captains to ensure a more effective conversion of effort into output. Another factor relates to the changing personnel in management. The reliance since independence on expatriate contract labour with transient commitment to the mine would explain the lack of interest in efficiency. Finally, Zambianisation has been accompanied by increasing fragmentation of jobs and corresponding increases in control and close supervision. This is felt at all lower levels as increases in effort.

Management, for its part, denies that it is in any way responsible for failing to translate effort into output effectively. On the contrary it blames falling output, as well as the strike, on the workers' laziness. Is this born out by the available data?

29. On one occasion Tembo himself was nearly embroiled in a walk-out staged by the members of the gang he was working with.

Table 1 shows changes in educational attainment, length of time spent lashing (the more engaged each year the less time that each new recruit will spend lashing) and the separation rates (expressed as the proportion of those recruited who leave before finishing lashing) for a period of three years prior to the strike.

TABLE I – CHANGES IN RECRUITMENT TO LASHING

<u>Period</u>	<u>Educational Level</u>							
	<u>Less than Grade IV</u>		<u>Grades IV–VI</u>		<u>Higher than Grade VI</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	No. New Recruits.	No. Leav- ing*	No. New Recruits.	No. Leav- ing*	No. New Recruits.	No. Leav- ing*	No. New Recruits.	No. Leav- ing*
Two–three years before strike.	42	0	5	0	0	0	47	0
One–two years before strike.	150	12	146	11	25	1	321	24
One year before strike.	2	0	641	127	142	34	785	161
Total	194	12	792	138	167	35	1153	185
% Leaving while still lashing (Separation rate).	6		17		21		16	

* The number of new recruits enrolled in the given period who left the mine before being transferred out of lashing.

Source: This data was compiled for the entire mine from records kept by the Personnel Department.

The data indicates an increase in separation rates, over the three years prior to the strikes, an increase in educational level, over the same period, a positive correlation between these two factors and finally a diminished length of service in lashing over the three years considered.

Management claimed that turnover and absenteeism were both high and on the increase. Absenteeism amongst lashers during the first quarter of 1971 was 5.9% while among day shift employees underground it was 2.5%. Annual labour turnover rates for lashers in 1970 was 20.4% while the figure for all local employees was 5.4%.³⁰

30. See Burawoy *et al.* (1971), p. 14.

Although I have been able to collect no figures for changing rates of absenteeism Tables I does indicate increases in separation rates for lashers. Therefore management's claim is upheld by the available data, but is it fair to conclude that lashers are lazy and irresponsible?

Hill and Trist (1953 and 1955) have shown that withdrawal of effort (expressed in the form of absenteeism, accidents and separation) is greater amongst new recruits. They argue that the longer an employee remains with an organisation, the greater his investment in that organisation and the less likely he is to leave. Second, absenteeism as an 'illegitimate' form of withdrawal tends to be replaced by more 'legitimate' forms of withdrawal once the employee becomes experienced at manipulating managerial codes. It is also possible that management is more indulgent towards longer service employees. In this way we can explain why lashers might exhibit higher rates of turnover and absenteeism than other longer service employees. Since the length of service of lashers is falling so it would also explain why labour turnover is increasing.

In addition to the fact that lashers are new recruits, the job itself is one of the most arduous, demanding a degree of effort which outweighs the rewards received. As we have seen this also accounts for the greater propensity to withdraw effort, and has been exacerbated by changes in recruitment policy. Being more educated, the lashers are also younger than their predecessors and therefore not as well built physically. Second, because they only spend a short period – less than a year – on lashing they never develop the strength to 'inure' themselves against the physical hardship of lashing. Thus where previous lashers might have found the reward for effort tolerable, the weaker lashers of recent years find the same relationship intolerable.

One further factor making for greater turnover and absenteeism amongst 'educated' lashers is their stronger position in the labour market. Since there are more opportunities open to 'present day' lashers, they are more likely to leave the mine when they find the reward for effort more acceptable elsewhere. It is interesting to note that as the commitment of the lasher declines so his propensity to strike increases – the opposite of Kapferer's thesis that uncommitted workers will try to maximise earnings and refrain from strike action.

The second question raised earlier is why the lashers responded to an imbalance between effort and reward by striking. We have already suggested that in the mine organisation incumbents at any one level have relatively little influence over incumbents

in the level above. In addition management is particularly uninterested in the
lashers and grievances emanating from them cannot be successfully channelled
up the organisation. Second, the personnel department is viewed as a buffer
protecting management from the worker and is largely ineffectual in influencing
line management. Third, the political party, although once an effective protector
of workers' interests, has been instructed to keep out of industrial affairs by the
President. Finally the rank and file have a very negative attitude towards the
union leadership. They are perceived as conspiring with management and the
Government to defend their own interests at the expense of the worker. (For
data on mineworker attitudes to all these bodies, see Burawoy, 1972b: Chapter 6.)
With no other channel to express their grievances workers can either resign themselves
to their present condition or take some form of independent collective action, such as
the strike.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

We are now in a position to draw together the various aspects of the two studies. Looking upon the degree and form of industrial conflict as dependent variables, we have throughout considered two sets of independent variables. The first set related directly to the work context, the scale of industry, pressures from both commodity and labour markets, patterns of management, the industrial community, technological factors on the shop floor and so on. The second set to be considered was the influence of wider structural, but particularly political, factors, such as the orientation of trade union and government towards workers, which affect each industry more or less similarly. The significance of the second set can be assessed by consideration of change over time, or more specifically changes brought about since independence. The first set reveals itself in a comparison between industries, in this case between a clothing factory and the mining industry, or rather a particular section of the mining industry.

Variations in Industrial Conflict between Industries

Under the paradigm central to the analysis in this paper industrial conflict manifests itself as an attempt to achieve an 'equitable' relationship between effort and reward. Thus all techniques of reducing effort or increasing reward, such as absenteeism, restriction of output, go-slow, fiddles, strikes, etc. are, from the point of view of expressions of industrial conflict, functional equivalents. The question remains, however, under what circumstances will a particular expression materialise? Or in more specific terms related to the subject matter of this paper, when will workers adopt strike action?

In order to interpret the findings in this field and place them in the context of our own conclusions, I propose to consider the three major determinants of collective behaviour to be found in Smelser's 'value-added' model, namely 'structural conduciveness', 'structural strain' and 'the growth and spread of a generalised belief' (Smelser, 1962: Chapter One).

a) Structural Conduciveness. Under this heading we include those structural features of the industrial setting which permit and encourage the development of collective forms of protest. Kerr and Seigal (1954) concluded that a major

determinant of strike propensity of an industry is the degree of isolation or lack of integration into the wider society and the corresponding internal cohesion of the industrial community. This, they argued, accounted for the greater propensity to strike amongst miners and longshoremen.

Though community isolation does not vary significantly as between workers in the clothing factory and the mining industry nonetheless similar ideas may be applied to the work situations. Thus one might argue that internal differentiation of the work group and the 'ecology' of the work process determine, in part, the likelihood of collective behaviour. The geographical isolation of the lashers from one another while at work would place them in a weaker position with regard to collective action than in the clothing factory where everyone is able to observe and communicate with everyone else. On the other hand, in both cases many of the workers knew and saw one another during leisure hours, thus providing avenues for communication and planning concerted action. Indeed Kapferer shows the importance of conversation over beer or a visitation to a fellow worker's house in persuading the more reluctant members to come out on strike. Clearly where workers interact outside working hours, the sanctions at the disposal of the group to bring deviant members into conformity with the majority are much greater than where workers live so far apart that they do not see one another except at work.

The homogeneity of the group, particularly with regard to the relations to the productive process, is also conducive to collective behaviour. Amongst the workers in the clothing factory there was a marked differentiation according to skill, which Kapferer argues obstructed the development of internal cohesion and a common interest. However, among the lashers the lack of such differentiation would make internal cohesion so much more easy to generate. Yet even here there was a differentiation of interest based on progress in the 'lashing career'. Those with only a short period to complete might be less likely to support strike action than those with longer periods to complete.

Internal differentiation of the work force is also affected by patterns of management. Controlling a small enterprise with face to face contact between manager and worker, Patel was successfully able to manipulate his system of sanctions to favour one employee today and another tomorrow. Since there were relatively few 'formal' procedures, he could arbitrarily operate a system of divide and rule through the dispensation of rewards and penalties. For the ganger in charge of the lashers such arbitrary manipulations of the system of sanctions was

ruled out by the constraints imposed from above, which left him little room for the manipulation of his workers.

b) Growth and Spread of a Generalized Belief. Before collective action takes place, the workers must develop a common consciousness concerning a grievance they all feel, which I have formulated as the imbalance between the effort demanded and rewards offered by management. It is at this level of causation of strike behaviour that Kapferer is most concerned in his analysis. However, his book focuses for the most part on the generation of a collective consciousness, not so much in response to a given grievance, but through the manipulation of social ties and the social control exercised by a leadership within the work group. The development of processes leading up to the strike relate to the consequences of a power struggle amongst the more senior workers, while the grievance itself, that is the tightening up of the indulgency pattern, is regarded more as a precipitating factor. In the second chapter I suggested that Kapferer mistakes symptom for cause. In other words it was the development of a collective grievance, namely management's attempt to extract greater effort from workers for the same remuneration, which led to the spread of a common consciousness. The power struggle did not create a common purpose but on the contrary was its symptom and developed along lines reflecting changes in working conditions. Thus it is not consciousness that gives rise to a collective grievance and thus to strike action, but the collective grievance gives rise to the common consciousness that precipitates strike action.

c) Structural Strain. We have seen so far how the interpretations of strike behaviour have tended to emphasise one or other of the three determinants of collective behaviour. In this way they have taken Smelser's scheme forward since in his formulation the relative importance of the various stages in the development of collective behaviour is considered invariant. At the same time the approaches to collective behaviour outlined above, while they do not ignore the various determinants of collective behaviour other than the one receiving focal attention, as with Smelser's model, they do not examine the interdependence of these determinants. This is their weakness. While it seems clear that factors of structural conduciveness and the growth and spread of a generalised belief cannot themselves induce structural strain, I have argued that structural strain, conceived as the imbalance of effort and reward, can in fact give rise to these other features of collective behaviour. Accordingly, in the context of strike

behaviour, structural strain assumes primary significance.

The interpretations offered by those who would stress 'structural conduciveness' or 'growth and spread of a generalised belief' do not provide satisfactory accounts of the conditions under which strikes takes place. They offer necessary but not sufficient conditions. In other words, they do not present a causal process of the development of a strike but rather the concomitants of such a process. Thus I have argued, both in connection with the strike in the clothing factory and by lashers, that industrial conflict develops when the relationship between reward and effort violates norms established by workers and management. When the norm cannot be restored by the manipulation of the work process or of the reward system, then conflict at the work face escalates. Should the machinery for the re-establishment of the norm fail in its function then collective protest is likely to ensue.

We have noted how in both the clothing factory and the lashing gangs the machinery for negotiation of modifications to reward for effort was either non-existent or ineffective. In the case of lashers there was little opportunity for negotiation. They were regarded as a peripheral and unimportant section of the labour force and therefore their grievances were disregarded. Indeed it was part of managerial 'wisdom' that lashers, as a contribution to their socialisation into industry, should be subjected to greater than normal hardship. This accounts for their greater propensity to strike and to withdraw effort in other ways as compared to other sections of the mine. The clothing factory workers, on the other hand, were able to negotiate directly with the manager, who for reasons of profit margins and proportionately high costs refused either to grant wage increases or to relax the intensity of effort. Eventually, in both cases, the only recourse was to strike.

Variations in Industrial Conflict Over Time – Wider Factors.

Smelser pays relatively little attention to the *degree* to which his various elements or stages exist, and the role this may play in precipitating or arresting the development of collective behaviour. Yet it is only by considering the extent of strain, structural conduciveness, generalised belief, etc. that we can explain how all these factors may be present yet no collective behaviour materialise. Thus, in the model of strike behaviour presented here, what determines the degree of strain, or imbalance between effort and reward, which workers find sufficiently intolerable so as to lead to strike action? In answering

this question we are forced to consider factors outside the immediate work context and which are common to all industries in a single country. As examinations of the available data before and after independence illustrate, (Burawoy, 1972a), the form and extent of industrial conflict is governed not merely by factors originating in the work context, but by much wider political and economic factors over which neither employer nor employee, as individuals, have much direct control.

The factors operating to discourage strike behaviour and incline workers to adopt less overt expressions of industrial conflict may be conveniently divided into two groups. The first contains economic factors and the second political, though the two are, of course, intimately related. Apart from the profit margins of the industry under consideration, which is a local factor not here being considered, broader factors affecting the propensity to strike revolve around the nature of the labour market – the supply and demand for labour. The availability of large numbers of unemployed or semi-employed Zambians to act as potential replacement or as scabs for those considering strike action, is a powerful antidote to the adoption of such protest. The more attractive the employment, the greater the reservoir of accessible labour and therefore the greater the risk to the worker of strike action. The unskilled and semi-skilled mineworkers may be more concerned to protect their jobs with their higher rates of remuneration than would the workers in the clothing factory, but both wish to avoid descending into the pool of unemployed. However, the labour market is not uniformly favourable to the class of employers, since at higher skill levels and in jobs requiring formal qualifications or training, such as tailoring or supervision, there is a shortage of Zambian personnel. But this greater bargaining power applies to a minority only; for the majority the presence of a large labour reservoir acts as a deterrent to strike action. With political independence the labour reservoirs have grown larger, while the number of trained and skilled Zambians has also increased and thus the strike deterrent effect of the labour market enhanced.

But this is not the only, nor even the most important, change that has disinclined workers to take strike action as a form of industrial protest. Political change since independence has led the Government, whether for developmental or for less altruistic reasons, to establish an institutional apparatus which assists management in extracting greater effort from the Zambian worker without corresponding wage increases.

Before 1964 political independence was the primary objective of the prospective Zambian ruling elite. There was little immediate concern for the economic development of the country. On the contrary the disruption of the economy was seen as an important weapon in hastening political independence. After 1964 the problems of economic

development, of conflict and of competition for the distribution of the meagre fruits of independence, had to be confronted. A period of industrial peace, lasting little more than a year, was followed by renewed wage demands from workers and it appeared to the Government, as evidenced in public speeches, that the Zambian worker was prepared to work no harder now than under the Colonial government. Whether this was actually the case or not is debatable, (Burawoy, 1972a), but what is not debatable is that the Government was concerned to extract greater surplus out of its labour force. Such powerful organisations as the Party and trade unions, which had gained widespread support before independence and had actively furthered the cause of the workers in bettering working conditions, were now mobilised by the Government to assist employers, whatever their race or ethnic origin, in extracting greater effort from employees and stemming overt forms of industrial protest.

Thus workers are daily subjected to exhortations from Party and Government officials to increase productivity. Positive appeals argue that the Zambian worker is no longer working for an alien colonising power but for his own country. After the nationalisation of the mines, politicians declared that the mines are now 'ours' and therefore the labouring classes should work harder. At the same time the Zambian worker is censured for his 'laziness' and unwarranted expectations. Greater discipline must be instilled into the work force, if necessary by punitive sanctions. Not only do Government and Party officials subscribe to these exhortations, but trade union leaders, particularly at the national level, castigate their members for indolence and demand greater commitment to work. Strikes, absenteeism, turnover and other manifestations of industrial conflict are viewed as unpatriotic and irresponsible acts. As I described earlier in the negotiations between management and union following the strikes by lashers, the underlying grievances were obscured by the continual reference from both sides to 'indiscipline' as the root of the 'malaise' in Zambian industry.

Those working in the industries central to the nation's economy are awarded greater attention than those in the peripheral industries. At the same time, the more central the industry, the greater its potentiality for disrupting the national economy and consequently the more wary is the Government before intervening in industrial conflict. This is reflected in Government's decision to isolate the mining industry from direct political interference and to take political action against mineworkers only as a last resort. In smaller enterprises such as the clothing

factory, their relative unimportance to the economy makes them unworthwhile as targets for political activity. Only when outside bodies are called upon to intervene do the Party and Government assist management to control industrial conflict.

It is in the analysis of the response of outside bodies to industrial protest and the counter response of workers, that Kapferer's book yields the greatest insights. He shows how the workers seek to prevent the interference of external agencies in bargaining with the manager and how the latter deliberately invokes the support of outside bodies. The strike is a means of restricting the 'field of action' to the factory'. While Patel's response is to extend the field of action by calling in the union, the labour officer and eventually Party officials enter the conflict on the side of management. Just as in the case of lashers, so the employees of the clothing factory were forced back to work without winning any definite concessions from management. That it is to the advantage of management to extend the field of action and to the advantage of the worker to restrict the field of action, illustrates the cohesiveness of the ruling class, despite its ethnically plural elements, and fragmentation and division amongst the elements of the working class.

Why does the union leadership act in a way opposed to the interests of the membership? To what degree is its behaviour constrained, or put differently, how much room is there for manoeuvre? Kapferer explains the ineffectiveness of the union as a defender of the worker interests by reference to the variety of forms and work contexts it had to deal with. Its few resources were widely dispersed. Secondly it was badly organised and beset with 'corruption'. But the mineworkers' union which is relatively well organised is equally 'ineffective' in defending its membership's interests and therefore other factors must be at play. Along with Bates (1971), Kapferer argues that the union has been transformed from an articulator of workers' interests to an executor of Government controls. Now that political independence has been won, the population must be mobilised for economic development. Particular interests, such as those of the workers, must be sacrificed for the good of all. Such an outlook is also a convenient ideology which a trade union leader may use to justify opposing the short term interests of the rank and file. Moreover, he may argue that were he to defend the particularistic interests of the union membership then he would suffer severe punitive sanctions. Such an interpretation sees the union leadership as so constrained by Government sanctions that it can no longer protect the interests of the worker as it did before independence. However, there is an alternative interpretation of the ineffectiveness

of union leadership in Zambia as well as elsewhere, namely that union leaders see themselves as part of a Zambian ruling class opposed to the workers rather than in support of them.

Which interpretation better fits the empirical data would emerge from a comparison of Colonial and Zambian Government's treatment of and attitudes towards union leaders. Those who favour the constraint thesis claim that the Zambian Government is more authoritarian towards 'deviant' union leaders than was the colonial Government. Such a view might find support in the restriction of leaders of the teachers' union and unofficial leaders of a threatened strike of mineworkers in 1971. But how important is the strike? Is the strike threat the only means available to the union leader with which to bargain with management? Is it not possible for the union leader to bargain for reduced effort and improved working conditions rather than increased monetary rewards? In so doing he would conform to the constraints imposed by Government yet at the same time be furthering the interests of the union members.

Insofar as the union leadership does not try to manoeuvre within the constraints imposed by Government the second interpretation becomes more applicable. This rests on the assumption that the rewards for conformity with governmental demands have risen as the union leader enters the ruling class. There is considerable evidence in support of this view as it applies to the mineworkers' union. In 1964 a union check off system was introduced and the union now collects some K250,000 from its members each year. In addition Government legislation for one union for one industry pre-empts any threat to the incumbent leadership's dominance from a rival union. As a result of both these factors the union leadership does not need to actively pursue the interests of the rank and file to remain in office. The Government not only supports the incumbent leadership against any rival group, more concerned to further the workers' interests, but offers avenues for mobility into more lucrative Government posts and dispenses company directorships to leading trade unionists. Holding such places in the ruling class engenders a lack of concern for the rank and file of the union organisation and a greater interest in conforming to pressures from Government, Party and to some extent management.

The negotiations between union and management over the lashing strike seems to favour the second interpretation. The union leadership was quite clearly aware of the adverse conditions under which the lashers had to work but nevertheless

considered them lazy and irresponsible. Such an orientation openly expressed during the negotiations is incompatible with a serious attempt to improve the conditions under which lashers worked. It appeared as though the union leaders were involved in a ritual bargaining session which served to justify their existence rather than to protect the interests of the membership.

In conclusion we see that the rise of a multiracial ruling class has aided those who control the economy in their attempts to extract greater surplus from the Zambian worker. With the utilization of popularly-based organs to suppress and contain industrial conflict, to the advantage of those who receive the profits, overt expressions of industrial conflict are limited to a few sporadic and local walk-outs or 'wild cat strikes'. But this does not mean that industrial conflict has abated since independence. On the contrary only its manifestation has altered, its source – the class structure, in other words the relations between classes in Zambian society – has not materially altered. Instead membership of different classes has been transformed and in this way opposition to the ruling class has been denuded of the formal organisation it had under colonial rule.

The leadership of the political party and labour movement rather than fighting *against* the ruling class are now fighting *within* the ruling class. Their struggles reflect primarily their interests as members of a ruling class and only secondly their interests as representatives of the ruled classes. At the same time as the competition between the elites has gained the central focus in the political arena, the struggle between classes remains unchanged but publicly ignored.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, C.N. and Simpson, R.L. (1964), 'Balance Theory and Distributive Justice', *Sociological Inquiry*, vol. xxxiv, No. 2
- Baldamus, W. (1961), *Efficiency and Effort*, London: Tavistock Publications.
- Barth, F. (1959), *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans*, London: Athlone Press.
- Bates, R.H. (1971), *Unions, Parties and Political Development*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Bendix, R. (1963), *Work and Authority in Industry*, New York, Harper & Row.
- Blau, P. (1955), *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (1964), *Exchange and Power in Social Life*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Burawoy, M. (1972a), 'Another look at the mineworker', *African Social Research*, No.14.
- (1972b), *The Colour of Class on the Copper Mines: from African Advancement to Zambianization*, Zambia Paper No. 7, Manchester University Press for the Institute for African Studies, University of Zambia.
- Burawoy, M., Pandawa, A., Simusokwe, A. and Tembo, N.P. (1971), *Absenteeism and Commitment to Work*, Lusaka: University of Zambia Sociological Association, Report No. 9.
- Burns, T. (1969), 'On the plurality of social systems', in Burns, T. (ed.), *Industrial Man*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Carey, A. (1967), 'The Hawthorne Studies: A Radical Criticism', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 32 No. 3.
- Crozier, M. (1964), *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cunnison, S. (1966), *Wages and Work Allocation*, London: Tavistock Publications.
- Goffman, E. (1961), *Asylums*, New York: Anchor Books.
- Gouldner, A.W. (1954), *Wildcat Strike*, New York: Harper & Row.
- (1954b), *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy*, New York: Free Press.
- Hill, J.M.M., and Trist, E.L. (1953), 'A consideration of industrial accidents as a means of withdrawal from the work situation', *Human Relations*, vol. VI, No. 4.
- (1955), 'Changes in accidents and other absences with length of service', *Human Relations*, Vol. VIII, No. 2.
- Homans, G.C. (1951), *The Human Group*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- (1961), *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.
- Horwitz, R. (1967), *The Political Economy of South Africa*, New York: Praeger.
- Kapferer, B. (1969), 'Norms and the Manipulation of Relationships in a Work Context', in Mitchell, J.C. (ed.), *Social Networks in Urban Situations*, Manchester University Press for the Institute of Social Research, University of Zambia.
- (1972), *Strategy and transaction in an African Factory*, Manchester, Manchester University Press.
- Kerr, C., Dunlop, J.T., Harbison, F.H. and Myers, C.A. (1964), *Industrialism and Industrial Man*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kerr, C. and Seigal, A. (1954), 'The Inter-Industry Propensity to Strike - An International Comparison' in Kornhauser, A., Dubin, R. and Ross, A.M. (eds.), *Industrial Conflict*, New York and London: McGraw-Hill.
- Lupton, T. (1963), *On the Shop Floor*, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- March, J.G. and Simon, H.A. (1958), *Organisations*, New York: Wiley & Sons.
- Merton, R.K. (1968), *Social Theory and Social Structure*, New York; Free Press.
- Mitchell, J.C. (1969), 'The Concept and Use of Social Networks', in Mitchell, J.C. (ed.), *Social Networks in Urban Situations*, Manchester University Press for the Institute for Social Research, University of Zambia.
- Roethlisberger, F.J. and Dixon, W.J. (1939), *Management and the Worker*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Ross, A. and Hartman, P. (1960), *Changing Patterns of Industrial Conflict*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

- Roy, D. (1954), 'Efficiency and "the fix" Informal Intergroup relations in a piecework Machine Shop', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LX, No. 3.
- Scott, J.F. and Homans, G.C. (1947), 'Reflections on the Wildcat Strikes', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 12, No. 3.
- Simusokwe, A. and Pandawa, A. (1971), *Determinants of Work Behaviour – Smelter Observations*, Lusaka: University of Zambia Sociological Association, Report No. 10.
- Smelser, N.J. (1962), *Theory of Collective Behaviour*, New York: Free Press.
- Stinchcombe, A.L. (1965), 'Social Structure and Organisation', in March, J.G. (ed), *Handbook of Organisations*, New York: Rand McNally.
- Tembo, N.P. (1971a), *Determinants of Work Behaviour – Lashing Observations*, Lusaka: University of Zambia Sociological Association, Report No. 11.
- (1971b), *Determinants of Work Behaviour – Lashing Interviews*, Lusaka: University of Zambia Sociological Association, Report No. 13.
- Trist, E.L., Higgins, G.W., Murray, H. and Pollock, A.B. (1963), *Organisational Choice*, London: Tavistock Publications.
- Van Hekken, P.M. & Van Velzen, H.U.E.T. (1972), *Land Scarcity and Rural Inequality in Tanzania*, Leiden: Mouton & Co.
- Van Velsen, J. (1964), *The Politics of Kinship*, Manchester University Press for the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.
- (1967), 'The extended case method and situational analysis', in Epstein, A.L. (ed.), *The Craft of Social Anthropology*, London: Tavistock Publications.
- Vincent, J. (1971), *African Elite: the big men of a small town*, New York and London: Columbia University Press.
- Walker, C.R. and Guest, R.H. (1952), *Man on the Assembly Line*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wilson, F. (1972), *Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911–1969*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. *The Population of a Zambian Municipal Township: a preliminary report of a 1964 social survey of the Broken Hill Municipal townships* by BRUCE KAPFERER. 1966.
2. *Maps of the Distribution and Density of African Population in Zambia* by GEORGE KAY. 1967.
3. *Some Aspects of Social Change in Africa South of the Sahara 1959 – 66: a bibliography* by EVA LOFT DEREGOWSKA. 1967.
4. *Selective Attention and Interference between First and Second Languages* by ROBERT SERPELL. 1968.
5. *Some Demographic Measurements for Africans in Zambia: an appraisal of the 1963 census administration and results* by PATRICK O. OHADIKE. 1970
6. *The Si-Luyana Language: a preliminary linguistic description* by TALMY GIVON. 1970
7. *Limitations and Possibilities of Increasing Market Production of Peasant African Cattle Holders in Western Province, Zambia* by JOSEF LUTKE-ENTRUP. 1971.
8. *An Inquiry into Staffing and Organisation of Secondary Schools in Zambia* by DR. J. ELLIOT. 1972.
9. *The Life of a Zambian Evangelist: the reminiscences of* REVEREND PAUL BWEMBYA MUSHINDO. 1973.


COMMUNICATION NO. TEN - SYNOPSIS

Michael Burawoy reassesses social network theory as applied to industrial strife in Central Africa. He reviews Bruce Kapferer's work on two strikes by Broken Hill (Kabwe) clothing workers in 1965, and reinterprets the data in light of his 'reward for effort' paradigm. In terms of the same paradigm Burawoy then presents a lucid description of recent working conditions among underground lashers on the Copperbelt. He uses the example of a lashers' strike to present the actions, ideologies and interests of the parties involved in determining the outcome of the strike. And he finally extends this analysis into a radical discussion of how the resolution of industrial conflict in Zambia has changed since Independence.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Burawoy after taking a maths degree at Cambridge turned his attention to social problems. Following a visit to India in 1967 to study the 'language question in University education' he became interested in Africa. He worked for six months in South Africa as a journalist and then he came to Zambia where he took a job in labour management research on the Copperbelt. After a year and a half he joined the University of Zambia as a full time M.A. student. In 1972 he received his M.A. - the first M.A. in sociology from the University of Zambia. He is now completing a PhD at the University of Chicago.



 Library IAS, Shimla



00050483