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THE FORMATION OF BUSINESS ATTITUDES TOWARD LABOR,
1880-1910

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ORDER AGAINST CHAOS
THE FORMATION OF BUSINESS ATTITUDES TOWARD LABOR, 1880-1910

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The idea for this study derived from a question about the difference between labor's acceptance of capitalism in the United States versus that of Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Comparing European and U.S. labor unrest in this period, the continued radical opposition of the European worker toward industrial capitalism contrasts with American labor's increasing accommodation to the basic structure of capitalist society. In both societies, the emergence and maturing of industrial capitalism set a pattern of underlying class conflict. As they developed a sense of their own exploitation, great numbers of workers on both continents cried out against abuses. European labor long supported labor, socialist, and communist political parties as well as independent, radical unions whose doctrines invoked the eventual destruction of the capitalist order and a subsequent restructuring of society and redistribution of property. Likewise, in the

U.S., widespread labor unrest after 1877 focused, in part, upon an overturn of the existing economic structure.

In contrast to the continued militance of European labor throughout the nineteenth century, the main elements of U.S. labor abandoned early radical unionism in favor of trade union structures advocating acceptance of labor's place within capitalist society. By the Second World War, craft unionism, as well as almost all other social groups in the U.S. harbored positive ideas about capitalism and consequently offered it few challenges. Although intense labor unrest existed in the period 1880-1910, the results of collective labor activity were meagre: business, aided by the courts, state and federal troops, private armies, and, more often than not, the press, won in most of the disputes. Radical unions were marginalized, nullified or destroyed. The American Federation of Labor, general successor of early unions, abandoned the unskilled for pure trade unionism and identified its well being with that of industry. The A F of L's refusal to organize the unskilled meant that only about 2.5 million, or 8 per cent of the workforce were unionized.¹ Although eventually acknowledging labor's separate and seemingly permanent class identity, the A F of L neither believed nor acted in a class conscious manner. It made mild, "bread and butter" demands upon owners to mitigate the worst aspects of the industrial system, but it did not challenge the system. As George Bernard Shaw put it, trade

unionism was the capitalism of the proletariat.² Clearly, this role remains unchanged to the present; witness a historian of U.S. labor's relations with socialism, William Dick writing in 1972:

Today, not only do American trade unions assert their sole function as a pressure group, but their members are among the principal upholders of the capitalist system. In the ferment of recent years they have been the most stalwart defenders of the status quo. Unapologetically, they offer nothing to the urgent needs of the society of which they are a part.³

George Meany, AFL-CIO President expressed this succinctly in an address to the National Association of Manufacturers in 1956: "I never went on strike in my life, never ran a strike in my life, never ordered anyone else to run a strike in my life, never had anything to do with a picket line....In the final analysis, there is not a great difference between the things I stand for and the things that NAM leaders stand for."⁴

There was a time in U.S. labor history when this was not the case. Beginning in 1877, the first great strike period, widespread labor unrest gave rise to various labor organizations calling for the restructuring of society in accordance with precepts which at the time were viewed as radical. The Socialist Labor Party, formed in the labor troubles of 1877, became the main vehicle for U.S. socialism until 1900, constituting a "broadly based, deeply rooted, self conscious movement for socialism...."⁵ An

anarchist-syndicalist movement appeared in New York and Chicago composed largely of radical emigres from Germany. The largest national labor organization in this period, the Knights of Labor, rejected in principle the system of private ownership and wage labor as it stood. Holding a nostalgic view of labor and posing a naive remedy for its ills, the leading spokesmen for the Knights nonetheless understood that a permanent condition of wage servitude should be avoided. To escape such a fate, the Knights believed that workers must achieve a large measure of socio-economic equality with owners by becoming cooperative owners themselves. The Knights were the only large national union to organize both skilled and unskilled workers until the 1930s. Most trade unions of the time accepted such an emphasis on labor solidarity which included the unskilled.

Promotion of a series of strikes after 1884 boosted the membership of the Knights to a high of 700,000 in 1886. Nonetheless, the Knights suffered various problems: a weak administrative structure, few strike funds, internal jurisdictional disputes with trade unions, which led to the formation of the A F of L in 1886, and most important, severe setbacks due to the strike breaking tactics of Jay Gould in the Great Southwest Railroad Strike of 1886. By 1892, Knights' membership had fallen to 100,000.

In 1886, the Haymarket bomb caused mass hysteria and adverse public opinion, destroyed the anarchist movement and

cemented the resolve of businessmen to crack down on subversive elements within labor organizations, in many cases by destroying unions themselves. Thus, while the years 1877 to 1886 had witnessed a growth in the incidence and size of strikes, approximately half of which had union sanction or aid, the twelve years after 1886 marked a reversal of those increases.⁶

Despite this overall decline in number of strikes, defiance remained alive. In 1894, Eugene Debs described the Pullman boycott as an open struggle between the working class and a social order which sanctified selfishness.⁷ The outcome of that major struggle exemplified the general trend of the battles between the power of organized capital and labor, and indicated the fate of many radical leaders.

With the decline of the Knights of Labor, many workers placed their hopes with the AF of L. Organized in 1886 by workers with Marxist ideas, the union couched its early rhetoric in radical terms. Although Samuel Gompers, Adolph Strasser and other early leaders were sincere in their beliefs, the experience of the union constituted a betrayal of that radicalism. This was partly due to the formation of the AF of L expressly to defend craft workers against the weakness of the Knights of Labor.⁸ An even more important reason was that Gompers' "pure and simple unionism" gradually divorced him from Marxism.⁹ Formally rejecting socialism in the 1890s, the Federation committed

itself to craft organization, consolidating its gains within the existing system. This constituted unionism's neglect of unskilled workers for the next fifty years and abandonment of independent political activity.

As the AF of L achieved primacy among U.S. unions, radical organizations faltered. In 1889, the Socialist Labor Party split into the SLP and the Socialist Party, after which the SLP remained, in the words of historian James Weinstein, "static, isolated, and marginal" to the experience of labor.¹⁰ Warfare between the SLP and the AF of L caused most of the SLP's problems. Gompers counseled AF of L members to avoid political involvement advocated by the SLP. In retaliation, the SLP attacked the AF of L, which in a boomerang effect, almost caused the former's destruction.¹¹ By the end of World War I, the SLP claimed only a small group of radicals and was ignored by major labor groups.¹² In contrast, no significant splits occurred between socialists and trade unionists in England, France or Germany.

The greater ire of the AF of L fell upon the Socialist Party. This revisionist socialist group formed to protest the SLP's trade union attacks. It supported unions, including the AF of L, and advocated political and legislative action. By 1912, the SP's 112,000 members marked the high point of socialism in the U.S. The Socialist Party criticized Gompers for his conciliatory stance toward

capitalism and his membership in the National Civic Federation which proclaimed the identity of interests of capital and labor. Put off by harsh criticism from Eugene Debs and William D. Haywood, and by attacks of the Socialist Labor Party, Gompers reversed his former conciliatory position, turned paranoid about socialists, and insisted that irreconcilable differences existed between socialists and trade unionists.¹⁴ In a similar manner to his reaction to differences with the SLP, Gompers resisted the SP's aims of making labor politically conscious.

With such an extreme anti-socialist and anti-political position, Gompers and the AF of L leadership differed markedly from European labor leaders.¹⁵ Leadership was crucial. The failure of the SP to gain broad trade union support furnished, to William Dick, the "fundamental reason for the failure of Socialism in the U.S."¹⁶ Unlike British trade union leaders who advocated political activity and democratic socialism, U.S. labor leaders informed their constituents that the goals of the Socialist Party were not only unrealistic but subversive of trade union principles.¹⁷ Although socialist elements remained strong in many AF of L affiliated unions until World War I, Gompers' leadership policies marginalized the socialists and their position deteriorated in the main union body. The AF of L's stance toward the socialists allowed the union to ignore a large body of support from unskilled and non-industrial workers, a

group which to Dick, "might have supported separate political action."¹⁸

By 1900, manufacturers organized to push the open shop, withhold union recognition, and aided by the courts and the Sherman Antitrust Act, to carry the attack to labor. Major trade unions retreated. By 1892, the defeat of the Homestead strikers had all but eliminated from the steel industry the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, once the most powerful trade union in the U.S.¹⁹ By 1909, U.S. Steel had totally eliminated all unions within its province. International Harvester and the meat packing industry both destroyed their workers' unions in 1904. Outside of urban areas, according to David Montgomery, all unions but those of miners were on the defensive or had been destroyed after the turn of the century.²⁰

The pattern of employer destruction of some unions fitted with the increasing docility and outright collaboration of others. This condition furnished the impetus for the formation in 1905 of the most radical of U.S. unions, the International Workers of the World. Announcing a new militancy and willingness to strike, the IWW condemned the paternal relations between capital and organized labor. The IWW, nevertheless, remained on the margin of U.S. labor, never gaining effective national membership or influence. The anti-radical persecutions of WWI finally destroyed the IWW. After that, with the

exception of a resurgence of labor radicalism in the 1930s, U.S. unions survived insofar as they were business unions.²¹

With radical unions small, major ones conservative, 92 per cent of labor unorganized, and the socialist movement dying by the 1920s, the U.S. lacked any expression of a radical class nature. By 1935, the historian of U.S. labor, John R. Commons, could remark upon the capitulation of labor to American culture and the death of a formerly significant socialist movement.²² The U.S. had a trade union movement, but no labor movement.

In accepting the capitalist order, did labor internalize capitalist labor ideology? Does a direct connection exist between the socio-cultural primacy of business and growing labor docility in this period? To what degree did elite ideological dominance constitute a significant social force in the determination of the assumptions and self image of labor, i.e., their reality? Did labor acquiesce in definitions of itself that were contrary to radical labor ideas? If so, how did employers substitute their ideology for that of radical labor? Did capitalist ideology dilute what might have become radical social consciousness? If, as Herbert Gutman and E.P. Thompson insist, labor strove in vain to resist its acculturation, then how did owners diffuse resistance? Was the outcome of this struggle a reflection of the imposition of owners values upon labor? And ultimately, how is power

divided in society? What are the long range consequences of that division for a majority of its members? What is the role of ideology in blocking the emergent collective power of labor, when the latter seeks to transform society?

The topic of this study is the ideology of capitalism expressed by businessmen in the period 1880-1910. It seeks to isolate, systematize and describe business attitudes toward labor and their method of application to society and to the workforce. Through increasing direct, on-the-job manipulation, overt imposition of ideology, and selective governance of the province of ideological debate, businessmen and their ideologues created a dominant ideology which influenced the discourse, consciousness and ideas that in part determined labor's social stock of knowledge, and, by implication, labor's self definition. Businessmen perceived labor in a certain manner and attempted to socialize workers to this perception, thereby constituting a significant factor in the formative period of modern working class consciousness. This inquiry seeks to describe that perception within the dominant ideology and the mechanism of its dissemination.

The scope of this study is confined to the ideas of Northern businessmen and manufacturers between 1880 and 1910 as expressed in published writing, public statements, correspondence and testimony to governmental boards of inquiry. As the North was the locus for business activity,

its businessmen set the ideological pattern for the rest of the commercial and industrial sector.

Two analytical modes are appropriate for an inquiry into elite control of the formation of social consciousness. The sociology of knowledge offers an explanation derived from Karl Mannheim, and in turn, from Karl Marx, of the interplay of ideas and consciousness in a social dialectic. In addition, Marxist hegemonic theory offers insight into the complex mechanism by which the social process is governed by a dominant set of meanings and values.

The sociology of knowledge asks two questions relevant to this study. How do certain notions come to be taken for granted in a society? And, how is the reality of those notions maintained? Marxist sociology of knowledge holds that social being determined consciousness. Members of different social groups hold different beliefs. In a class society, a particular class adopts certain beliefs to promote its own interests. Dominant ideas reflect dominant modes of production, and in this way are the ideas of the dominant class. Class interests skew or distort beliefs to their own ends, and thus promote false consciousness. In Marx's words,

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby... the ideas of those who lack

the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas.... Insofar, therefore, as... (the individuals of the ruling class) rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch.., they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age.²³

Contemporary Marxists have modified Marx's definition of ideology as false consciousness. Louis Althusser argues that ideology does describe reality, for it constitutes a "lived relation" with the world. He defined ideology as a practice, not merely an idea about the world arising from modes of production. Economic relationships, he maintains, constitute the main factor of capitalist existence, but they do not exist separate from ideological or political conditions of existence.²⁴

In The Social Construction of Reality, authors Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann posit an analytical framework which demonstrates the manner in which knowledge is inextricably bound up with the organization of society.²⁵ Berger and Luckmann do not assign a deterministic relationship between ideas and underlying economic conditions. Rather, they hold that the "relationship between ideas and their sustaining social processes is always a dialectical one.²⁶ The process by which humans create and sustain social groupings furnishes the structure by which they selectively order the world into coherent "reality" and

transmit that to newcomers. Therefore, the social and individual consciousness most humans take for objective reality are products of collective endeavor and vary between different societies. Humans cannot be understood apart from their social context. Consciousness cannot be separated from society. Knowledge, which the authors define as the "certainty that phenomena are real and have certain characteristics," is always knowledge from a certain, socially grounded position.²⁷ Since individual consciousness is socially constructed and reflects social hierarchies, this works to the advantage of groups and institutions whose dominance provides the power to manufacture and control knowledge in their own interests.

All human social interaction, to the authors, occurs within a highly structured body of cognitive determinants, the "social stock of knowledge," which constitutes "reality" to the individual. This reality carries the massive and coercive weight of parental and general social authority. It is a reality of ordinary, common sense consciousness, and as such, exists as the dominant reality for every member of society. The social stock of knowledge prescribes for the individual an identity by which he places himself in reference to the institutions, beliefs and individuals of society.

Social structures known as institutions function both to maintain the social stock of knowledge and to

provide definition, direction and stability to what would otherwise be chaos in human interaction. Society, in one sense, constitutes an agglomeration of institutions which control "collectively relevant conduct" by establishing clear, rigid, predefined norms of thought and behavior.²⁸ "To say that a segment of human activity has been institutionalized," Berger and Luckmann maintain, is to say that this activity has been "subsumed under social control".²⁹ Institutional orders can be understood only in relationship to the "knowledge" its participants have of it, knowledge which, in turn, prescribes norms of conduct.

As individuals are born into and perceive institutions, the notion of reality of an institution becomes "crystallized" or experienced as having an a priori existence, apart from the individuals which compose it. Through this cognitive process, individuals experience institutions as "possessing a reality of their own, a reality that confronts the individuals as an external and coercive fact."³⁰ In this manner, institutional reality comes to have a "sense of comprehensive and given reality...analogous to the reality of the natural world. Only in this way, as an objective world, can the social formations be transmitted to a new generation."³¹ Institutionalization guarantees patterned, habitual, repetitive behavior. Social control is the function of institutionalization, itself the basis of the social

construction of reality.

For example, individuals accumulate a body of knowledge defining the special province of labor. This knowledge functions as a "channeling, controlling force.., indispensable to the institutional 'programming' " of worker activity. It provides a vocabulary and consciousness designating workers' relationships to specific tools, usages, payments, and the larger institutional framework of shop, factory, industry, society and the economic system itself. This body of knowledge serves as an objective description of the institution of labor.³² Workers adopt this body of knowledge as it is "learned as objective truth in the course of socialization and thus internalized as subjective reality."³³ The same example works with other modern institutions: the state, property, law, education or religion.

The coercive power of institutions over individual thought and behavior derives from the "sheer force of their facticity," as they exercise direct and indirect forms of control. The more conduct is institutionalized,

the more predictable and thus the more controlled it becomes. If socialization into the institutions has been effective, outright coercive measures can be applied economically and selectively. Most of the time, conduct will occur "spontaneously" within the institutionally set channels. The more, on the level of meaning, conduct is taken for granted, the more possible alternatives to the institutional "programs" will recede, and the more predictable and controlled conduct will

be.34

Institutions do not have an automatically guaranteed existence. They require continual reaffirmation by living individuals through the process of legitimation. Since explanations of legitimacy are inherent in the process of defining, language itself is the first level of legitimation. Thus, to name another person cousin legitimates behavior appropriate to cousinhood. Other forms of legitimation range from aphorisms, moralisms, and definitions of "how things are done," to sophisticated and specialized bodies of theory. Ideologues simplify legitimations into formulas to facilitate ease of memorizing. Ritual affirmation of legitimations are accomplished by techniques such as fetishism, ritualization, and symbolization.

On its highest and most abstract level, legitimation integrates all the various institutional realities into a coherent, cosmological whole. At this level, all the lesser legitimating theories combine into related elements of a symbolic universe. This universe, Berger and Luckmann hold, "transcends and includes the institutional order."³⁵ The whole social construct now "makes sense." The example of the body of labor ideology represents a small portion of a grand theory of the universe and of man. Therefore, to legitimate is to locate all institutional norms within a comprehensive, meaningful, symbolic universe which, in the West, has

various designations: divine will, natural law, and science.³⁶ The lesser, lower level legitimating theories link with the grand intellectual constructions on the universal level.

The operation of a socially constructed ideological universe rests on the underlying social structure which "permits the definers to do the defining."³⁷ Historically, the social division of labor allowed the emergence of bodies of personnel responsible for the administration of special bodies of knowledge. The ideological monopoly of these legitimators derived from the established social structure. The legitimators served the interests of elites. Berger and Luckmann reserve the term "ideology" to refer specifically to a "particular definition of reality...attached to a concrete power interest."³⁸ They would not use the term ideology to refer to Christianity in the Middle ages, for that symbolic universe engulfed the entire society from lord to serf. After the industrial revolution, however, Christianity became a bourgeois ideology. "The bourgeoisie used the Christian tradition and its personnel in its struggle against the new working class," the authors explain, "which in most European countries could no longer be regarded as 'inhabiting' the Christian universe."³⁹

Since objectivation and legitimation function to portray knowledge as a body of universally valid truth about reality, any deviation from institutional norms constitutes

a threat to the maintenance of the social status quo, for it threatens the authority of the legitimators. Order is the prime requirement of human existence. The institutional order is continually "faced with the ongoing necessity of keeping chaos at bay. All societies are constructions in the face of chaos."⁴⁰ It follows that those with the most to fear from social disruptions and the most to lose in the transformation or collapse of the social order will be those investing most energy in legitimation. The converse is the seed of revolution.

For the purpose of maintaining the symbolic universe, various individuals and groups within a society function as full time legitimators of the institutional order: priests, professors, editors, judges, politicians, and businessmen. The legitimators' task is to impress institutional meanings "powerfully and unforgettably on the consciousness of the individual" by various means.⁴¹ Definitions of reality may be enforced by the police, and remain "no less convincing than those accepted 'voluntarily'...."⁴² Even if the individual is innocent of institutional functions, neither the objective reality of the institution nor its power to coerce are diminished. Neither the reluctant, the unwilling nor the naive escape institutional control.

Historically, deviant ideas challenged the dominant symbolic universe and the institutional order which it

legitimates. Such challenges require both repression of the alternative ideas and legitimation of the means of repression.⁴³ The success of the repressive machinery and its legitimation depends upon the power of those who operate it. As Berger and Luckmann explain, "he who has the bigger stick has the better chance of imposing his definitions of reality."⁴⁴

Legitimation sustains the reality of the socially constructed universe. Nihilation, its opposite, denies the reality of deviant ideas. Nihilation is a specific form of repressive machinery which discredits or destroys oppositional forms of thought or behavior by denying the legitimacy and thus the reality of challenging ideas. Legitimizers designate any deviance from institutionally approved conduct or thought as moral depravity, lawlessness, mental disease, ignorance, folly, madness or downright evil.⁴⁵ They sometimes nihilate deviant concepts by destroying those who hold them.

The authors define socialization as the "comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society."⁴⁶ Socialization achieves success when a large degree of symmetry is obtained between objective and subjective reality.⁴⁷ Individuals never totally internalize objective reality, rather they are socialized in varying degrees, depending on the relative complexity of the society in question. Since socialization

is imbedded in social structure, Berger and Luckmann explain, the greatest degree of socialization

is likely to occur in societies with very simple division of labor and minimal distribution of knowledge. Socialization under such conditions produces identities that are socially predefined and profiled to a high degree. Since every individual is confronted with essentially the same institutional program for his life in the society, the total force of the institutional order is brought to bear with more or less equal weight on each individual, producing a compelling massivity for the objective reality to be internalized.⁴⁸

Modern industrial societies with a high division of labor, high economic surplus, greatly differentiated social structure, and conditions of rapid social change, often do not offer elites the means of maintaining effective monopoly over all competing definitions of reality at all times.

Modern societies generally have a common core ideology which members take for granted and which exists superimposed above various lesser ideologies. Put another way, different classes have different realities.⁴⁹ However, hegemonic theory offers a hypothesis to explain how the "reality" of the most powerful class ultimately overwhelms all others.

"Coexistence", in Berger and Luckmann's definition, operates only to a point. Between 1880 and 1910, for example, the existence of working class ideology demonstrates that the dominant ideology was not absolute. Milton Cantor indicates the presence of oppositional working class ideology, but points out that these ideas were in the process of being

subordinated within the dominant culture.⁵⁰

Constant tension exists between dominant legitimators and alternative ideas, but the latter are eventually subsumed under the larger ideology, or incorporated into it as oppositional but contained and controlled, ideologies. Thus, Stuart Hall explains how, despite the seemingly oppositional ideological stance of labor, dominant elites utilize the institutional oppositions of the working class as instruments of domination:

The dominated classes which have their own objective basis in the system of productive relations, their own distinctive forms of social life and class practice remain...a corporate class culture which is nevertheless CONTAINED. When these subordinated classes are not strong or sufficiently organized to represent a 'counter-hegemonic' force to the existing order, their own corporate structures and institutions can be used by the dominant structure as a means of enforcing their continued subordinations. The trade unions, which arise as a defensive set of institutions in the working class, can nevertheless be used to provide a structure which perpetuates the CORPORATENESS of that class, confining its opposition within limits which the system can contain....⁵¹

In addition to the sociology of knowledge, the Marxian theory of hegemony offers an explanation of the social function of elite ideology. The concept of hegemony originated with the Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci.⁵² Gramsci studied the lack of class consciousness of the Italian proletariat of 1915-1930 and the seeming ease with which it was controlled by elites. Ruling elites, he wrote, generate among themselves desires for hegemonic control as

authorities...have lost credit.⁵³

The formation of ideology is a response to the "newly problematic nature of social reality in post-traditional society."⁵⁴ As traditionalism wanes, a marketplace of ideas arises in modern society and a struggle over ideas commences. This struggle centers around what forms and definitions of reality are to predominate and constitutes a central element of class struggle in industrial society. The control of social definitions of reality becomes a political question in that it allows elites to determine and legitimate the distribution of power and goods.⁵⁵

Focusing on the machinery of elite domination of the working class and other subordinate groups, Gramsci found that hegemonic control occurs when the particular ideology of one class "tends to prevail, to gain the upper hand, to propagate itself throughout society - bringing about not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity...."⁵⁶ This dominance is achieved through the active, objective attempts of ruling elites to organize and command the ideas, sentiments, and consciousness of subordinate classes. In Stuart Hall's explanation,

Gramsci argued that 'hegemony' exists when a ruling class...is able not only to coerce a subordinate class to conform to its interests, but exerts a 'total social authority' over those

they aspire to general social and cultural leadership. Elites realize that social authority and ideological dominance are central to maintenance of the established order. The structural relationships of power in that order, Gramsci assumed, were those of centralized, monopolized, private capitalism and its political arm, the modern nation state.

Hegemonic ideology depends upon the historical development of what Alvin Gouldner calls a post-traditional society, that is, a society having attained a sufficient degree of urbanization, centralization and technological growth to foster the ascendancy of dominant bourgeois society with the fundamental historical problem of its class: control of urban labor at the point when traditional modes of control have disappeared. At this juncture, the need for ideology as social control and the means for its implementation arise. Elites develop a doctrine of public discourse among literate, urban populations that assumes the function of traditional forms of social control. As Gouldner explains:

Ordinarily, in a traditionalistic setting, the established consensual validation of the group's beliefs suppresses questions of their validity, and questions that do arise may be settled by the decision of a commonly accepted authority. Failing consensual validation, as the new industrialism succeeds and replaces the old traditionalistic arrangements, beliefs do indeed become problematic and must be given some justification - a new kind of justification, in reason and evidence, precisely because the older

classes and the social formation as a whole. 'Hegemony' is in operation when the dominant class fractions not only dominate but direct - lead: when they not only possess the power to coerce but actively organize so as to command and win the consent of the subordinated classes to their continuing sway.⁵⁷

The key concept is that dominant elites acquire and maintain power directly and indirectly by imposing their concepts and definitions of the Way Things Are, and by controlling the framework of discussion and thought.

As Hall suggests, hegemonic power is more than the imposition of a formal system of elite ideology. An ideology is a conscious, formal, articulated system of beliefs held by a particular group or class. Hegemony carries the instruments of social control further than the scope of mere ideology. The hegemonic process constitutes, in Hall's words, the "whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings and values."⁵⁸ Consciousness is controlled by more than the objective system represented by ideology. Its formulation occurs in all relationships which involve dominators and dominated, over every range of political control, economic coercion and social deference. Hegemonic control penetrates consciousness and becomes the natural or the unquestionable.

Elite definitions of social reality carry great social weight because of built in deference to prestige and power. These deferences enhance the hegemonic system. The relationship between social deference to elites and the

legitimation of elite ideology exists in symbiotic form. Although contending in a marketplace of ideas which include those which seek to deny its legitimacy and overturn its power, the ideology of capitalist elites has the advantage of reinforcement by their social antecedents: prestige, religious and moral force, and visible display of wealth.

To Raymond Williams, hegemony "supposes the existence of something which is truly total..., which is lived at such depth, which saturates society to such an extent" that it "constitutes the limit of common sense for most people under its sway."⁵⁹ Williams explains,

Hegemony is then not only the articulated upper level of "ideology", nor are its forms of control only those ordinarily seen as 'manipulation' or 'indoctrination.' It is a whole body of practices and expectation, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values - constitutive and constituting - which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is...in the strongest sense a 'culture', but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes.⁶⁰

To Gramsci hegemony operates through two mechanisms: voluntary consent to the social authority of private elite society and the use of force by the state. Hegemonic power rests on the interplay between these two levels, state coercion and elite social authority. The hegemonic power of

ruling elites rests upon the coercive power of the state, and use of this power, in turn, reinforces general consent to private elite authority. In this manner, hegemonic power is at once the initiating factor and the beneficiary of the use of state force. Gramsci maintained that elites perceive voluntary consent to be a more powerful form of social control than the use of state force. In liberal capitalist states, the former predominates.

Hegemonic domination creates several conditions in the ideological realm. It obscures class bias in an ideology, by presenting its ideas as derivative of and beneficial to the whole of society, and by posing the political questions inherent in class struggle on a universal rather than a corporate plane. Although, to Gramsci, the state exists as the political arm of one class, that class, nevertheless, is able to present its interests as coordinate with the interests of all other classes, and to portray its power as the progressive force which develops national energies.⁶¹ The concept of general interests allows political activity to conceal from elite practitioners any class motives. Elites, Alvin Gouldner explains, define their power in terms of group benefits.

Their claim is that when they seek office, power, livings, tenures, or income, they do not seek them as private enjoyments but only because they advance collective interests. Ideology thus serves, on the one hand, to permit ruthlessness to others in the name of high values, and, on the other, to present oneself as having a selfless ambition, that nonpartisanship

which legitimates any claim to power. Ideology thereby permits the mobilization of power and, at the same time, allows its full and unrestrained discharge.⁶²

The universalizing of class into general interests occurs in part because of the manner in which political society fragments members of a class, representing them as individual citizens or voters, and then reunites them into what Hall terms class neutral "ideological totalities" - the community, the nation, public opinion, consensus, the general interest, the popular will, society, or consumers.⁶³ This process of fragmentation and recombination enables dominant elites to reshape individual wills into a form more easily manipulated toward their class requirements. Cloaked in such liberal bourgeois notions as tradition, liberty, freedom, or moral rightness, such ideological totalities generate imaginary unity and consent.

Class interests also disguise themselves as general interests through a process Williams calls the selective tradition. This involves promoting a body of ideas as the actual, significant, most meaningful past. Selective tradition selects from historical experience certain facts which are emphasized and others which are actively excluded.⁶⁴ The power of ruling elites rests on history, tradition, and the moral values of an earlier age which are claimed to have universal validity. This general history, although selectively compiled by ruling elites, passes for truth in society and prescribes the bounds of what

discussions are tolerated. By the process of selective tradition, dissent is institutionalized, and for all practical purposes, diffused. Dominant elites, Hall suggests, frame "competing definitions of reality within their range , bringing all alternatives within their horizon of thought." Thus, subordinated classes "make sense of their subordination in such a way as to sustain the dominance of those ruling over them."⁶⁵

Since the goal of hegemony is to create mass allegiance to the established order, it emphasizes certain meanings and values over others. This occurs not just while selecting ideas from the past, but while confronting challenging ideologies of other classes. Dominant ideology cannot allow too great a degree of experience outside itself, without risk. In its nascent period, bourgeois society tolerated certain spheres of religious, artistic or private life without significant concern. By the twentieth century, Williams explains, because of changes in the social character of labor, of communication, and of decision, the definition of deviant or oppositional ideas or practices is made within a much narrower scope.⁶⁶ The emergence of mass society extends the "necessary area of effective dominance," and reduces the level of elite tolerance of ideological diversity.

In summary, certain social mechanisms function in the interest of dominant groups to impose ideology on those

with few corresponding means of constructing and maintaining alternatives. This is the structure of hegemony. Thinking and cognition are grounded in and function through the class system. Thus, the dominant culture is self defined and sways the remainder of society to share its values.⁶⁷

When operations of hegemony and the selective construction of social reality are interwoven with the vast increase of forms of direct control of industrial labor, the expanded use of state coercion in labor disputes, and the increases in forms of media influence over urban populations, then the ability of one class to impose its ideology over other classes becomes clear. These factors operate effectively in an industrial capitalist context where class antagonism produces deviant behavior and opposition ideology. In this context, the significance of elite ideology bears on the issue of the social power of business in the period 1880-1910. Through hegemony, business elites influenced individual "knowledge," and behavior, and established for themselves a crucial and fundamental cultural leadership. Through three case studies, this study describes the content of that ideology as it defined the industrial world, and the respective place of owner and worker.

It is necessary, first, to describe U.S. society after 1877 with respect to elites and their opportunities for social control, and the working class and its social and

ideological vulnerability.

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CHAPTER II

THE SETTING

From the period of early colonization to the Civil War, most U.S. inhabitants carried the cultural and ideological baggage of Western Europe which reflected the results of class struggle in Europe. The ancestors of most of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century population of the U.S. had undergone the commercial revolution marking the appearance of capitalism, the Protestant revolution against the central ecclesiastical and political authority of the Catholic Church, and the liberal bourgeois revolution against eighteenth century aristocracy.

These revolutions initiated the transfer of the intellectual, political, economic and social power of Western Europe's feudal aristocracy to a middle class of merchants, financiers and agriculturalists who promoted economic individualism and private property. In Europe, this emergent middle class clashed with the aristocracy's cultural and intellectual power. This tempered the most blatant cultural and political expressions of the new money power. Few such restraints existed in the U.S. With no feudal background and a Protestant religious orientation, U.S. society offered a clean seed bed for the growth of bourgeois society.

The American Revolution did not constitute a genuine

revolution in the sense of others of its age which overturned one class of governing elites by another, more representative of the people. Rather, the American Revolution represented the defeat of bourgeois elites of one country by those of another. From early on, commercial and landed elites governed U.S. life and their bourgeois values concerning status, property and society - legacies from Europe - pervaded the life of the nation. U.S. elites exercised no such centralized or organized social power as those after 1875, but such social power as did exist rested almost entirely with the bourgeoisie.

From the Revolution to the Civil War, merchants, shipbuilders, lawyers, financiers and owners of landed estates made and administered the laws, enjoyed social prestige, held the economic power and served as creditors to much of the remainder of the population, the small landowners, tradesmen, artisans, laborers, tenant farmers and slaves. The bulk of the population consisted of small landowners who lived a near marginal existence.

From the beginnings of national life in 1783, bourgeois elites defined government as the protector of property and guarantor of liberty through republican leadership by upstanding men of property. Through the Constitution, such men affirmed private enterprise, limited government and individual liberty. Representative of the economic power of the nation, Constitutional authors formed

a minority of educated, wealthy owners who created a document reflective of their interests. The Constitution was ratified through the double effect of the skillful politicking of its proponents on one hand and, on the other, the poverty, lack of organization and political naivete of its opponents. As the states fixed voting qualifications, the white, male, propertied flavor of the government reflected the founding fathers' fear of both democracy and the masses of the potentially disrespectful.

Bourgeois power continued into the antebellum period without suffering substantive threats. although a transfer occurred about 1800 from Hamiltonian commercial, and financial federalism to Jeffersonian agrarian interests. While representing 'the people,' Jeffersonians referred to those whose virtues derived from ownership of land. The same Jefferson who sought to avoid aristocratic power also feared that of the unpropertied. To him, only the institution of private land ownership guaranteed republican virtue. Jeffersonian ascendancy signalled the exchange of power from one set of propertied interests for that of another.

Jacksonian democracy likewise did little to alter the assumptions or power of U.S. capitalist interests. The Jacksonians' goal was to challenge the power of financial and industrial monopolists by increased popular movement into favored political and economic positions. The policies and class orientation of Jacksonians in public affairs,

however, differed little from the Jeffersonians or Federalists. Basic notions of bourgeois virtue survived intact the Jacksonian's radical rhetoric of economic levelling. Thus, in the period 1783-1860, bourgeois political orientation aimed at the protection of property and guarantee of social order. Battles within ruling circles over the bank and tariff belie the reality of an underlying unity of interests.

The Southern secession in 1861 ended the period of agrarian domination and allowed Northern business interests to dominate the government. Except for the Emancipation Proclamation and Radical Republican proposals for land reform, the Republican North did not assault Southern property in the period of the Civil War. Rather, Northern businessmen passed a federal tariff, monetary and subsidy legislation designed to protect and enhance their economic interests. After the war, a new alignment of Northern and Southern men of property converged in the Compromise of 1877. Whig elements in the Republican Party traded commercial opportunities and federal troop withdrawal to Southern Whig elements for a presidency which was to protect and extend wartime legislation favorable to business.

At this point in U.S. history, historian Barrington Moore observes, "what Northern capitalism needed from any government was the protection and legitimation of private property." With Radical Republican influence dying and Whig

elements ascendant in both parties, businessmen came to dominate U.S. government. In time, Moore continues, the government became a "series of ramparts around property, mainly big property, and an agency to execute the biblical pronouncement, 'To him that hath shall be given.'" ¹

Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, the fortunes of industrial capitalism grew exponentially, protected and encouraged by a government providing sound monetary policy favoring creditors, a central banking system, promoting internal transportation, creation of large holdings from resources on and of federal land, the highest protective tariff in the nation's history, and contract labor laws allowing the importation of cheap and plentiful labor. By 1900, the U.S. surpassed Great Britain in industrial production.

Since the social and cultural power of businessman derived from property ownership, the growth of economic power necessarily magnified that of the owning class, enlarging its opportunity for social control. A comparison of both the general social milieu and factory work environments in pre-industrial and industrial settings points up profound increases in the possibility of owner input into worker consciousness.

While the beginnings of factory life appeared by the 1820s, the U.S. remained pre-factory and pre-industrial until about 1850. The antebellum agrarian economic base was

overlaid by a small but rapidly growing stratum of industrial, commercial and financial activity. Rich merchants, bankers and landowners existed at the top of a loosely deferential social hierarchy determined by honor, status, virtue, service and wealth. Beneath these fell the middle income farmers, small shopkeepers, skilled artisans, professionals, and beneath them, subsistence farmers, unskilled laborers, servants, Native Americans, free Negroes and slaves. Social life for the bourgeoisie adhered to traditional patterns of family and church. The white, Anglo-Saxon element of the population carried Protestant values from generation to generation, attempting to impose them on minorities. Bourgeois social norms demanded hard work, sobriety, thrift, and appearance at church. Community members attributed one another's relative wealth and standing to their degree of adherence to such norms.

In the decades before 1850, social power did not depend entirely on material factors. The gap between rich and poor was narrower among descendants of Europeans than at any other time in U.S. history. Within a seemingly democratic atmosphere, subtle gradations determined social standing, distinctions that, as Robert Wiebe notes, "would have eluded an outsider - the precise location of a house, the amount of hired help, the quality of a buggy or dress - held great importance in an otherwise undifferentiated society."²

In this relatively traditional, stable setting before 1850, general ideological consensus precluded large scale, fundamental social criticism. Questions that did arise usually remained within general ideological bounds and were easily answered or defused by accepted social authorities. Free from the later strains of industrialism, antebellum society witnessed few threats to its social or economic arrangements or ideological definitions of reality. The existence of socioeconomic classes did not preclude near ideological uniformity, if one excepts Negroes and Native Americans. Jacksonian historians, for example, generally agree that the interpretation of the Jacksonian era in terms of class interest founders in the ambiguity of the notion of class. In place of rigid classes, historian Marvin Meyers sees only a "relatively loose class structure," heavily weighted in the middle orders: farmers, mechanics, shopkeepers and laborers. Social mobility, availability of land and economic expansion gave antebellum society a multiplicity and flexibility of careers and a variety of interests which made social differences "shaded and unstable."³

In discussing prefatory antebellum working class structure, Milton Cantor notes that "the perceptions and ideology spawned in a working-class community [were] not automatically those of class, and class consciousness was not the automatic and involuntary product of those having a

strong sense of vocational cohesion."⁴ While not positing the total absence of class antagonism, Cantor holds that paternalism diffused class militancy and produced deference to the social power of owners. To Cantor, the

relations of both dependence and reciprocity evolving out of paternalism produced complex but usually inarticulated views, and a generally muted class consciousness mingled with a belief in the importance of loyalty to the legitimacy of managerial authority.⁵

Similarly, Tocqueville commented on the lack of class solidarity on the wealthier end of the social spectrum. The rich were not "completely united amongst themselves....Though there are rich men, the class of rich men does not exist: for these rich individuals have no feeling or purpose in common, no mutual traditions, or mutual hopes; there are individuals, therefore, but no definite class."⁶ He thought that individuals of the business community of the 1840s held neither political nor ideological power, rather, the "common opinion" controlled them.⁷

This condition of relative socioeconomic homogeneity, together with a great degree of demographic and cultural uniformity, pointed to what Marvin Meyers called a "uniformity of economic attitudes throughout the population."⁸ This uniformity, Cantor suggests, pointed upward toward dependence and loyalty to the authority of paternal owners. Important exceptions existed, but in general, the population adhered to an ideology of praise for

the small independent landowner or worker. Since most of the antebellum population was self employed and could foresee economic betterment in their lifetime, budding entrepreneurial values served to reinforce existing norms of bourgeois activity.

Antebellum social tensions reflected less those of class than a rapidly changing society realizing the implications inherent in the unrestricted pursuit of gain. As more people entered the quickly expanding marketplace, the moral anxiety produced by comparing its values to those of the Puritans fostered a nostalgic affirmation of the virtues of noncompetitive, yeoman life. To Meyers, such seemingly contradictory behavior constituted the paradox of the age of Jacksonian politics:

the fact that the movement which helped to clear the path for laissez-faire capitalism and its culture in America, and the public which in its daily life eagerly entered on that path, held nevertheless in their political conscience an ideal of a chaste, republican order, resisting the seductions of risk and novelty, greed and extravagance, rapid motion and complex dealings.⁹

Such nostalgic adherence to increasingly obsolete values caused Americans' evaluations of one another to depend less on economic factors than on a moral orientation which respected honest work, and praised, in Meyers' words, "simplicity and stability, self reliance and independence, economy and useful toil, honesty and plain dealing." ¹⁰

A second antebellum political notion, that of the

Republicans after 1850, centered around a rhetoric of praise for yeoman labor. Expressive of a long standing facet of U.S. culture, praise of free labor became central to Republican ideology. Republicans touted the superiority of Northern society, which to historian Eric Foner, represented a "dynamic, expanding, capitalist society whose achievements and destiny were...the result of the dignity and opportunities which it offered the average laboring man."¹¹

Republican ideology expressed the dignity of free labor, its importance as the source of all moral and temporal value, and the basis for the North's prosperity. Labor, to Republicans, did not define a class, or characterize the activity of the wage worker, but, as Foner observed, represented a classless definition encompassing the small businessman, farmers and craftsmen as well as ordinary laborers.¹² Workers were often owners, and the goal of those without property was to accumulate enough capital to obtain businesses for themselves, not for the purpose of achieving wealth, but for economic independence. The Republican free laborer reflected a social ideal of a middle class society of independent small owners, vying on a nearly equal basis in an economic system where social distinctions did not produce social antagonisms. Foner surmised, "the interests of capital and labor were identical because equality of opportunity in American society generated a social mobility which assured that today's

laborer could be tomorrow's capitalist."¹³

Relative economic harmony and social consensus in this period obscured or diffused the disparity of those interests. Evidence of that disparity comes from early attempts at organizing trade unions in the Jacksonian period. Yet these unions declined after the Panic of 1837, not to reappear after the Civil War. Apparent harmony pervaded factories and shops, where artisans, handcrafters and unskilled cottage industrialists constituted a growing part of society. Employers such as mill owners or self employed craftsmen often created a work environment free from observable economic or social abuse. This explains a relative lack of class antagonisms in antebellum industry. Most shops were small, employed few workers and centered around a home or small workshop. Cantor characterized workers as living within a relatively homogeneous peer group society with high residential stability, and having daily, face to face social and economic interaction with owners.¹⁴ Frequent contact and paternalism served to ensure allegiance of workers to owners and enhance the mutuality of their efforts. Owners and workers knew one another by name, often ate or lived together and recognized one another's skill. Deference existed between owners and workers, but it was not the acquiescence to naked economic power characteristic of later industrial society.

Control of labor seldom arose as an issue in the

workplace, due in part to employer paternalism which combined the roles of owner and authoritarian father. Given the apparent coincidence of interests on the job and the lack of wide social gaps between employers and workers, such paternalism sufficed to guarantee the latter's dependency and compliance. Since most workers lived with or near owners, their behavior came under close watch. Job discipline was casual since the productivity was not entirely geared to profit maximization, cost efficiency or the time clock. Work included periods of rest, eating and conversation, reflecting social as well as economic needs. Unless they worked in one of the small mills or factories, producers controlled many aspects of work. The shoemaker or cottage weaver largely set his own work time, method of operation and on-the-job social activity. Control and discipline existed as facets of a larger social deference required by the age. Labor unrest that did arise was largely a contention over details, and did not cause a direct clash. Thus, before 1850, owners did not feel the need to impose standards of thought or behavior on an already docile and deferential population.

When all participants believe in the system and ensure its survival by fulfilling their economic and social roles, this guarantees the smooth operation of social control. Tocqueville observed that widespread property ownership and U.S. economic viability ensured social order:

Not only are men of democracies not desirous of revolutions, but they are afraid of them. All revolutions more or less threaten the tenure of property: but most of those who live in democratic countries are possessed of property...[and] live in the condition where men set the greatest store upon their property.¹⁵

After the Civil War, industrialization destroyed this social stability by creating at once a large class of unpropertied workers and a class of owners with great stakes in property. In the social and economic relations of small U.S. manufacturing towns, Tocqueville saw "monstrous exceptions" to the equaity he observed in U.S. society. Manufacturers formed "small aristocratic societies" which, like past aristocracies, contained "some men who are very opulent, and a multitude who are wretchedly poor."¹⁶ This manufacturing aristocracy "first impoverishes and debases the men who serve it, and then abandons them to be supported by the charity of the public."¹⁷ Such an aristocracy bore close watch by the "friends of democracy," for "if ever a permanent inequality of conditions and aristocracy again penetrate into the world..., this is the gate by which they will enter."¹⁸

By 1900, the U.S. had developed a mature industrial society. Sophisticated methods of economic organization generated rapid urbanization. Demographic, social and economic transformations forced by industrialization, technological revolutions in transportation, and the influx of great numbers of immigrant laborers created a radically

different world. The new method of organizing production, the large factory, became the most important economic fact of life. Rapid change and growth disrupted the stable antebellum social structure by creating a new class of wealthy manufacturers and businessmen and a larger class of more or less permanent wage earners. The Republican hope of individual economic independence no longer applied to the new society.

The social changes accompanying industrialization saw the corresponding rise of mass culture, mass society and mass politics. The culturally centralized, urban setting offered elaborate means for the introduction of elite ideas into both the general intellectual milieu and worker consciousness.¹⁹ Such changes transformed social and economic life and restructured class relations, separating workers from traditional forms of social control, illuminating and deepening class antagonisms, and creating organizational problems for manufacturers that forced them to search for means of social control in the factory and society. As the centralized economic system touched the lives of all but an isolated few, industrial reality came to dominate almost every aspect of a worker's life.

The factory system forced the labor process to undergo immense structural changes. For workers, the very complexity of industrialism entailed what historian E. P. Thompson described as a "severe restructuring of work

habits, new disciplines, new incentives and a new human nature."²⁰ As workers moved from household oriented centers of production into large factories, they were faced with faster paced and more routinized demands of rational production, which rendered obsolete both the irregular labor rhythms and the direct, paternal character of owner-worker relationships. The workplace lost its function as a center of social activity and became geared exclusively to profit. As the structure of the workplace changed, so did its framework of authority. Work was gradually removed from the control of workers as owners of production assumed direction of all aspects of job activity. Work discipline became more impersonal as managers or overseers imposed rules and penalties. Workers became more dependent upon owners as they assumed owner controlled patterns of work discipline.²¹ At the same time, distance increased as owners' interests became more financial and commercial than industrial and managerial.

The emergence of class consciousness among workers was the most important result of these changes. To Harry Braverman, "a class cannot exist in society without in some degree manifesting a consciousness of itself as a group with common problems, interests and prospects - although this manifestation may for long periods be weak, confused, and subject to manipulation by other classes."²² Industrialization provided the experience that crystallized

class consciousness among U.S. workers.

Growing class consciousness was partly due to the establishment of urban working class neighborhoods. Socially distanced from paternal employers, workers formed their own cultural institutions which offered solidarity and identity, especially when centered around ethnic bonds. As Cantor observes, however, "industrialization severely tested and frequently overwhelmed such traditions and institutions," which could not offer sufficient insulation against the dislocations of industrial life or the immense increase in the hegemonic power of industrial elites.²³

At this time, owners' social and cultural power increased. The authority of traditional elites declined in favor of those whose power resulted entirely from the industrializing economy. The businessman rose to a position of general social and cultural prestige theretofore unknown in U.S. history. Differences between new entrepreneurial values extolling acquisitiveness and display and those of antebellum elites did not escape Mark Twain, who, in 1871, presented this dialogue:

Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. To get rich.

Q. In what way?

A. Dishonestly if we can, honestly if we must.

Q. Who is God, the only one and True?

A. Money is God. Gold and greenbacks and stocks - father, son and the ghost of the same - three persons in one; these are the true and only God, mighty and supreme; and William Tweed is his prophet....

Q. Who were the models the young were taught to emulate in former days?

A. Washington and Franklin.

Q. Whom do they and should they emulate now in this era of enlightenment?

A. Tweed, Hall, Connely, Camochan, Fisk, Gould, Barnard, and Winans.

Q. What works were chiefly prized for the training of the young in former days?

A. Poor Richard's Almanac, the Pilgrim's Progress, and The Declaration of Independence.

Q. What are the best prized Sunday-school books in this more enlightened age?

A. St. Hall's Garbled Reports, St. Fish's Ingenious Robberies, St. Camochan's Guide to Corruption, St. Gould on the Watering of Stock, St. Barnard's Injunctions, St. Tweed's Handbook of Morals, and the Court-House edition of the Holy Crusade of the Forty Thieves.

Q. Do we progress?

A. You bet your life. 24

The general application of Victorian notions of rational order and the efficiency demands of mass production combined to generate new needs for and more absolute forms of social control. Businessmen and manufacturers recognized the need for predictability and control of labor, capital, raw materials and markets. Because of their investment in property and their fear of the masses, employers sought to ensure the predictable working of society and the orderly behavior of the lower orders.

Although businessmen's power functioned as one element in the process of modernization, it was the single most influential factor in the cultural changes in this period. Businessmen found themselves in a position to create a labor ideology and use it as a means of labor control. The emergence of the entrepreneur as the most admired social type, coupled with new forms of owner socialization of workers, assured the cultural primacy of capitalist ideology.

Any elite, upon coming to power, suggests Lawrence Goodwin, seeks to consolidate its authority and create a situation that precludes further social change.²⁵ Though the business elite did not shrink from direct use of both state and private police force, it generally sought an easier method to prevent direct assault on its authority, and found this method in mass socialization. Thus, to Goodwyn, business elites understood that cultural control

offered a more permanent and desirable means of ensuring domestic tranquility. They resorted to cultural control and "the creation of mass modes of thought that literally make the need for major additional social change difficult for the mass of the population to imagine."²⁶ This new ideology emerged constituting a "new culture in itself," as the working population was forced to "define all conceivable political activity within the limits of existing custom." A society which has achieved this limitation on the activity of its most volatile elements can "genuinely be described as 'stable'." and in the future, Goodwyn explains,

protest will pose no ultimate threat because the protesters will necessarily conceive of their options as being so limited that even should they be successful, the resulting "reforms" will not alter significantly the inherited modes of power and privilege. Protest under such conditions of cultural narrowness is, therefore, not only permissible in the eyes of those who rule, but is...positively desirable because it fortifies the popular understanding that the society is functioning "democratically."²⁷

For this reason, the political consequences of mass deference to received culture cannot be overstated, especially in this, the period when the industrial proletariat was so large, its exploitation so acute and European radicalism so instructive. In other words, the mass socialization of labor occurred during a time when capitalism existed in a potentially threatening context. But labor offered no viable political alternatives to the

dominant culture.

Democracy suffers when large groups of citizens defer to prevailing truths. It is only opposition and criticism which serve to make democracy viable. To observers such as Goodwyn, "individual self respect and collective self confidence constitute the cultural building blocks of mass democratic politics. Their development permits people to act in self-generated democratic ways - as distinct from passively participating in various hierarchical modes bequeathed by the received culture."²⁸ When this individual consciousness is thwarted by a pervasive ideology, individual action can no longer offer or demand social or economic alternatives. In imposing a "received culture," elites of the Gilded Age set the stage for the creation of a mass deference that eliminated true oppositional politics on the part of labor. This study describes the ideology of business elites and the methods of its imposition.

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CHAPTER III

VICTORIAN LABOR IDEOLOGY

As stated earlier, one of the functions of ideology as social control is to define the dominant symbolic universe through which society presents a coherent definition of the way things are in a manner which legitimates its powerful elements. The period 1870-1900 witnessed the emergence of a class conscious entrepreneurial ideology toward labor which was of major significance in the cultural development of U.S. industrial society and of labor's consciousness within that society. This chapter describes the content of that "given" or received consciousness in this period by analyzing the dominant symbolic universe as it defined the general relationship between capital and labor, the proper station and role of all participants and the reasons for their success or failure.

The social rationality of capitalism found particular expression in late nineteenth century Victorian culture. Victorians constituted a bourgeois, Protestant, middle class, for the most part a product of the industrial revolution. The ownership of productive wealth furnished the material basis for their social and intellectual power. Yet, most historians of Victorian culture understand it in terms of its emphasis on values and morals, in particular, rational order and efficiency, and, furthermore, in terms of

its overwhelming dedication to persuasion as a means of propagating them.¹ The Victorians were serious people to whom moral considerations were uppermost. Daniel Howe characterized their speech as "laden with words like 'duty', 'urgency', and 'virtue'." The earnestness with which these values were promoted was "rooted in the assumption of the objectivity and universality of moral principles."² The Victorians followed a prescription for personal behavior which included sexual repressiveness, narrowly defined and usually deferred gratification, emphasis on personal self control, punctuality, hard work, niggardliness, self-improvement, competition and acquisitiveness.

Victorians hoped that these personal characteristics, when translated into the social realm, would produce a society where collective security and order were guaranteed by individual adherence to tenets of rational behavior. In part, the high value placed on rational order resulted from the tensions and strain of rapid change and modernization which intensified the psychic needs of elites to maintain visible signs of social stability. Attracting a large working class population to urban areas, U.S. elites of the gilded age enjoyed cheap, readily available, overly plentiful labor, but at the same time, generating among themselves a fear of possible threats to their power. Social fear was evident in the anxious hostility with which Victorians viewed drunkenness and the

idleness of social groupings of the working class, as well as in their nostalgia for the "old days" of order and obedience.

Historians placed an important source of the reform impulse of this period in elite attempts to deal with social disruptions.³ Since Victorians viewed social instability as coming from the workers, their fears coalesced in a general assault on working class ideology, behavior and culture. Discipline and repression constituted constant themes in this assault as elites sought to impose order on the laboring class in schools, churches, asylums, prisons, settlement houses, with devices such as prohibition and blue laws, and at work, with labor efficiency, time thrift, punctuality, obedience and temperance. In short, by imparting bourgeois values, Victorian elites sought to create disciplined, moral and respectable workers.

Victorian ideology combined eighteenth century classicism, the work ethic, liberalism, and Social Darwinism.⁴ Both classical liberalism and seventeenth century Puritanism relied on natural law, rationality and individualism. Both assumed the "naturalness", and thus the objectivity, immutability and universality of moral laws that were not human constructs. Both assumed an immutable, abstract "human nature" in which rational man possessed enlightened free will which made him both reasonable and responsible for his actions. And the ideal Protestant, a

frugal, hardworking, sober man, merged with "economic man" of the classicists and the "fittest" of the Social Darwinists. Although rational man represented an ideal, and men could and did act rationally at times, Hobbsean, Lockean, and Puritan views, posited a fallen condition for some, where disorder and unrationality reigned. This idea of unequally distributed rationality allowed elites to exclude certain social elements: women, children, the insane, the immoral - all unrational or imperfectly constituted groups. When confronted with the social realities of industrial society, Victorian elites enlarged earlier definitions of unrational elements to include those who practiced social disruptions in the form of labor violence or who offered unsettling definitions of the way things ought to be. Thus, the central problem for elites in the late nineteenth century was control of elements in society whose behavior and ideas threatened the maintenance of the capitalist order and its rational social whole. Victorians viewed themselves as special carriers of civilization, entrusted with the moral responsibility of preserving correct economic theory and social wholesomeness.

The social promotion of "correct" behavior was at once an exhortation to follow the Victorian code of personal conduct and a definition of morally marginal groups and the reasons for their inferior station, generally their unwillingness to adhere to correct behavioral norms. This

helps explain the Victorian emphasis on ideologies which justified the unequal distribution of wealth: individualism, natural law and Social Darwinism.

When Darwinian ideas first entered the United States, Victorian elites siezed upon them as a scientific addition to prevailing thought which defended unfettered competition, rampant individualism, limited government, resistance to social reform, and the unequal distribution of wealth - in short, a mode of thought which gave scientific justification to the status quo and accepted only limited change. Applying the biological dictum of natural selection to human society, Social Darwinism posited a vision of life that dovetailed with the laissez-faire economic ethic of the industrializing period. In the struggle for economic survival, those with favorable characteristics such as frugality and diligence were naturally elevated upward, and the lazy, shiftless and inefficient were duly punished. In this manner, Social Darwinism gave a biological legitimacy to competition and the unrestrained pursuit of self interest.

Because it was supposedly grounded in science, Social Darwinism furnished legitimacy to notions of laissez-faire and natural law. Human society was an organism which should grow naturally, unfettered by outside coercion. Society would progress toward higher forms of civilization only if it were free. Thus, the state should

adopt a negative role, not promote reform. It should guarantee each individual's absolute freedom to develop naturally, including freedom to pursue business enterprise, subject to the rule that one not harm the freedom of others. Thus, the natural law of evolution prescribed the natural rights of each individual, rights to a free and equal chance to compete, rights to an equal protection of the law, and these became proper ethical standards within Victorian society. Those who succeeded in the game did so by dint of their natural superiority, those who failed, failed because of natural inferiority.

Not only did Social Darwinism legitimate laissez-faire and individualism, but William Graham Sumner, its most active and popular proponent, even ascribed a role to capital in the struggle for existence.⁵ Within the struggle for existence, it is the production and accumulation of capital, he maintained, which augments the productivity of labor and ensures human progress. Those who acquire capital are possessors and transmitters of superior characteristics and talents and their wealth is a legitimate payment for their services to civilization. This placed a special social responsibility on the guardians of capital to protect and promote the values and virtues necessary for its correct organization, utilization and preservation.

Drawing on the vogue of Social Darwinism, Victorian philosophers of success seized on the idea of the freely

competing individual to explain the increasing gap between those in rags and those in riches.⁶ Late nineteenth success literature such as Horatio Alger novels had transformed antebellum notions of success and success-producing qualities to accommodate the new economic relationships of industrial society. The old antebellum emphasis on self discipline and character had balanced economic virtues with moral and religious values, guaranteeing that hard work would enable the individual to achieve a measure of security. But in the Victorian period, ideas of ethical conduct leading to self improvement shifted away from this earlier balance toward an almost naked emphasis on the pursuit of wealth. Moreover, to account for the obvious fact that economic advancement was not available to all in a monopolistic industrial setting, philosophers of success added a new element, competition, to traditional concepts of self improvement. Self help literature increasingly stressed the efficacy of competition in a free marketplace in improving the individual and guaranteeing social progress. Society provided a competitive arena wherein all should strive for advancement and prosperity, and where success devolved upon those with the requisite virtues. Those who failed could blame only their own unwillingness to compete or failure to embody these virtues.

In Victorian society, the concept of rags to riches served less to encourage those in rags than to justify those

with riches. If wealth were there for the taking, then those who availed themselves of the opportunity must possess certain characteristics that set them apart from their fellows, enabling them to capitalize on their natural advantages. Conversely, those who failed to grasp opportunity deserved their fate. That was the way things were supposed to be by both divine and material design. In this manner, the victims of industrialization were blamed for their plight while elites and society itself escaped responsibility.

Successful businessmen of the gilded age seldom rose from poverty, but began their careers on one of the higher rungs of the ladder.⁷ Andrew Carnegie was an exception, but his example became the rule for millions on both sides of the property line. It was necessary to justify their high position by insisting on the superior merit of those who sat there. Although they believed it for different reasons, businessmen, knowing that most laborers could never rise to ownership positions, still used the example of the few who did to affirm that the system was fluid, open, rewarding a certain kind of virtue and providing individual freedom. But the expression was more important in ideological terms than the actuality. "Give me your tired, your poor", and society provided the setting where the virtues of such people were tested.

The prevailing economic theory in the Victorian

period derived from seventeenth century English political economy.⁸ Classical economics interpreted economic processes within the competitive arena of private property and individual enterprise. It posited the existence of an impersonally functioning economic system whose absolute laws were prescribed by nature. Within that system, unrestrained competition reigned in all spheres of the economy, providing a beneficial force that generated progress. The laws of the marketplace reflected the natural order of things, governing such economic phenomena as supply and demand, wages, the labor pool, and the distribution of wealth.

Classical economics considered all elements in the economic sphere as cogs in the economic machine which worked smoothly as long as nothing interfered with the free use and exchange of any of its parts: capital, raw materials, technology and especially labor. The whole economy was a market, governed by fluctuating prices and conditions, and to the businessman, labor was no different from any other commodity or service, suffering the common fate of oversupply, price competition and impersonalization, carrying no more obligation than any other materials. This market mentality precluded any acknowledgement that labor was a collective term for humans, over whom owners had direct control.

Businessmen did not believe that they exercised any control over the market or could successfully defy its laws.

Railroad owners, Thomas Cochran notes, assumed that no business could pay labor more than subsistence wages and survive. Owners saw themselves as "simply marshals of the force of economic law."⁹ Economics textbooks of professionals such as Arthur L. Perry held that wages and profits bore an inverse relationship. High wages were incompatible with high profits. Businessmen promoted the idea that wages were determined by law and that strikes were therefore powerless to benefit the working class. "Strikes," asserted Perry, were an "irrelevant remedy for low wages." And these principles were in keeping with the "same old laws of God laid down at once in the Constitution of things and in the Constitution of men." ¹⁰

Social Darwinism reinforced the impersonal nature of the workings of this system, maintaining that some were rightly more fit to play its game than others and deserved unequal rewards based on unequal degrees of fitness. Moreover, the eighteenth century had idealized and rationalized individualism, believing that the pursuit of self interest was a law of nature, classical economics included a doctrine of social selection that once antedated the nineteenth century and anticipated exactly the archetypical entrepreneur of the gilded age. From the seventeenth century, classical economics had described "economic man", who, while completely absorbed in his own self interest and completely motivated by gain,

unconsciously acted in the best interests of society as a whole. As man pursued individual self interest, mainly the maximization of profits, his activity directly benefited the whole of society. Self interest was therefore identical with the rational interests of the social whole. As the individual efforts of one individual paled in the face of corporate organization and monopoly capitalism, Victorian business elites insisted that corporations acted as individuals and their activity was also a means to progress. What benefited the company benefited the nation. Government intervention was both unnecessary and unwise. Unnecessary since society under freedom was already perfectly constituted; unwise since any violation of nature's law would upset the delicate balance, punishing society with chaos. Progress occurred only when man subjected himself to natural economic law; conversely, it was interrupted or reversed when these laws were disobeyed. In addition, any increase in state activity caused a direct and corresponding decrease in the freedom of its individuals. The state assumed a negative role.

The nineteenth century concept of economic man included the notion that some men were naturally more suited than others to deal in the economic sphere. Certain, more acute people had better notions of market opportunity and capacities to exploit, and thus "naturally" took advantage of the impersonal workings of the system. This idea

produced an atmosphere where there was a sort of Gresham's law of behavior in which certain kinds of more "modern" competitive behavior drove out more "honorable" forms, better suited to earlier times.

Because Victorians assumed the identity of self and social interests, because they assumed that man inherited instincts for acquisitiveness, there was no problem with a separate social morality with respect to business activity. Economics, with its own legitimating morality, was a separate sphere from ordinary morality. Businessmen divorced economics and reformers, business and ethics. Success was the only moral indicator. Victorian political economy elevated the successful businessman to a position of role model, extolling his successes, his competitive drive, and his accumulation of property, all of which assured his social and cultural authority.¹¹

The classical idea of natural law also embodied notions of natural rights, especially those that promised individual liberty and the right to property.¹² The rights of property must be respected by all, including the right of owners to manage property as they saw fit. Within this context, propertyless employees had no legal basis for arguing about wages or conditions. Thus, employers discharged leaders, blacklisted workers and killed unions based on the right to manage property.

The fundamental concept underlying Social Darwinism, classical economics, natural law and laissez faire was the cult of the free and self sufficient individual. With roots in protestantism, especially evangelical protestantism, the enlightenment and English political economy, this idea reached full fruition in the open economic free for all in late nineteenth century U.S. Individualism received a special boost after the advent of industrialization, for it was a philosophy which reflected the dominant mode of privately owned productive enterprise. Capitalism treated people as autonomous economic units that functioned as individual, equal and separate buyers and sellers in the open marketplace. Although in practice, this value was being undermined by the realities of industrial life, it was nevertheless ingrained in native U.S. workers. Individualism was a less easily promoted value among immigrants, however, from non-urban, non-industrial, and often non-Western contexts where modern socioeconomic transformations had not yet dulled traditional communal values.¹³ Individualism was a more congenial value to urban German and Jewish immigrants.

Within this general ideological context, Victorians defined the capitalist-entrepreneur and the laborer, ascribing various class characteristics to each group. After 1880, traditional beliefs in the cultural importance and social worth of the individual worker reflected new

concepts of labor more in keeping with the changed conditions of industrial society. To the businessman, the worker was no longer an admired social type, but an impersonal economic element to be utilized. Although businessmen still offered rhetoric in praise of work, workers and self improvement, their actions were guided by the knowledge that the chances for advancement were small and that the great majority of workers would die in occupational categories not far removed from where they were born.

Since most workers were also poor, definitions of "worker" and "poor" became intertwined in Victorian ideology. Criticisms of poverty offered by elites often involved criticisms of one's work station and work habits. In pre-bourgeois Christian society, poverty was thought to be due to forces outside human control. God determined rich and poor and obedience to him involved accepting one's lot as permanent. Poverty was a burden, but not a sin. Something that, while it could not be overcome, need not be atoned for. After the rise of industrial capitalism and its legitimating ideologies, society viewed poverty less as a result of one's fate than of one's personal unwillingness to exert oneself, one's improper habits, and even one's active, willing sin. "The general truth will stand," Henry Ward Beecher noted to his congregation, "that no man in this land suffers from poverty unless it be more than his fault -

unless it be his sin."¹⁴ Poverty was not permanent; by one's efforts one could improve. The rich were demonstration of this, the poor an example of the failure to try. Thus businessmen and their clergy preached the doctrine of success and the dominant symbolic universe held out to the ordinary laborer a world of glittering success and wealth that served both as an incentive to rise and a blistering reminder of his own inadequacy and unworthiness.

Businessmen's attitudes toward charity are instructive. Aid to the poor, they maintained, not only disrupted the natural workings of the marketplace, but was undeserved by the recipients and actually harmed them by demoralizing their will. "The number of poor to be sympathized with is very small," observed the Reverend Russell Conwell; "to sympathize with a man whom God has punished for his sins, thus to help him when God will still continue a just punishment, is to do wrong, no doubt about it." Most businessmen in the gilded age were convinced that poverty functioned to make people austere, and to stimulate them to hard work. The limited social responsibility that elites assumed toward the working class was always couched within this context of individualism and the utility of poverty. Elites specified the reason for working class poverty: personal habits. Workers would not save money; businessmen were savers and their wealth was the result. The poor had the power of saving if they only would.

Thus workers in the late nineteenth century experienced the increasing poverty of their material surroundings and at the same time a new ideological assault which identified them as the active cause of their own misfortune. These ideas impressed upon workers the reality of their second class, abhorrent nature, of which they were the guilty architects, and on which basis they were denied a legitimate place in society. This placed a stigma on the workers, undermining self respect. It is difficult to determine the degree to which labor internalized such definitions, but it is clear that in this period, such an ideological assault, coupled with the rigors of factory discipline and the disruption of traditional culture furnished critical elements in the socialization of the workforce to dominant bourgeois culture.

Businessmen in Victorian society popularized such ideas for various reasons. First, they shifted the value system to a new level of materialism. Nineteenth century society became organized around the assumption that material values could be universalized. It is for this reason, to economic historian Karl Polanyi, that one can "allow a comparatively wide scope to the play of economic motives when analyzing that society."¹⁵ Second, these ideas gave universal legitimation to Victorian businessmen's economic and social behavior, allowing them to defend the status quo and justify their superior position while attacking labor.

But they were more than just an excuse for explaining and absolving responsibility for the fate of the industrial workers. It was morally assuaging for elites to picture competition as a reflection of biological necessity. And their specific labor ideology was designed to bring the entire capital-labor dialogue within the ideological arena already prescribed by Protestantism, classical economics and social Darwinism, in short, to reduce the debate on the relationship between capital and labor to a series of affirmations of received ideas. That was the heart of the matter. For it was from this ideological orientation that businessmen undertook to educate, prosletyze, propagandize and otherwise intellectually coerce the public, and its element most in need of education - labor.

ENDNOTES: CHAPTER III

- 1 Daniel Howe, "American Victorianism as a Culture" American Quarterly vol. 27 (1975), No. 5, p. 507-532; see also H. Wayne Morgan Victorian Culture in America 1865-1914 (Itasca, Ill.: F. E Peacock, 1973).
- 2 Ibid. , p. 525
- 3 see Michael Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovations in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), and David Rothman The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).
- 4 C.S. MacPherson, "The Social Bearings of Locke's Political Theory" in Judith Shklar, ed., Political Theory and Ideology (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1966), pp. 66-79; Louis Hartz "The Mentality of a Victorious Middle Class" in The Liberal Tradition in America (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), p. 89.
- 5 Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944), p. 58.
- 6 John Cawelti, Apostles of the Self Made Man (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 168-171.
- 7 Lee Soltow, Men and Wealth in the United States, 1850-1870 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); see also Louis Galambos, The Public Image of Big Business in America 1880-1940: A Quantitative Study of Social Change (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).
- 8 Arthur L. Perry, Principles of Political Economy (New York: 1885), p. 193, 237, 264; also see Frances Bowen American Political Economy (New York: 1890), p. 207.

- 9 Thomas C. Cochran, Railroad Leaders 1845-1890: The Business Mind in Action (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 182; business schools treated immigration as purely an economic matter, see Isaac Hourwich, Ph.D., Immigration and Labor: The Economic Aspects of European Immigration to the United States, (New York: B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1922), Chapter II, "Report of the Immigration Commission."
- 10 Perry, p. 195, 237, 264.
- 11 James Bridge, Inside History of Carnegie Steel (New York: Aldine Book Co., 1903), p. viii discusses how Social Darwinism legitimates the removal of ethics from economics.
- 12 Nicholas Abercrombie, Class, Structure and Knowledge: Problems in the Sociology of Knowledge (New York: New York University Press, 1980), pp. 56-58, 63.
- 13 Gerald Rosenblum, Immigrant Workers: Their Impact on American Labor Radicalism (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 115.
- 14 quoted in Sidney Fine, Laissez-Faire and the General Welfare State: A Study of Conflict in American Thought, 1865-1901 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), p. 137; see Henry Ward Beecher, Advice to Young Men (Philadelphia: Henry Altamus, 1900).
- 15 Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944), p. 153.

CHAPTER IV

EMPLOYER IDEOLOGY IN THE PULLMAN STRIKE

The Great Chicago Strike of 1894 furnished a context which demonstrated the labor ideology of the owners and managers of the Pullman Palace Car Company, and through the General Managers' Association that of the owners and managers of the 23 railroads with a terminus in Chicago. In addition, George Pullman's creation of the model factory town of Pullman fourteen years before the strike offered an example of an employer's social ideals in practice, a demonstration of what type of social environment he, and by implication, many manufacturers would have if they could control society.¹ The creation of Pullman, the subsequent strike and boycott declared by the American Railway Union against Pullman car carriers, and the use of federal force in an industrial dispute generated a body of employer rhetoric concerning relations of capital and labor and workingmen's rights to organize, strike and boycott. In the course of these events, employer ideology legitimated capitalist social and economic structures and worked to obstruct workers' organization, defuse their resistance, discredit them publicly, and prevent the propagation of their ideology. The Pullman Strike constituted a major defeat for railroad labor, a defeat brought on in part by the propagation of the labor ideology of George Pullman and the railroad owners.

I. Pullman Town

George Pullman established the Pullman Palace Car Company in 1867 with a capital investment of \$1,000,000. By 1880, prosperity and patent protection enabled him to acquire a monopoly of railroad sleeping car manufacture and service on three-fourths of the nation's rail mileage. The fiscal year ending in July, 1893 found the Company capitalized at \$36,000,000, having a \$25,000,000 surplus of undivided profits, paying yearly dividends to stockholders of 8 to 12 per cent including \$2,520,000 in 1893, and distributing wages of \$7,233,000. The Panic of 1893 forced a reduction in wage payments in fiscal 1894 to \$4,471,000, but produced no corresponding reduction in dividends; the latter rose to \$2,880,000.²

Prosperity in 1880 allowed Pullman to construct a new car plant and alongside it, the planned community of Pullman. Pullman's town became the material manifestation of his principles of economy and social control, and in particular, his labor ideology. Pullman's ideas reflected both the greater ideological milieu of late nineteenth century American society, and, in particular, the socioeconomic reality of boomtown Chicago. Between 1870 and 1880, Chicago's population almost doubled to one half million, and it became the nation's busiest railway center. Between 1880 and 1890, the city's population tripled to one

and one half million. Rapidly built, overcrowded, dirty and disease infested, working class housing districts constituted, in the opinion of many business leaders, breeding grounds for the social unrest that plagued the city. Labor disturbances hit the city many times during the decade of the 1870s. In the great nationwide railroad uprisings of 1877, Chicago witnessed four days of rioting which left more than 40 dead and scores injured.³ Chicago newspapers predicted "Civil War", "Horrid Social Convulsion," and "Red War."⁴ In 1886, events near Haymarket Square generated a national outcry among businessmen and the public against the dangers of anarchism. They established Chicago's reputation for harboring the nation's most radical labor elements.⁵

These and other disorders alarmed some businessmen such as George Pullman to the dangers of industrial society and made them fearful of a great social revolution. Determined to avert a catastrophe, many business leaders became concerned with the living conditions of working people as they searched for new institutions to bring order to the urban social structure. Pullman had early become involved in Chicago's social and civic life: education through the Y.M.C.A. and the Chicago Manual Training School, youth temperance through the Citizens' Law and Order League, and civic improvement through commercial clubs. Welfare work began in his own plants in 1873 with the charter of the

Pullman Mutual Benefit Association, and Pullman expressed the desire to provide future eating, bathing, reading, and social facilities for workers.⁶

Pullman's desire to prevent social disorder was matched only by his eagerness to promote habits of efficiency and economy among workers. The impetus for the model town combined economic efficiency and return on investment with social control. "Whatever tends to make the [company's] headquarters attractive to the employee has the effect to make [sic] them more useful," Pullman argued in 1872. ⁷ He maintained that the city was constructed as "strictly a business proposition" which would take advantage of the "commercial value of beauty."⁸ He insisted that relations within the town remain on the business level of employer to employee, landlord to tenant.⁹ As a business venture, the town was expected to return 6 per cent annually on the original investment. High rents ensured such a return, and a coercive collection procedure guaranteed prompt rent payment. Each worker received two paychecks, one for rent which he signed over to Pullman town's bank, and one for the balance due for wages.¹⁰ Thus the costs of utopia and beauty were borne by residents and subsidized by their rents.

To George Pullman, the cultural habits of Chicago's working people precluded good business practice. The temptations of urban society -- drinking, idleness,

unhealthful living, transience -- all fostered poor work performance. The social and moral evils of working class neighborhoods, however, could be eradicated by imposing upon workers his notions of social order and community, forcing them to live in a clean, orderly, stable, moral environment. A direct attempt to change and control the cultural habits of workers, Pullman City offered the material benefits of pleasant, healthful, uplifting physical surroundings, free from disorder and corruption, an environment which would produce better workers. Pullman wished to "attract the best class of mechanic", to exclude "baneful influences," and to achieve "elevation of the employees".¹¹ In this manner, commercial motives and social goals blended into a utopian project in which material beneficence provided the basis for moral uplift and guided working class thought and behavior toward Pullman's desired ends.

In one sense, Pullman City was an attempt to resist the social reality of industrialization by recreating between employer and employee the stable, paternal, hierarchical social relations of an earlier age. It followed the pattern of antebellum model factory towns such as Lowell, Massachusetts, which, along with asylums, schools, orphanages, prisons and reformatories served as communities providing order, control and supervision. Such institutions were designed to contain the first indications of the disruptive social forces of urban and industrial society.¹²

While Pullman sought to recreate the past on one hand, on the other his city anticipated the welfare work and other paternalistic reforms of the early twentieth century.

Pullman employed artists and engineers to design a town with sewers, paving, and greenery, combining the aesthetic with the useful. Constructed entirely of red brick, the town was laid out in a 1/2 by 2 mile grid between Lake Calumet and the Illinois Central tracks. Shops and offices of the Pullman Palace Car Company, set at one end of town, included a foundry, wheel manufactory, brickyard, lumberyard, gas works, wood and machine shops, tool shop, auxiliary buildings and a 190 foot water tower, in addition to the car manufacturing shops. The thirty acre car shop area was dominated by a main construction shop and office building, 700 feet long, the center office section of which rose to 140 feet above its two wings and housed a large lighted clock.

The town of Pullman consisted of park, residential, and commercial areas. Bordering Lake Calumet, the park offered spacious greens, seating areas, sports fields and tennis courts. From it a bridge led to an island on which were situated a lavishly constructed boathouse and race tracks which doubled as skating rinks in winter.

The Arcade housed the main commercial and community activities. A block long and 90 feet tall, this building contained shops, theatre, kindergarten, library, meeting

rooms and a second floor observation gallery. Four of the library's five rooms, clearly intended for the clean and well dressed, were richly upholstered and decorated. The fifth, the austere furnished Men's Reading Room, had a separate outside entrance allowing workers to enter without passing through the more richly appointed library. In the opinion of Reverend W.H. Carwardine, Pullman town's Methodist minister, the library appeared too luxurious to the average worker, creating "a spirit of caste in the little town."

The library was designed to promote the community's moral and intellectual development. Only 31 per cent of its books were fiction, the remainder being devoted to what the librarian termed more serious education. Library patrons paid an annual fee of \$3.00, equal to a day and a half's work for an ordinary laborer, and this, coupled with the intimidation of its luxuriousness, kept annual membership under 200. Like the library, the richly appointed theatre separated those who paid 35, 50, and 75 cents a seat from those who occupied the boxes in the balcony. The town's other public buildings included a free school for children of Pullman, a casino, and a stable. The latter housed both the town's work and the wealthy citizen's pleasure horses. A carriage and horse could be rented for \$3.00 a day for excursions.

The Florence Hotel, a huge, two story, elaborately

constructed and decorated "gingerbread" building, rented rooms from \$3.00 to \$4.00 a day. The hotel offered 75 cent meals in its restaurant and contained banquet rooms to let for weddings and parties. The hotel housed Pullman's only bar, clearly intended by its location and appointments for management only. One worker reported that he "looked but dared not enter Pullman's hotel with its private bar."¹³ In an interview published in the Ottawa Daily Free Press on September 9, 1882, George Pullman explained:

We allow no liquor in the city; now take strong drink away from men who have been accustomed to it, and not furnish something to fill the gap is all wrong - there is a want felt, a vacuum created and it must be filled; to do this we have provided a theatre, a reading room, billiard room, and all sorts of outdoor sports, and by this means our people soon forget all about drink, they find they are better off without it, and we have an assurance of our work being done with greater accuracy and skill.¹⁴

City planners also located groceries and shops in Market Hall, which like the Arcade provided areas for socialization and relaxation.

Pullman City had a total of 1799 dwelling units. The average rent in Pullman was \$13.50 per month, approximately 20 to 25 percent higher than in neighboring Kensington or Rosedale.¹⁵ Many families sublet to individual boarders in order to survive. Although Pullman denied any connection between rental and employment, job preference in slack times went to town residents.¹⁶ Workers testified to the United States Strike Commission in 1894 that Pullman compelled

workers to reside in town when space was available.¹⁷ Worker residence areas were situated on paved, landscaped streets arranged in a gridiron pattern and constructed with rows of identical two-to-five family dwellings built of red brick. These adjoined like buildings on each side, with narrow strips of front lawn and narrow lots of open ground in back. All families in the tenement shared the back lot, which was barely large enough to accommodate a clothesline and certainly insufficient for a garden. Lowest rents were in tenements which let for eight to nine dollars per month. Each apartment had a cooking stove, gas lighting, sink and water tap and shared a watercloset with other apartments on that floor. Tenement apartments housed both laborers and carbuilders. Skilled workers usually resided in the more comfortable, single family, five room houses which occupied separate plots of ground and rented for \$15 to \$25 per month. Houses of Pullman's company officers, merchants and professionals were individually constructed with lawns bordering on the wide Florence Boulevard. Considerably larger, these had up to 12 rooms, and rented for up to \$75 per month.

Pullman advertised his model town as a public demonstration of his notions of economic efficiency and social control. He encouraged visitors, travellers, the press, and other businessmen to view the plant site, the town, and its workers to see how a company could

simultaneously promote its own interests and those of its employees.¹⁸

"The building of Pullman," a company official reported to the press, "is very likely to be the beginning of a new era for labor."¹⁹ The physical and social arrangement of the town was designed to support and encourage the establishment of an obedient, moral community by providing a closely monitored, centralized setting in which worker interaction took place in an atmosphere free from liquor and what Pullman considered to be "bad influences". The city was designed to produce "habits of respectability", making workers punctual, mannerly, respectful of superiors, moral, saving, educated, and uplifted.²⁰ The ideal worker went directly home from work and spent his time and money on his family rather than at a saloon. During the strike, Pullman wrote to a friend that no violence or destruction of property occurred at Pullman city because of the company's having provided "various sources of elevation of character."²¹

The town promoted and, where it could, enforced order, efficiency, and discipline, in part through the visible example of its orderly layout and construction, and in part through its daily dealings with workers and their families. George Pullman "simply cannot endure litter and confusion," reported the New York World : "the love of order is the keynote to a great system."²² Reverend Carwardine of

Pullman's Methodist Church found, however, that "the monotony and regularity of the buildings gives one the impression that he is living in soldiers' barracks."²³ Social goals determined Pullman City's physical setting. The town was intended to shape attitudes as well as meet its residents' needs, and it provided workers with visual models of hierarchical class differences in income, housing, leisure, and recreation.²⁴

Pullman's labor ideology was expressed in implicit and explicit messages to workers who lived and worked in the town: the company's interests and those of its workers were the same, and the company was competent to ascertain both; order and hierarchy were of prime importance; workers should stay in their proper place; the company rightfully watched and controlled where it could. Pullman did not allow labor unions in town and forbade labor organizers to hold meetings or give speeches. Federal Strike Commissioners later assessed the significance of the system at Pullman City:

The conditions created at Pullman enable the management at all times to assert with great vigor its assumed right to fix wages and rents absolutely, and to repress that sort of independence which leads to labor organizations and their attempts at mediation, arbitration, strikes, etc.²⁵

Command and administrative problems as well as employee criticisms pointed to the difficulty involved in effecting at Pullman what leaders of the age called social engineering. Workers charged that no redress or grievance

system existed to deal with inequities in the shops, especially the gradual reduction of piecework rates over the five years previous to the strike. "They had come to feel they could get no justice," charged Carwardine. The parson noted that Company spies practiced a system of surveillance and espionage, and that the president received weekly reports concerning workmen's attitudes and conversations. He cited instances where workers had rebelled against Pullman's "absolutism" and left the Company's employ rather than endure it. Carwardine observed of Pullman's authority:

it seems to me that imperialism on the part of a gentleman so powerful in influence as Mr. Pullman is unpleasant to say the least, and capable of producing harm whether intentional or not toward those in authority under him.²⁶

Charges that Mr. Pullman influenced his employees' voting in the presidential campaign of 1892 were reported in an August 1894 article in American Industries, the publication of the National Association of Manufacturers. This article reprinted part of a July 10, 1893 interview in the New York Herald between the newspaper's editor and George Pullman. In this interview, Pullman expressed anger and disgust over the election of Grover Cleveland, whose policies Pullman considered directly responsible for the Panic of 1893. Pullman claimed that Pullman town usually returned a Republican majority of 2,000 to 25,000 votes. He had confidently expected the same for Benjamin Harrison in 1892 and had fought against Cleveland's election "with all

my power" including the delivery of a warning speech to his employees late in the campaign. In this speech, Pullman stated that he did not wish to "unduly" influence his workers' votes, and that he hoped that no worker would regard his speech as an "attempt to coerce you into voting any way against your convictions."²⁷ However, Pullman attested,

this is a business campaign. If Cleveland is elected it means an end to the protective tariff...and the biggest financial disaster which this country has ever seen. If Cleveland is elected business in this country will come to a standstill. Pullman will have to shut down or to run along on half pay. In other words, the cold fact is just this: That any man in Pullman who votes the Democratic ticket is simply voting bread and butter out of his mouth and out of the mouths of his wife and children. If you want to do that go ahead and do it. But I appeal to you not to commit such a folly.²⁸

Reprinted in Chicago newspapers, this speech stirred up the workingmen of Chicago and, in the opinion of the Herald editor, contributed to the unexpected vote Cleveland received in that city. American Industries reported that "a more impolitic speech could hardly have been delivered" and that the Chicago Republican party organization had tried unsuccessfully to counteract its "boomerang effect." Pullman admitted surprise when Pullman town returned a majority of more than 2,000 votes for Cleveland. "The workingmen were simply crazy," he fumed. Claiming that he had done as much for labor as any man alive, he felt betrayed and lashed out in a vindictive fury. "I made up my mind," he told the

editor, "that that was the last of my sympathy for the workingman." He decided that he would cut wages since his employees had voted "against their own interests and against my interests," and were no longer worth caring for. "Now, let us see how they like it," Pullman said.

Workers themselves complained that the Company interfered with their political activities. In addition, they charged that the Pullman bank collected overdue bills and rent and that the company guaranteed full occupancy by requiring workers to live in town. In addition, they charged that the company practically refused accident liability.²⁹ The company hired "spotters" to spy on the town's residents. Criticism had no official channels and its unofficial expression remained difficult. "Owing to the peculiarity of the paternalistic government of Pullman," Carwardine concluded, "no one feels like openly criticising the Company."³⁰ When wage cuts occurred, Pullman's workers resorted to union organization, arguing that there was no other way to get the company to talk to them except through organization.

In the decade of the 1880s, the press largely favored the Pullman experiment. The main criticism centered around the question of paternalism.³¹ This issue received a national airing in an 1885 Harper's Monthly article by Richard Ely.³² An assistant professor of economics at Johns Hopkins University, Ely rejected the "dogmatic assumptions

of classical political economy," and criticized Pullman Town from a Christian and "scientific" standpoint. He praised the use of scientific principles to provide a rational social setting with substantial material benefits. He approved of Pullman's goals of reapportioning wealth and providing the individual worker a share in the benefits of civilization. Pullman town "is social experimentation of a vast scale," he concluded, "and this is its significance." And it worked, Ely maintained, to the extent that the "wholesome, cheerful surroundings enable the men to work more constantly and more efficiently."³³ Yet, Ely condemned the experiment for creating a dependence and paternalism which subverted the workmen's personal liberty and individualism. He cited conditions which produced this effect, in particular the company's exercise of an all pervading, absolute power. The town's design and physical setting, to Ely, was distressing in its monotony and "mechanical regularity" which suggested "machine made," and reinforced regular habits among the residents. The city existed as an extension of the Pullman Company, where "every municipal act is here the act of a private corporation."³⁴ He likened Pullman's authority to royal absolutism in which "the citizen is surrounded by constant restraint and restriction, and everything is done for him, nothing by him."³⁵ Not only were strikes regarded as the "chief of social sins," Ely observed, but "individual initiative, even in affairs which concern the residents

alone, is repressed." He concluded that the exercise of such power resulted in a "dependent, servile population."

Pullman's experiment "desires the happiness of the people, but in such a way as shall please the authorities."³⁶

II. The Strike and Boycott

The great increase in organization of both owners and workmen in the railroad industry during the last quarter of the nineteenth century made the 1894 strike a test case between capital and labor. Between the great strikes of 1877 and 1894, the railroads experienced seventeen years of struggle with their labor forces. The formation of the General Managers' Association on a national basis in 1886 furnished railroad leaders with the most powerful employers' organization in the United States. Composed of 23 railroads centering or terminating in Chicago, it represented \$2,108,552,617 in capital, 52,088 stockholders, net earnings of \$102,710,917 and control of 221,097 employees. The Association received dues from members for the purpose of recruiting strikebreakers during labor disturbances, maintaining blacklists, deflecting employee grievances, and fixing among its members standardized rates for service and wages.³⁷

Investigators of the United States Strike Commission reported that, because it represented an illegal organization to fix rates, the General Managers' Association

is an illustration of the persistent and shrewdly devised plans of corporations to

overreach their limitations and to usurp indirectly powers and rights not contemplated in their charters and not obtainable from the people or their legislators. An extension of this association...and the proposed legalization of "pooling" would result in an aggregation of power and capital dangerous to the people and their liberties as well as to employees and their rights.³⁸

American Railway Union members had no such corresponding power; they had only their collective labor to give or withhold. Before 1893, railroad labor organizations, represented mainly by the conservative railroad brotherhoods, lacked central control. The brotherhoods functioned as craft unions, which secured contracts with the railroads through collective bargaining. While Eugene Debs was an official in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, he observed that railroad owners successfully exploited the brotherhood's rivalries, reluctance to act, and willingness to work as strikebreakers against one another. The United States Strike Commission noted that until the railroads organized, their employees never attempted a general union of railroad workingmen.³⁹

The American Railway Union formed at Chicago in 1893. It represented the only attempt to unite all railroad labor in a nationwide industrial union designed to transcend the brotherhoods' self interest and protect labor against the rapid concentration of railroad capital and management. Early success in the Great Northern Railroad Strike of 1893 boosted ARU membership to 150,000 by spring of 1894, out of

approximately 850,000 railroad workers nationally. This compares to a combined railroad brotherhood membership of 140,000, an AF of L membership of 500,000 and a Knights of Labor membership of 150,000.⁴⁰

The depression of 1893 brought wage reductions in most U.S. industries and railroads. Wage reductions began at Pullman in August and the Company reduced its workforce from 4500 to 1100 between July and November. By April, 1894, the employment level had reached 3100, the average monthly salary had been reduced by 28 per cent. Despite wage reductions and layoffs, the Company offered no corresponding reduction in rents and did not reduce salaries of officials. Resentment among workers grew as they suffered during the winter of 1893. In March and April of 1894, Pullman's workers formed ARU locals. By May 7, a workers' committee asked Pullman's Vice President Thomas Wickes for either a return to the June, 1893 wage scale or a reduction in rent. On May 10, the Company fired three of the committeemen despite George Pullman's assurances that their jobs were secure. The next day most of the workforce struck and Pullman closed the plant. The strike continued peacefully for over a month with Pullman refusing to give in to public pressure for negotiation or arbitration.

In an atmosphere of strikes and violence associated with the depression, the national convention of the American Railway Union met in Chicago and considered the Pullman

worker's case. On June 21, 1984, the ARU voted to boycott Pullman cars after the 26th if Pullman refused to arbitrate his workers' grievances. The Pullman company again refused arbitration and turned the matter over to the General Managers' Association. The nationwide boycott began June 26. ARU President Eugene Debs threatened a general rail strike if the roads attempted to replace the boycotters. The General Managers' Association met on the 29th and resolved to uphold the Pullman Company's stand against its employees, to move Pullman cars, and to "act unitedly" to crush the ARU. It announced that no striking worker would ever secure work on the road whose employ he forfeited.⁴¹ The boycott began on the 26th, and by the end of June almost 25,000 rail workers had severely restricted the nation's rail movement and all but isolated Chicago. Violence and sabotage alarmed officials and lost for the strikers the press sympathy they had in most of Chicago and the nation. Rumors abounded and many people feared general insurrection. Large groups of strikers and strike sympathizers assembled at the Rock Island yard, forcing the railroad to ask for protection.

On June 28, U.S. Attorney General Richard Olney appointed Edwin Walker as special U.S. Attorney in Chicago and instructed him to break the strike. On June 30, the Managers gained from Olney the right to import private detectives, and to deputize a private army of U.S. marshals for railowners' use in the strike. They recruited, armed,

paid, and directed this army during the strike. To isolate and paralyze ARU leadership, Walker obtained from the Circuit Court of Chicago blanket injunctions effective July 2. Although the ARU offered special crews to move mail trains, the railroads attached mail cars to regular trains which also carried Pullman cars. Since the injunction forbade the Union to obstruct the movement of mail, this tactic furnished the federal government with a reason to intervene. The federal injunction also prohibited Union officials from sending telegrams or communicating with each other or with strikers. "The result," charged Debs, "was to reduce our influence to nothing."⁴² Federal courts issued similar injunctions in 19 other states under the strike.

On July 2, Walker informed Olney that neither the passage of mail trains nor the court injunctions could be enforced without aid from the Regular Army. Olney agreed and on 3 July, against the protests of Illinois Governor Altgeld, an entire federal garrison entered Chicago and began clearing tracks, guarding trains, and resisting mobs. Federal military intervention increased mob violence which, in turn, resulted in the enlargement of the federal garrison and the calling out of the state militia.

John Egan, acting manager of the General Managers Association announced that the railroads were no longer party to the dispute which now involved only the ARU and the federal government. The Managers held that the strike arose

from the railroads' unwillingness to tolerate the ARU's attempt to dictate to them. On July 5, Debs promised an end to the strike in return for Pullman's agreeing to arbitration. On July 10, the Chicago Circuit Court issued an arrest warrant for Debs and three other ARU leaders for disobeying the court injunction. On July 12, Debs appealed to Samuel Gompers, President of the AF of L to declare a general nationwide strike in support of the rapidly failing boycott. Gompers declared that his union would neither join a sympathetic strike nor support the ARU boycott. He advised strikers to return to work. On July 17, Debs and ARU leaders were jailed for a week. These events and the refusal of the roads to reemploy active union members effectively killed the strike and crippled the ARU. Mob violence abated by the middle of July and most troops were withdrawn by July 19. On 18 July, Pullman announced the resumption of work in its shops. By August 24, 1984, it had employed 1778 former workers and 559 new ones.

III. The Issues

During the course of the strike, Pullman and the General Managers Association publicly mounted an ideological assault which promoted their assessment of the situation. Their strongest assertions held that a) owners of property had the right to control it, b) their interest was guided by the principle of safeguarding capital, and c) their hands were tied at certain points by economic law. Together, these

assumptions constituted a basic reference point from which other arguments and practices flowed.

In a Pullman Company statement in the Chicago Herald, June 26, 1894, Vice President Thomas Wickes held that the main issue in the strike was Pullman's and the railroads' right to govern themselves.⁴³ The American Railway Union, charged Pullman, "seeks to dictate to the railway systems of this country what cars they shall use."⁴⁴ In defending to the Strike Commission the company's refusal to arbitrate, Wickes reiterated the same contention:

There was a principle involved...that the company felt in justice to itself it was bound to maintain; that was the control of its own business. If the company had allowed its employees to dictate upon what terms it should do its business.., the putting out of its own power the control of its business would have been a very serious matter for years to come.⁴⁵

To the Pullman company, the right of control meant that employees should have no voice in "dictating" or entering into negotiations concerning wages, rents, or work conditions.

Strike Commissioners' questions raised the issue of Pullman's loyalties and duties to his employees, suggesting that a profitable company such as his should have borne some losses, shared some profits, and carried workers through the depression. This prompted two responses. First, Pullman vehemently insisted that his loyalty belonged exclusively to Company stockholders. Those who invested in stocks years

ago, he maintained, made wise decisions. The company itself had been prudent in creating profits and accumulating a surplus. Thus, just because the company "happened to be prosperous," Pullman saw no reason why he should take profits rightfully belonging to the 4,200 shareholders and turn them over to the Pullman workers. "The Pullman company divides its profits with the people who own the property," Pullman attested. Paying profits to workers would be giving them a "contribution," which would reduce their self respect.⁴⁶

Ownership of property likewise carried with it a license for control over renters. Pullman justified his attempts to control town residents by citing its beneficial effects. For example, he maintained that his refusal to sell land to commercial interests or individual workers prevented the introduction of "baneful elements which it was the chief purpose to exclude."⁴⁷ Likewise, he refused to rent property for any purpose the company deemed unsavory. Pullman claimed "very satisfactory success" in excluding undesirable elements: "there are no saloons in Pullman; there are no brothels or other objectionable houses; no such places of resort."⁴⁸ Pullman saw the beneficial results of his paternalistic control in visits to employees homes, "as I had occasion to do often", and from their appearance in the streets. He estimated that employees and their families lived "about 40 percent better than people in ordinary

manufacturing towns...that did not have the advantages of cleanliness and order and the elimination of bad influences."⁴⁹ He concluded that "the general expression of people was in the direction of a higher class."⁵⁰

The amount of debate and controversy over wages generated during the strike placed that issue at the forefront of the ideological struggle. Pullman, supported by the General Managers, identified labor costs as the elastic factor in cost accounting, blamed the strike on high wages or demands for high wages, and saw wage reductions as easily the most justifiable method of cost cutting in hard times.

The Chicago press raised the issue of wage cuts which prompted Pullman to include in his public statement of 14 July a discussion of the factors which determined wage rates. During the depression, he declared, the company operated at a loss in order to share with workers the costs of hard times by providing work, even at reduced wages. Realizing that the depression would mean only scattered, small contracts from hard pressed railroads, Pullman told his managers: "Our bids will be based on the lowest possible estimates, eliminating the question of profit and the interest on investment, and if the workmen will contribute some help in the way of accepting some reduction of wages...we can hope to keep running."⁵¹ Even the reduced wages, Pullman argued, did not permit a shop profit on work contracted after spring of 1894. For his part in meeting the

economic crisis, Pullman contributed a "business loss", although management salaries were not reduced, and he expected the workers to "work a little harder" and be "willing to do their work at a less price" rather than close the shop. They should "show proper appreciation by helping themselves over hard times," Pullman announced to the press.⁵² In the absence of any information to the contrary, company officers assumed that wage reductions were "acceptable to the employees under the circumstances."⁵³ The wage question, Wickes testified to the Strike Commission, "is settled by the law of supply and demand. We were obliged to reduce wages...in order to compete with other people in the same business, that were doing the same thing. I suppose the wages we were paying were practically the same wages they were paying." Wickes further defended the company position: "we go into the market for men, just as we go into the market for anything else...." To pay more than the law of the market allowed, was to give a "gift of money."⁵⁴ If high wages kept costs too large to remain competitive, the plant must close. "The economic law is inexorable," he insisted.⁵⁵

Pressed by the commissioners, Pullman admitted that operating at a loss was cheaper than shutting down entirely. Considerations of avoiding costs arising from fixed overhead, shutting down the plant, and scattering the workforce also influenced the decision to operate the plant

at a loss.⁵⁶ The Strike Commission found that the company kept the plant running

mainly for its own benefit as a manufacturer, that its plant might not rust, that its competitors might not invade its territory, that it might keep its cars in repair, that it might be ready for resumption when business revived with a live plant and competent help, and that its revenue from its tenements might continue.⁵⁷

Although the Pullman company insisted that fixed economic laws governed its practices, officials used other factors to determine daily piece rate payments. The company avowed the "principle" that a day's wage should be a "reasonable wage for ten hours at that particular work for a competent workman, not an expert." Ascertaining "by experience" the amount of work a "faithful, competent" worker could perform in one day, the company used its piece rate system to penalize "less industrious" workers with payment of "less than the reasonable day's wage." Likewise, the piece rate system rewarded the "expert and more industrious" with the "just benefit of his superior energy and skill."⁵⁸ The company automatically adjusted piece rates downward when "experience" discovered that the undeserving regularly made an "unreasonable day's wage." Piece rates never needed downward adjustment because the most competent workmen were making excessive wages, Pullman officials explained, for such workers limited their output on a piece "excessively priced" so as not to attract company attention. Despite company adherence to what it termed

economic law, Wickes testified that shop foremen could further cut piecework rates arbitrarily. He claimed an average wage reduction of 19 per cent between April 1893 and April 1894, but the Strike Commission found wages reduced an average of 25 per cent.⁵⁹ During the depression, the company abandoned its "principle" of paying a reasonable day's wage and decided upon piece rates based on the going rate in the shops of other industries.⁶⁰

Notwithstanding the workers' original complaint that they were squeezed between reduced wages and fixed rents, company officers never considered reducing rents. Pullman maintained that the two issues were separate, that none of the wage reductions he made as an employer could be considered in his fixing rents as a landlord. Ownership of employee housing had provided the company with a guaranteed market for its rental business and with a means to recoup monthly almost half the money paid to workers in salary. Since the two paycheck system guaranteed that the rent due was satisfied first, many workers were left during the depression with a second check of only a few cents. The lesson was that their employer considered rents more important than any other obligations. To the company, legitimate business practice required that employers hire labor as cheaply as the market allowed and that landlords keep rents profitable regardless of what wages tenants received. In business depressions, the Company maintained,

good business methods prescribed taking advantage of conditions to reduce wages irrespective of rent conditions. The company defended itself by claiming both the legal right and the power to operate with such procedures.⁶¹

Although fixed at a rate to return six percent on the original investment, after taxes and repairs, actual rental profits were never more than 4.5 per cent, and reached only 3.8 per cent in 1893. Rents could not be too high, as workers charged, with rental income low. Pullman testified that rental income was so low in fact "that there was no room for reducing the rent and bringing any income from it."⁶² Although workers owed \$70,000 in back rent by the time of the strike, Pullman had not attempted to collect it, intending to recoup back rents by the two paycheck method when good times returned.

Pullman's insistence on business control of property governed his refusal to treat with the Union or arbitrate strikers' grievances. The ARU committee requested arbitration on June 15 but Pullman refused to consider it representative of the strikers. Wickes informed a workers' committee the next day "that we did not consider that there was any proper subject for arbitration."⁶³ Pullman stated that it would be "business folly" to operate the shops at a loss just because it happened to be the opinion of a third party that he do so.⁶⁴

The amount of loss did not determine his view toward

arbitration, Pullman declared, but rather the "principle involved," the principle that such matters should be decided by the company, not submitted to a third party. Matters of opinion, he conceded, were proper subjects for arbitration, but not "whether a fact that I know to be true is true or not." Such truths "could not be made otherwise by the opinion of any third party."⁶⁵ In a press statement he warned the public of the dangers of arbitration:

The public should not permit the real question which has been before it to be obscured. That question was as to the possibility of the creation and duration of a dictatorship which could make all the industries...and the daily comfort of millions dependent upon them, hostages for the granting of any fantastic whim of such a dictator. Any submission to him would have been a long step in that direction.⁶⁶

On 22 June, an ARU committee met with Wickes and asked him to notify the Pullman company that, unless it agreed to arbitration, a boycott against Pullman cars would begin in four days. Wickes replied that the company would acknowledge no communication from the ARU on the subject. When the ARU publicly announced the boycott, Pullman denounced its action in the Chicago Herald on June 26.

George Pullman's thinking on the question of arbitration coincided with that of the railroad owners. Asked by a Strike Commissioner if he had attended any of the meetings of railroad officers or the GMA, he admitted that he had not, but that he had held a "casual conversation in the [Chicago] club with some railroad men" whose opinion on

arbitration "agreed with my own." Like Pullman, the presidents of the Lake Shore and the Eastern Illinois considered the question of arbitration "an absurd proposition."⁶⁷ After the boycott began, Pullman insisted that questions of arbitration "are now entirely under the control of the railway companies, and could not be influenced...by the Pullman company in any way." The GMA, for its part, announced that its members would "act unitedly" to resist the boycott.⁶⁸

On July 3, Chicago Mayor John P. Hopkins advised the Pullman Company's manager of the need for "settling the trouble." The latter refused to negotiate, replying that he could not deal with the strikers because they were lawbreakers, not law abiding citizens.⁶⁹ On July 6, a committee composed of ARU officials and Chicago city aldermen requested of Mr. John Egan, acting GMA manager, that the GMA meet with them. He refused. Two days later, that same committee called at the Pullman Company office to arrange for the appointment of a board to "arbitrate the question as to whether there was anything to arbitrate or not." The committee's purpose was "not to arbitrate the differences between the Pullman company and its employees, but to see whether there were any differences." The company again rebuffed the committee, reiterating its earlier public refusal to arbitrate.⁷⁰ In response to this last overture, Wickes threatened to move the Pullman factory to New Jersey.

On July 13, Chicago Mayor John P. Hopkins personally delivered a communication from Eugene Debs and other ARU officials to Everett St. John, President of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and Chairman of the GMA, who informed Mayor Hopkins that the Association did not wish to receive communication from the union, but that out of respect for the Mayor, he would deliver the message personally to members of that body. The next morning Hopkins received a note from John Egan, of the GMA, stating that the managers had "expressed themselves in the most positive terms that they will receive no communication whatever from the parties whose names are attached." The note requested Hopkins to return the ARU's message.⁷¹ When asked if he found the ARU note offensive, Egan answered that any party that attacked railway companies, and found itself "whipped", as did the ARU, displayed "considerable cheek to dictate the terms of their surrender." Egan explained that the General Managers rebuffed the ARU offer because their employment of strikebreakers had beaten the union and settled the strike.⁷² Egan admitted that the GMA's objective of breaking the strike required that it refuse arbitration:

Commissioner Wright. Was there no time you cared to negotiate?

Ans. No, I don't think so.

Commissioner Wright. Was it or not the policy of the managers' association at all times during the pendency of this difficulty to crush the strike as a matter of policy?

Ans. They considered it necessary to crush the strike; yes, sir.

During the strike, employers determined the status of striking workers, and after the strike, they refused or accepted workers' reemployment. The Pullman Company did not recognize the right of strikers to remain employees while on strike. Wickes regarded the men on the workers' committees who visited him after May 11 as "former employees." When the shops reopened, the Company signed up former workmen only when they handed over their ARU cards.⁷³ Most of the railroads pursued an equally firm policy. The General Managers Association announced publicly on June 30 that it considered strikers "as employes [sic] who have resigned their positions and who are not anxious for work."⁷⁴ Illinois Central Superintendant Albert Sullivan reported that he endeavored by "every effort" to induce workers to "see the errors of their ways" and return to work "before the opportunity for obtaining reemployment was lost to them."⁷⁵ He gave an ultimatum to the 3,599 Illinois Central workers to return to work or lose their jobs, and he set a deadline. Although railroads maintained that strikers could be reemployed without giving up the ARU, most striking workers quit the Union before being rehired. An Illinois Central worker stated that the blacklist against ARU leaders was so effective that they did not attempt reinstatement.⁷⁶

Debs and other ARU officials perceived that crushing

the ARU was the object of the federal government as well.⁷⁷ Debs charged that Attorney General Olney planned to use Sherman Antitrust legislation to break up every labor union in the country.⁷⁸ The strike raised the question of the creation of a private army of deputized U.S. marshals under employer control whose members acted at once as police and as railroad employees, exercising federal authority for private ends. Although Attorney General Olney ordered General Nelson Miles, commander of the U.S. troops, to Chicago to protect the mail and keep order, both the Regular Army and the deputy marshals cleared tracks and ran trains. Upon his arrival in Chicago, General Miles reported directly to the General Managers' headquarters and worked closely with the rail owners. The following day, newspapers quoted him as saying that he had broken the back of the strike.⁷⁹

The important issue of railroad employers' attitudes toward labor organizations and activities arose during the strike. In general, the owners did not believe in labor's right to organize to protect its interests. They acknowledged union presence only when it served their interests, tolerating the railroad brotherhoods but moving to crush an industry-wide union. Although Debs maintained that the ARU did not seek railroad owners' recognition and insisted that union recognition had no part in the controversy, the GMA questioned the ARU's very existence.⁸⁰ Both Pullman and the GMA refused to recognize or communicate

with the ARU. The Pullman Company, explained Wickes, "would not treat with our men as members of the American Railway Union, and we would not treat with them as members of any union. We treat with them as individuals and as men."⁸¹ John Egan publicly rebuked Mayor Hopkins for acting as the ARU's "messenger boy."

A Pullman employee testified before the Strike Commission that Company policy forbade unions to trespass on company property, and that workers had to go outside the company grounds to organize. Even though there was no open order against unions, the worker explained,

when a man goes to the company for a job they ask him, "Are you a member of the American Railway Union?" "Yes sir." "Have you got a card?" "Yes, sir." "Give us that card." The card is handed to them and then the applicant signs a paper that he will have nothing to do with the [ARU]...for five years if he wants a place in the Pullman shops.⁸²

After the boycott ended, the company rehired workers only on the condition that they surrender their ARU membership card. "We never discriminated against any labor union," Pullman said, "except the American Railway Union."⁸³ A Strike Commissioner questioned Vice President Wickes concerning the rights of organized labor:

Q. Don't you think that the fact that you represent a vast concentration of capital...entitles [the worker] if he pleases to unite with all of the men of his craft and select the ablest one...to represent the cause?

Ans. As a union?

Commissioner. As a union.

Ans. They have the right, yes sir. We have the right to say whether we will receive them or not.

Commissioner. Do you think you have any right to refuse to recognize that right in treating with the men?

Ans. Yes, sir; if we chose to.

Commissioner. If you chose to. Is it your policy to do that?

Ans. Yes, sir.

Asked if he thought the preponderance of capital's power over labor was subject to abuse, Wickes answered "it is a man's privilege to go to work somewhere else."⁸⁴

Explaining to the Strike Commission the GMA's refusal to accept the ARU's note carried by Mayor Hopkins, Everett St. John stated that "in our judgment, there was no room for an organization of that kind."⁸⁵ The Commissioner questioned St John further on the refusal:

Q. Was it based on a determination not to recognize any union of all railway employees?

Ans. It might have been upon a determination not to recognize this one of all others.

Q. Did [the GMA believe] that an association of all railway employees would not be recognized?

A. I think the general feeling was that the parties who had been instrumental...in destroying our property, decreasing our earnings, not permitting us to operate our trains, setting fire to

our buildings, were not worthy of very much consideration at that time, when it was plainly evident to all that their power was limited.⁸⁶

When asked pointedly by the Strike Commission, "Do you believe in the principle of organized labor in general?", John Egan of the GMA gave a curiously vague answer: "There is no doubt but what organized labor at times has done good to some classes of labor, but in many cases they have paid dearly for it." A labor union, however, does not help workers "to any great extent," except providing well paid jobs for grievance committee members.⁸⁷ While denying the legitimacy of labor combinations, Everett St. John held that it was "perfectly natural" and "perfectly right" for railroads to organize, "where an assault is upon all, for all to protect themselves...."⁸⁸

To Pullman and the railroad managers, the "unjustifiable and unwarranted" boycott amounted to a labor conspiracy against the railroad companies.⁸⁹ In the owners' view, the ARU itself constituted a national combination against the railroads. "It is my belief," charged George Pullman in a statement released to the press July 14, "that the controversy excited, at Pullman was merely a move in the greater scheme...for a simultaneous and causeless attack upon the railways of the country."⁹⁰ Railroad managers such as Albert Sullivan of the Illinois Central pointed out the "utterly helpless condition...of the railroad to protect

itself" against the irresponsibility and arbitrariness of the conspiracy to stop traffic. A more vehement indictment of the ARU's conspiratorial actions came from Harry P. Robinson, editor of Railway Age , the major trade publication in the rail industry. In August, 1984, he analyzed "modern labor doctrine" in the North American Review . The editor accused the laboring population of conspiring to cause a "general industrial rebellion," through which organized labor sought to control the entire U.S. government.⁹¹ The ARU, he charged, constituted the first attempt to organize enough of the great mass of unskilled, previously unorganized railroad labor into a national power. The ARU planned to join with parallel organized movements in other industries in "one grand army" whose object was to mount an armed insurrection of "the wage earning class against constituted society." To the editor, this rebellion naturally began with the ARU's strike at the most vital part of society, the nation's commercial arteries. He cited as further evidence of the conspiracy the AF of L's threat to call out all organized labor in support of the ARU.⁹² Robinson ended the article with the warning that labor disturbances in previous years were but "sporadic outbreaks," but the strike of 1984 represented

a deep-seated malady, a cancerous growth, which has been deliberately planted in the social system of the country, and has been fostered there till it struck roots, which will not be torn out without the rending of tissue and the spilling of blood. Its existence is a

menace to the nation.⁹³

Charges that the ARU threatened the very existence of U.S. society were echoed in the same North American Review issue by General Nelson Miles and by Wade Hampton, United States Commissioner of Railroads.⁹⁴ Both men defended Pullman's actions, characterized labor as anarchistic and revolutionary, condemned it for usurping power, and characterized the situation as a national crisis. Both Miles and Hampton enjoined patriotic citizens to hope for the establishment of the supremacy of law but to fear the consequences of a general conflict between capital and labor. When this war conflict began, Miles warned,

Men must take sides either for anarchy, secret conclaves, unwritten law, mob violence, and universal chaos under the red or white flag of socialism on the one hand; or on the side of established government, the supremacy of law, the maintenance of good order, universal peace, absolute security of life and property, the rights of personal liberty, all under the shadow and folds of Old Glory on the other.⁹⁵

During the strike, Pullman and the General Managers publicly expressed opinions on the general nature of members of the working class. Workers were easily influenced, emotional, irresponsible and generally immoral, especially when they repudiated what Albert Sullivan, General Manager of the Illinois Central termed the "moral obligation of the contract."⁹⁶ Owners distinguished the workers that Pullman called the "best men [who] don't give us any trouble with unions or anything else" from the "inferior men.., the least

competent, that give us the trouble as a general thing." Pullman nevertheless added that if the best men "allow themselves to be led by incompetent men, that is their misfortune."⁹⁷ Pullman believed that workers had rights as individuals, mainly the right to quit if dissatisfied. When they conspired in groups, workers forfeited their rights, lost their individuality to the control of leaders, and became lawbreakers.

S.C. Wade, a Rock Island Railroad attorney who became a captain of the U.S. marshals during the strike, blamed working class disorder on the influence of liquor. He testified to the Commission that he observed "persons who were pointed out to me as dangerous strikers" frequenting "low-class" saloons during the strike. He kept lists of persons entering these establishments, for he believed that saloons served as strikers' headquarters. Had city officials taken the precaution to close them, Wade argued, the city would have escaped destruction of property during the strike.⁹⁸

Pullman's official doctor for the previous ten years, John McLean, characterized Pullman City as a "regular Utopia for workers," but blamed "profligate habits" and "extensive intemperance" on high wages paid in 1893. He had known workers who earned as much as \$150 a month. Many of these engaged in "constant drinking," which the doctor held to be the indirect cause of "all labor troubles." High wages

discouraged personal discipline and made economizing difficult in hard times. McLean grumbled that workers paid saloon keepers before they paid doctor bills. Along with alcohol, the abrupt change from prosperity to depression, "prepared the minds" of the highly paid workers "for the destructive influences of the labor agitators."⁹⁹ Workers earning small wages, however, displayed more temperate and frugal habits.

Owners blamed the strike on what they termed labor agitators. Both Pullman and spokesmen for the General Managers charged the "leaders of disorder" with transforming a minor dispute into a major confrontation. Pullman claimed that his model town had produced workers of high calibre who were immune to union organizers.¹⁰⁰ He felt certain that in meeting with the original workers' committee and agreeing to consider their grievances, he had defused the wage-rent dispute at his shops. At that point, the intrusion of outside union officials interfered with his employees' ordinary perceptions and understandings. Had the union not interfered, Pullman believed, he would have succeeded in convincing his workers that "their interests lay in the direction of working with me," despite reduction of shop wages. Yet in the excitement of the ARU meeting the night of the committeemen's firing, workers lost their heads and allowed themselves to be influenced by "persons almost unknown to them." The ARU, in Pullman's view, took unfair

advantage of workers laid off by the depression, for "if our men had been left free from outside influences there would have been no trouble."¹⁰¹ John Egan of the GMA also blamed the strike on "labor agitators." The very nature of their jobs, he explained, requires them constantly to agitate for increased wages and to cause employers trouble.¹⁰²

Owners and their spokesmen characterized labor leaders as "dirty" and "vermin-ridden." In answering ARU Vice President George Howard's accusation that the General Managers hired men to burn rail cars, John Egan replied that "considering the source," the charge was "the vilest rot." Egan considered it on the level of other statements Debs and Howard made "to bolster the spirits of the poor fellows who [sic] they had so successfully duped."¹⁰³ Pullman and the General Managers agreed with Railroad Commissioner Hampton that "no condemnation can be too emphatic, no punishment too severe" for the unscrupulous labor leaders who duped the rank and file.¹⁰⁴

In searching for a long term solution to the problem of arbitrary strikes, Albert Sullivan of the Illinois Central called for restrictions to prevent the formation of other unions capable of causing similar damage. He had no objection to unions, finding it easy to deal with representatives of the Brotherhoods, but he thought there must be "checks on the wrongful use of [union] power."¹⁰⁵ Devastating strikes such as the present one could happen all

over again, he charged, if the easily aroused labor force continued to be led by

organization men who can bring about such an emotional wave that will carry with it the same degree of ardor and eliminate entirely all the elements of conservatism, all the obligations of agreement of contract, all the moral obligations that exist between an employee and employer, simply because the organizations themselves have no responsibility.¹⁰⁶

Sullivan's solution to union abuse of power required unions to assume legal responsibility for their acts to ensure that they were led only by men of "intelligence and conservatism."¹⁰⁷ In keeping with other employer ideology of its age, the GMA emphasized the need to force labor unions into a more easily controllable, corporate existence. In making their case for union incorporation, the general managers cited court interpretations of unions as illegal combinations in restraint of trade. Incorporation would compel unions to forego strikes and behave responsibly, to honor their contracts, and most importantly, to be sued in court. Pullman's solution to union disruptions was simply one of education: those who wish to be employed must realize the "rule of business," namely that "cost of a piece of work must not exceed its selling price."¹⁰⁸

Throughout the struggle, Pullman and the GMA used the press as a forum in an attempt to convince the public of the rightness of their actions and viewpoints. Pullman insisted that the Company can "do no more than explain its situation to the public."¹⁰⁹ The Managers issued public

statements which cited the importance of public understanding of the railroads' position.¹¹⁰ In the early period of the strike, the Chicago press and public reacted favorably to the plight of the Pullman strikers. But with the initiation of the boycott, rail stoppages, and especially after the intervention of the army, violence increased and press and public opinion swung to the side advocating law and order. In the opinion of many people, the ARU meddled in the Pullman Company's internal affairs and unfairly attacked the innocent railroads.¹¹¹ By July, a contemporary historian, W.F. Burns reported that "every newspaper in Chicago except the Times stood by the railroads." He further charged that "whole columns of...falsehoods were published and circulated broadcast through the land."¹¹² In July, for example, false reports of the strike being called off greatly interfered with its conduct. Personal attacks against Debs came from employers who attempted make an example of him.¹¹³ Burns observed that the "slanders" directed against Debs "simply baffled recounal because of their numbers." As an observer of Chicago opinion, Burns described press treatment of Debs:

He has been called crazy, drunken, revolutionary, criminal, incompetent. Newspapers have at once declared his conduct of the strike impotent and denounced him for having made it so effective. Labor has been entreated to throw him over as a puerile leader and capital has been warned that he is a dangerous man because of his surpassing ability.¹¹⁴

The subsidized press," Burns concluded, was "the most

dangerous enemy of labor and, next to the courts the most effective weapon in the hands of the railroad corporations in destroying the rights of labor and defeating the strikers."¹¹⁵

In his testimony before the Strike Commission, Debs recognized the ideological nature of the struggle and acknowledged public acceptance of the owners' point of view. In a press statement on July 6, he cited the "many misleading reports that have been given currency" in the press and charged that the ARU had been "deliberately and maliciously misrepresented."¹¹⁶ He cited the erroneous but widely accepted charge that labor leaders and union agitators had induced Pullman's workers to strike. "The charge is wholly untrue," Debs said. He further asserted that General Miles circulated the false story that ninety percent of Chicago's citizens sympathized with the Pullman Company and the railroads.¹¹⁶ "The railway managers took advantage of this report," Debs continued, "and spread and distorted it in order to discourage the strikers."¹¹⁸

As Pullman and the General Managers defended protection of railroad property and justified their actions during the strike, they played upon public indignation and fear. In his press statement of June 26, Pullman deplored "annoyance to the public by the threats of irresponsible organizations" bent on causing discomfort to rail

travelers.¹¹⁹ Rail owners pointed out that whatever stoppages inconvenienced the railroads also inconvenienced the public and whatever violence threatened the railroads' control or destroyed property, rail owners argued, in turn endangered the public interest. Owners pictured themselves as helpless in the face of union power and the strike situation as totally out of their hands. The GMA charged that the object of the boycott was to "embarrass the railroads" in the public eye by inconveniencing the traveling public.¹²⁰ The Association indignantly denied charges that it fomented violence to justify the owners' private use of force.

As a model town for the future, Pullman city's "model" aspects and control policies did not long survive Pullman, who died in 1897. Technological changes in industry after 1900 coupled with demographic changes in the Chicago boom area caused the town to lose its former community identity. Housing deteriorated and many homes and buildings stood vacant or were occupied by Pullman's new unskilled workforce from southern and eastern Europe. By 1915, the town contained fifteen saloons; by 1918, one third of the Arcade was unrented. The Pullman Company, although continuing to resist unions in its plant, experienced increasing unionization and a succession of strikes after 1902, culminating in a major union busting lockout in 1904. Thereafter it rehired only those who would "act toward the

company as individuals."¹²¹ Although Pullman town was famous as an experiment in corporate social engineering, few U.S. industries followed Pullman's example of creating company planned and owned residential areas.

As a demonstration of employer power, an exercise in employer strikebreaking tactics, and a message to railroad workers who would organize and pit a national industrial union against the combined power of railroad capital, the strike and boycott constituted a victory. The GMA attained its goal of outlasting the strikers, crushing the ARU and discrediting both the leadership and methods of strikers. ARU membership declined drastically, and the union disappeared after 1900. No national industry-wide rail workers' union took its place. Nor did labor organize on a large, industry-wide scale until the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1935. Debs himself abandoned labor organization in favor of direct political action as a method of dealing with the capitalist system. The demise of the ARU forced railroad workers into the AF of L's craft union structure and more conservative leadership which favored arbitration. Samuel Gompers all along objected to the militancy of the ARU and refused to call a sympathetic strike in its support.

In 1894, the bituminous coal strike and the Pullman boycott constituted broadly based, national sympathetic strikes in which striking unions gained support from other

unions with no direct stake in the outcome of the strike. The loss of the Pullman boycott demonstrated that the strongest union could not prevail against a stronger combination of organized capital backed by federal judicial and military force. The defeat brought into question the efficacy of sympathetic strikes. Under the leadership of the AF of L, unions increasingly preferred to honor contracts with employers rather than express solidarity with fellow workers. After strong activity in the early 1890s, sympathetic strikes declined in number.¹²² From then on, they were more limited in scope, and rarely had union sanction.¹²³ Sympathetic strikes represented a consolidation of working class opinion and contributed to class consciousness. The defeat in practice of a national sympathetic strike meant also its defeat in principle, and a corresponding solidification of the owners' point of view. The demise of the sympathetic strike was a victory for capital.

The violence and disruption associated with the strike fueled several growing national movements. Newspapers reported that many readers believed the railroads' and Pullman's refusal to arbitrate exacerbated the crisis. The move toward state and national legislation requiring arbitration and mediation grew with platforms of both political parties endorsing arbitration in 1896. Federal legislation requiring railroad mediation passed in 1898. But

this did not guarantee to organized labor the right to recognition. Much of the business community expressed outrage when in 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt forced coal company owners to arbitrate with the union on strike.

The strike was an exercise in tactics pitting labor weapons of collective action in the strike, picket and boycott against employer power in their own plants, and in the media, the courts and government. The efficient use of employer strikebreaking tactics called into question labor's notions of its right to organize and strike, its demands for arbitration, its need to have free communication during the strike, its right to union recognition as a bargaining agent, and the right to be considered employees while on strike. In addition to the GMA's refusal to communicate with the ARU, the federal injunction effected an information blackout and communication crisis between leaders at strike headquarters and the ARU locals. Owners involved in the strike created a public opinion adverse to the striking workers, charging them publicly with a range of unpatriotic, immoral and heinous acts. The strike demonstrated to labor the quickness with which the federal government was willing to use military power against labor disturbances, and showed the utility of court injunctions as strikebreaking tools. These set precedents of intervention and use of injunction that Governor John P. Altgeld and others were to term "government by injunction."

A question of ideology becomes a question of consciousness. It is difficult, however, to assess the impact of the events of 1894 on rank and file union members. Various railroad employees testified to the Strike Commission. Some, like George Lovejoy, a Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific yardmaster, maintained that strikers learned the importance of organization when they found themselves confronted with the united press, clergy, judiciary and office holders of the nation.¹²⁴ Others, like Charles Naylor, fireman on the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne and Chicago, testified that when workers see government support thrown in with the corporations in any emergency, "they begin to lose confidence."¹²⁵ ARU leaders expressed their reactions clearly. Debs surmised, that "when all the organized orders of society are against a strike," there is nothing which can defend labor in times of trouble. Against labor's powerlessness,

the corporations are in perfect alliance; they have all of the things money can command, and that means a subsidized press, that they are able to control the newspapers, and means a false or vitiated public opinion. The clergy almost steadily united in thundering their denunciations, then the courts, then the State militia, then the Federal troops; everything and all things on the side of corporations.¹²⁶

The courts defeated the strike, Debs continued, by destroying the ARU leadership network. The "moneyed power is potential enough to control all this machinery," he charged. Asked by a Commissioner, "Do you believe there is no

solution of any of these troubles under the present industrial system," Debs answered, "No sir; that is my candid conviction."¹²⁷

ENDNOTES: CHAPTER IV

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CHAPTER V
LABOR IDEOLOGY
OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS

"We stand not for capital against labor,
but for order against chaos."

James W. Van Cleave,
President
National Association
of Manufacturers¹

National employers' organizations first appeared in 1886 as trade associations formed to promote common interests in labor matters to the end of guaranteeing production at the minimum cost per unit of labor. The organization of employers, their annual meetings, the publication of trade journals, the discussion of labor matters together represented the first concerted attempts of employers to assess and codify their thinking on the relationship of capital and labor. Through the negotiation of trade agreements with unions, trade associations attempted to counter or reduce the power of organized labor. The first trade agreement was negotiated in 1891 and contract activity reached a peak in the years 1898-1902. Soon afterward, however, many of the early negotiatory and bargaining employers' associations developed a militant, anti-union stance as their experiences led them to blame the unions for subverting the trade agreements. As attitudes hardened after 1900, many of the nation's largest trade

associations eliminated the closed shop or entirely abolished unions within their trades.²

I. Organization and Policy

The example of the National Association of Manufacturers, the NAM, is central to the study of employers' labor ideology because it best represents the large scale, non-trade organizations that joined the general assault on unions after 1900 and developed into combative associations with the express purpose of fighting unions on the level of legislation, litigation, propaganda and public opinion. In pursuing its major activities, the NAM functioned as the nation's most important and prominent mouthpiece for organized capital, generating a pro-capitalist ideology and various national platforms for its propagation, and in doing so, furnishing a significant body of ideas to the dominant ideological universe in U.S. society in this period.³

Begun in 1895, the NAM comprised manufacturers largely from the industrial states of the northeast and north central regions. Its wide influence in business circles coupled with an ideology resting on extremely bitter opposition to unionism and avowed dedication to "impress the working masses and entire body politic with the merits embodied in its principles" combined to render the NAM a formidable propaganda force. Association influence, strength

and financial power rested upon the nation's industrial structure. Its membership represented the influence and power of manufacturing concerns representing over 22 billion dollars of invested capital, one million stockholders, six million employees and 75 to 80 percent of the total manufacturing output of the U.S. In 1909, an Association official deemed the NAM "the most powerful body of businessmen ever organized in any land, or in any age."⁴

According to the 1896 Constitution, the Association's purpose was the "promotion of the industrial interests of the United States, the fostering of the domestic commerce of the United States, the betterment of the relations between employer and employee, the education of the public in the principles of individual liberty and the ownership of property, the support of legislation in furtherance of those principles and opposition to legislation in derogation thereof."⁵ From its birth until 1903, the Association expressed no definite labor policy, devoting the greater part of its energy to reforming the tariff and promoting international trade.

In 1903, however, the NAM abandoned its "former conservative policy respecting labor," and adopted a self proclaimed "belligerent" offensive toward "class legislation" and ideas promoted by organized labor.⁶ Alluding to the new and more hostile anti-unionism in industry, as the large manufacturers moved to terminate

trade agreements and destroy affiliated unions, Association leaders declared that "conciliation is a myth" and "arbitration a failure."⁷ In addition to following the leadership of the nation's largest trade associations, the NAM identified a second reason for the abrupt change in the focus of its activity: the rapid increase in membership of its "chief opponent," the American Federation of Labor, which between 1899 and 1904 had grown from less than 360,000 to over 1 1/2 million. The Federation accompanied such membership gains with increased activity supporting a legislative slate of labor benefits, promoting closed shop unionism, and by increased strikes, often to force union recognition. Alarmed by this activity, owners of large manufacturing firms flocked to the NAM, increasing its membership correspondingly in the five years after 1903 from 988 to almost 5,000.⁸

The new hostility toward labor reflected class fears on the part of manufacturers that capital was undefended against the increasing level of organization by those who would revolutionize the social order.⁹ Speeches of Association leaders at the 1903 and 1904 annual conventions outlined the problem: organized labor, and its solution: organized capital. "Labor," said a prominent manufacturer, "was already united, labor was moving as one man; labor in splendid phalanx like precision was moving like an army..." to achieve its purpose. By contrast, capital was

disorganized with no coherent force or definite, united policy to "interpose against the aggressions that might be made upon its interests." The speaker resolved that "the time had come when to be disorganized was to be demoralized, and to be demoralized was to be damned...."¹⁰

President David M. Parry's annual addresses in 1903 and 1904 rallied his fellow members to mount a concerted attack upon labor. These two convention speeches served as the points of departure for the subsequent anti-labor campaign of the NAM and were often cited in later years by Association officials as the first, most vehement, most necessary and appropriate calls for capital to organize and collectively resist labor power. President Parry set the stage for the concerted struggle. "Heretofore organized labor has had only the individual employer to combat," he maintained, "but its growing power now demands a counter-organization strong enough to resist its encroachments."¹¹ Too long has "lawless and socialistic unionism" preoccupied manufacturers and employers generally, so the Association must focus its first attention on this, the "paramount question."¹² "We have been intimidated by a handful of anarchists and so-called labor leaders, and it is now time...to settle this issue once and for all."¹³ In a castigating critique of organized labor, Parry referred to labor's introduction in Congress of bills supporting eight hour days on federal jobs and opposing injunctions, and to

the favorable reception of such bills by the press and the public, as "ominous manifestations of the deep seated power of an organization which in late years has had such an insidious growth that we find it dominating to a dangerous degree the whole social, political and governmental systems of the nation."¹⁴

With this call to arms, the NAM embarked on an ideological onslaught against labor, "an open and square fight to the finish with the unions". ¹⁵ Because "public opinion is the guiding force in this nation today," and because "organized labor owed its present power mainly to the support of public opinion," it was on this front, the arena of ideas, that organized business interests must struggle. Designating the NAM the "most efficient mouthpiece of capital," President Parry identified its chief work as "an educational one - the moulding of public opinion" to the point where labor's efforts "will be bound down in their infancy, so that they will not come to so dangerous a head."¹⁶ Through the press and the platform, the Association must "educate the mass of the people to right thinking and doing in all matters industrial and social, and it must "arouse the great middle class to a realization of what trade unionism really means."¹⁷ And organization was a recognized element in the struggle: "We know from experience in industry and politics," said an Association official, "that an organized eight or ten percent of a community can

sway a whole community."18

But more important than 'the people' was the consciousness of the individual worker. On this most crucial level, the Association sought to counter the teachings of labor leaders with what they deemed a simple and sane treatment of economic questions. Clearly, the new emphasis focused on organization, creation of an anti-labor ideology and its aggressive promotion in society at large and among labor groups.

Association leaders recognized that modern society offered new opportunities for the use of ideology as social control:

While the industrial era has brought new problems of social government, it has also fortunately supplied the means for their solution. There has been a remarkable development on educational lines and the dissemination of knowledge is one of the wonders of the age. The minds of men are being constantly broadened, and in this fact lies the hope for the correct solution of industrial questions and the application of proper remedies to evils that threaten progress.

In 1904, the Association revised its constitution, codifying its new objectives with respect to labor in a Declaration of Principles:

The maintenance of individualism. The social and material welfare of all classes of people is dependent upon the full exercise of individual freedom consistent with the equal rights of all and upon the perpetuation of the principle of personal ownership which furnished the necessary incentive to individual effort and best promotes the conservation of capital, the great assistant of labor.

The Association...is opposed to boycotts, blacklists, and all interference with the constitutional rights of employer and employee. It is opposed to restriction of individual output, to limitation of the number of apprentices, and to all means and policies that tend to reduce the efficiency of the individual and productive capacity of the nation.

Employees have the right to contract for their services in a collective capacity, but any contract that contains a stipulation that employment should be denied to men not parties to the contract is an invasion of the constitutional rights of the American workman, is against public policy, and is in violation of the conspiracy laws. This Association declares its unalterable antagonism to the closed shop and insists that the doors of no industry be closed against American workmen because of their membership or non-membership in any labor organization.¹⁹

II. Tactics and Methods

From its immense power base in industry, the Association promoted its principles through various institutions: public schools and universities, churches, the press, and state and national government agencies. It maintained an extensive network of communication with these institutions with a wide circulation of its official organ, American Industries, among manufacturers, statesmen and educators, by means of government lobbies, and through the dissemination of official reports, literature and public speakers. In addition, the Association utilized direct channels of communication to industrial and commercial interests through trade and non-trade employers' associations, bankers' associations, chambers of commerce,

citizens industrial associations, farmers organizations, the National Conservation Congress and the American Academy of Political and Social Science. The same year, President Kirby delivered speeches in ten major cities where local newspapers printed his address in full. Kirby claimed that together he and other Association leaders had in one year's time addressed 250,000 persons, reached another 750,000 through Association publications and ultimately contacted fifteen million if one counted press notices and newspaper articles. "Never before in the history of the Association," said Kirby summing up the 1910 propaganda effort, "has [its] work been more fully presented or its influence more widely extended." The use of such methods, he claimed, "spread the gospel of industrial truth in a way that leaves no room for complaint."²¹

Focusing on the schools, the Association furnished copies of its Principles, year books, American Industries, and material from its Educational Literature series to public and leading college libraries throughout the nation. In addition, it provided speakers to educational institutions which, in its view, treated the principles of individual liberty, private property, and methods of industrial peace in a manner in keeping with the philosophy of the manufacturers. Recognizing the current importance and popularity of debate in the educational process, the Association generated and then capitalized upon the "great

public interest" in the open shop debate, providing materials to college and university teams defending the open shop position.²² In 1904, President Parry reported that he had yet to learn of the loss of a single debate for the Association position. Through the remainder of the decade, the Association continued to receive numerous requests for material from debating teams, always making "prompt and liberal" deliveries of printed information. In one month, the Association sent 42 sets of debating materials to educational institutions in Nebraska alone.

In the period 1900-1910, the founding and promotion of industrial trade schools illuminated a labor-capital dispute centering around two questions: Who was to control the supply of labor and to what end? And, who was to control the ideology imposed upon workmen new to the workplace? The AF of L addressed the trade school issue on precisely the same grounds. Its member unions, where they had the power to do so, enforced an apprentice system which governed both the number and on-the-job training of apprentices. To lose such control to employer dominated institutions meant that unions would face a deluge of skilled labor in numbers sufficient to glut the market, lower wages, and ultimately to destroy unions. To the Federation, the trade school issue addressed the heart of the question of labor supply and wage levels, representing a struggle between those who would cheapen labor by increasing its numbers, and those who would

create what the NAM termed an "artificial scarcity." More importantly, the Federation recognized the crucial necessity of controlling ideology at the very point when young apprentice workmen entered the workplace itself. The AF of L knew that trade school education would effectively eliminate labor control of job-acquired ideology and force upon apprentices a pro-employer sentiment making them willingly serve as strike breakers. To such "scab hatcheries" said U.S. Labor Commissioner Carroll Wright "labor unions declare themselves totally and unalterably opposed."²³

To the NAM, employer operated trade schools provided a favorable solution to both the ideological and supply problems of worker control, and thus constituted vital element in its general assault on worker consciousness. In 1905 the NAM began a propaganda assault challenging organized labor's limitation of apprentices and its governance of their ideological training. It exhorted its members to found employer controlled trade schools for the "economic necessity" of guaranteeing cheap labor, and the ideological necessity of righting a "great wrong committed by labor against its own class", that of biasing it against its "true benefactors" and denying the individual freedom to work.²⁴

The NAM insisted that the interests of manufacturers required a "new education" for workers, one which would not only guarantee secure, skilled, intelligent, willing labor,

but labor that was "properly protected from the domination and withering blight of organized labor, and thus loyal to the interests which [employers] represent." Thus, trade schools were made necessary by "the un-American and arbitrary methods of labor unions."²⁵ The apprentice is the creature of the union," said Association President Van Cleave, "and not of the employer. He must observe union rules and walk out when the union strikes. As a consequence, the apprentice is not as loyal and serviceable to his employer as he would of necessity be had he no relation to the union."²⁶

Clearly, the Association recognized a vital element in the ideological struggle, the interrelationship between workers' loyalty and "serviceability" and "right education." It also understood that the removal of apprenticeships from union control would eliminate the main source of pro-labor input from the most crucial site of ideological input: the workplace. Through the formation of employer or state operated industrial trade schools, capital sought to prevent organized labor from obstructing the free employment of apprentices, increase the number of apprentices and thus the supply of skilled labor, insulate them from union ideology, and control and standardize the technical content of worker education.

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The Association couched the whole question of union restriction of labor supply through controlled apprenticeships within the larger question of the free operation of the "natural law" of supply and demand and the moral law of freedom of the individual. Against labor's "great moral wrong" of "artificially" limiting the number of apprentices, the NAM pictured its efforts to open trade schools to all comers as guaranteeing to the individual freedom to work, to learn a trade, to develop himself, a "God given birthright, further vouchsafed to him by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution...."²⁷ This divine and legal right to learn a trade, said one Association official,

should be as free as air and sunlight, and all artificial and arbitrary hindrances or barriers from whatever source must sooner or later be removed. This is the law and the gospel

as embodied and enunciated in the immutable and everlasting principle of the "Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man," - Samuel Gompers and his cohorts, and a few stray closed shop ministers of the Gospel, with closed shop union cards in their pockets, notwithstanding....28

Thus the power of the cult of economic individualism backed by the law of the land and the moral law of god was employed to legitimate capital's demand for the right to learn a trade free from 'unnatural' limitation, and to condemn those who would interfere. Anyone robbing a worker of this right by restricting freedom of the individual "is a thief of the deepest dyes, no less heinous than he who seeks to deprive him of light, air, water, aye even life itself."29 The Association's insistence upon freedom of choice for workers and its desire to implement the missionary and educational potential of trade schools were based upon its own self interested economic reasons; the trade school was "essentially a business proposition of the first water."30 But its justification for this method of assuring plentiful labor rested upon the ideological plane of moral, legal and natural laws and rights.

The Association's answer to the question of the control of labor supply was also bound up with its interest in controlling worker ideology. As it saw the relationship between job training and supply, so it recognized the inseparability of job training and ideology. The Association was convinced that "there will never be any

permanent improvement in labor conditions" until those who would compose the future labor force "are trained in their youth...to receive correct ideas on their relations to capital and of capital to them."³¹ The Association recognized the inseparability of ideology and job training. Employer operated schools, capitalizing on the economic power of shop based training and education, implanted a "shop spirit" in workers that formed the basis of their behavior, creating an "industrial mental discipline" along with "practical knowledge and general culture" to guarantee a docile and servile workforce. Training in employer controlled schools was designed to "nip diseased ideas in the bud," and instill in labor the "spirit of the undertaking that renders possible its practical use and employment, coupled with respect for and obedience to the laws of our country, recognizing fully the rights of all men...."³² Thus educated with anti-labor and pro-capital teachings, labor began to understand who best served its interests and where its true loyalties lay.

After 1905, Association meetings devoted large blocks of time to affirming the ideological control provided by industrial schools, hearing reports from sponsoring manufacturers and administrators of existing schools. Reports cited favorable gains made in "imprinting and impressing...upon the plastic minds and lives of these youth...that loyalty and honesty and integrity are greater

even than a union label...."33 The schools instilled common sense, docility, and a willingness to work hard, along with "correct" ideas on the relative obligations between capital and labor. Employers of the NAM placed great store in the power of trade school implanted ideology as social control. Had such trade schools been founded throughout the country fifty years ago, remarked one administrator, "teaching men to work in harmony with employers and recognize that his interest is theirs, then the strikes and labor troubles which have so greatly vexed us since the War would have been largely averted...."34

In the period 1905-1910, employer sponsored trade schools began to produce labor that did in fact consider the interests of labor and capital identical, avoid the open shop and union organizers and serve as scab labor. To manufacturers, the term 'industrial education' came to signify easily controlled, non-union labor. By 1908, the Association president could claim that "new and immensely larger conquests for the 'open shop' are coming through the growth of industrial education." And to further guarantee plentiful and obedient labor, he advocated beginning such education not at age fourteen, as in most trade schools, but at seven, an even more opportune time to "impress upon the boy the things we want him to know."35

The Association confined its efforts to generating interest in trade education, urging its members to give them

generous financial assistance, but left the actual establishment of schools to manufacturers and the public. Given labor's "well known" objections, employers acknowledged that "it is too early at this stage of the game to expect that the mass of the people will accept without a murmur public trade schools supported by public taxation." "Nevertheless," said the Special Supervisor of Industrial Education in Boston, the selling of the idea is paramount, but once sold, it will encounter no further opposition; we want, and are going to have (trade) schools...."36 The NAM initiated a publicity campaign conducted by each of the member manufacturers in his own plant to convince workers that such schools served the interests of labor. The campaign sought first to "clear the horizon of discussion from the clouds of smoke which arise from the firing line of the pedagogue and the labor leader," and then "practically answer the statement...that trade schools are a benefit to the workingman." The workers "need but a few object lessons to find out that [trade] education simply relieves them of hardships and that it is in line with social and industrial advancement."37 And through trade schools, employers of the NAM rose to the challenge of providing those lessons.

In 1905, the Association formed a Committee on Industrial Education to stress the importance of industrial education to the American people. Serving as a clearing house for information, this committee linked other similar

employer movements throughout the country, encouraging public and private institutions to found trade schools. In 1906, the Committee circulated propaganda material advocating the establishment of trade schools to the superintendent of public education in every city in the U.S. over 30,000. The following year, it sponsored a national bill providing for taxpayer financing of national and state trade schools. By 1907, it reported that, instead of waiting for public schools, many manufacturers such as the National Metal Trades Association and the National Tile Association were "taking matters into their own hands and training their own labor," by establishing schools in their factories.³⁸ And national trade associations began to support existing private and public trade schools through generous gifts of equipment and money: the National Stove Founders' Association and the National Metal Trades Association financed the construction of a fully equipped foundry at a trade school in Indianapolis; in Cincinnati, the populace appropriated, against local opposition, \$1,000,000 for the establishment of a technical school; and in Pittsburgh, the Carnegie Technical School neared completion at a cost of \$12,000,000. By 1909, the Committee reported four consistent years of "great progress" in the proliferation of trade schools.³⁹

Education? Yes, but education that had its impetus in the same desires for social control that informed the

Victorian middle class, especially its business elements beset by labor unrest. Thus, education was siezed upon to serve as a tool of indoctrination away from ideas that the employers of the NAM considered subversive of the best elements in society, toward ideas that would enhance an allegiance to that society and its precepts. They were sincere in their belief that trade schools would "in the end...be one of the greatest blessings socially, economically and industrially, that could ever come to the American people...."40

One hardly need recount the immense political power of the business-dominated Republican party or its role in shaping government economic policy in this period. Within that structure, the NAM functioned as an element, albeit a powerful one, in the exercise of business power. In promoting the interests of employers, the NAM considered the direct influence of legislation one of its chief functions, a more practical method of achieving its goals than the "often slow and less direct" process of influencing public opinion.⁴¹ Although Association officials acknowledged that, ideally law should reflect public will, they approached the question of controlling legislation knowing that the reverse was more often true. "Just as public opinion creates law," U.S. District Judge William H. Speer of New Jersey informed Association members, "so you will find law creates public opinion."⁴²

The Association's extensive political activity included issuing endorsements and condemnations of individual legislators and legislation, conducting aggressive warfare against state and federal pro-labor bills in its official publications, and influencing party platforms. Most important, it maintained a lobby in Washington, D.C., to ensure the passage of laws favorable to its interests.

To maintain direct communication between the business community and events in the nation's capital, the Association published a bimonthly newsletter, the Washington Service Bulletin . This served to keep employers advised on pending legislation, cases in the federal courts, and activities of various administrative commissions and bureaus. It encouraged members to meet personally with public officials, and conducted telegram campaigns as crucial votes approached. In this manner, the Association mobilized the "collective judgement" of a large and influential block of businessmen on industrial questions, to guarantee the expression of their will in legislative policy.

The NAM first began active campaigns against labor bills in 1902, successfully opposing the national eight hour bill for workers employed in government work and various anti-injunction bills, all sponsored by the AF of L. The Association attacked the "vicious class legislation"

promoted by organized labor in Congress on the grounds that it would "make lawful for one class of citizens to do that which remains unlawful for every other class to do." The Association denounced the eight hour bill as "an act to repeal the bill of rights guaranteeing the freedom of the individual," and the anti-injunction bill as an attempt "to legalize strikes and boycotts."⁴³ Because it challenged business power in one of its most sacred bastions, the courts, the anti-injunction battle clearly touched a nerve for the NAM. To remove the power of injunction from the courts, said President Kirby, is to remove the only protection employers have against the "lawless" methods of labor unions. Emphasizing the importance of this "first contest," the Association brought to bear the great range of its power in "aggressively" opposing these bills, "not only because [they would be] extremely injurious to the industrial welfare, but also because a test of strength between individualism and socialism is being made on the proposed legislation."⁴⁴ The Association directed a resolution to Congress opposing the eight hour bill as an unwarranted interference with business of manufacturers holding government contracts and generated a flood of telegrams from members, efforts which resulted in the defeat of the bill in Congress in 1902. Until its passage in 1912, the eight hour bill met similar active NAM opposition in every session of Congress.

In 1907 the NAM created, underwrote and governed a subsidiary organization, the National Council for Industrial Defense which allied it with other commercial and industrial employers' associations to create permanent unification of employers' associations, provide a heavily funded, Washington-based lobby for capital interests in "matters pertaining to class legislation."⁴⁵ Representing, in 1907, 130 national, state and local organizations, the Council sponsored a staff of attorneys fully equipped for the systematic work of scrutinizing legislation. During its first year of work, the NCID legal staff, aided by NAM attorneys, analyzed 29,000 separate House and Senate bills identifying "dangerous measures that affect the labor relation." It used these analyses to enable Congressmen to understand labor's attempt through legislation "to obtain special class privileges or to impair or destroy personal property rights." The Council's chief attorney, James W. Emery, reported to the Association that during the 1907-1908 legislative session, all such bills were "appropriately and effectively" resisted.⁴⁶

The NCID's success in swaying national legislators stemmed partly from the forceful, smooth and knowledgeable impression made by members of its lobbying team. Congressmen themselves described Emery as "quick, alert, resourceful, keen as a Damascus blade,...endowed with a refinement and a tact that make him a charming companion,

and with a fluency of speech that suggests lineal descent from the great Demosthenes himself." Congressmen characterized another NCID attorney, Daniel Davenport, as "cool, judicial, calm of speech, a master of logical statement." Legislators recognized Mr. Emery's "authoritative knoweldge" on the subject of industrial law, admitting that were it not for his "properly organized effort," dangerous class legislation would appear on the statute books of the nation.⁴⁷

The passage of anti-injunction legislation reappeared as the chief demand of labor in Congress in the years 1906-1908. Charging that injunctions were "improvidently issued and oppressively enforced," the AF of L and labor sympathetic legislators in 1906 sponsored a new series of anti-injunction bills which the Association dubbed the "extreme demands of the American Federation of Labor."⁴⁸ Over the next two years, the NAM generated pressure from businessmen to defeat these bills. Congress and President Theodore Roosevelt were deluged with telegrams and letters from the leading citizens of every city and state in the Union. In one 48 hour period beginning with a call for action on May 8, 1908, the organizational network sent over 10,000 letters and telegrams against a pending anti-injunction bill. That same year, numerous Associaion members went to Washington to personally join the fight against AF of L leaders. Congressional committeemen

"received information gladly" from NAM delegates, characterizing them as "patriotic, dignified men who have left their business to come and act as ex-officio members of their committee." The NAM's lobby of "scholarly and eloquent attorneys and witnesses" insisted to House Judiciary Committee members that "neither the law nor patriotic public policy would admit or tolerate" the passage of such bills. Senior members of Congress remarked that a "more powerful expression of business opinion upon a legislative subject" had not been experienced."⁴⁹

Citing the Association's "amazing record" in defeating labor legislation, President Parry described an evolution in tactics. At first, he said, the Association followed anti-injunction and eight hour bills through the Senate calendar, and then defeated them in committees. But, gradually after 1907, the number of bills presented in committee declined "because of the (A F of L's) supposition, which was quite correct, that it would be useless to send them there." The same process worked initially to defeat bills in House committees and finally prevent them from appearing at all. "It has almost required a separate session of Congress...to beat these measures back step by step," declared Parry.⁵⁰ Eventually, Association officials in Washington announced that unions were "effectually checkmated in their efforts to secure socialistic and semi-socialistic laws." By 1909, President Van Cleave could

report to the assembled Association on the defeat between 1906 and 1909 of all pro labor legislation including the Hepburn Bill, the death of anti-injunction "agitation," the Supreme Court's declaration of an employers' liability law unconstitutional and the AF of L's boycott against the Danbury hatters a conspiracy in the restraint of trade.⁵¹ To Association members, this marked the failure of organized labor in national politics, demonstrating "what power is in the hands of the conservative business elements of this country." "We defeated them in Washington," announced President Van Cleave in 1909.⁵²

In the election year of 1908, the ideological struggle between capital and labor extended to the issue of the content of national party platforms. In 1904, neither party platform had included AF of L planks. In 1908, the AF of L sent delegates to Chicago to, in the opinion of the NAM, "frighten the Republican National Committee into sanctioning their anti-Democratic, anti-Republican and anti-American propaganda."⁵³ To meet this challenge, President Van Cleave and other officials journeyed to Chicago and with great effort, convinced the national platform committee to abandon the AF of L resolutions. "We defeated them overwhelmingly," gloated Van Cleave; the "briars and thistles of Gomerism were cut down," postponing their presence as a national political issue for at least four years. Instead of enacting pro labor items, the

Republican convention, partly in response to the current legislative battle over anti-injunction bills in Congress, passed a resolution affirming the authority of the courts, "ever to insist that their powers shall be preserved inviolate."⁵⁴

As early as 1906, the Association claimed a reward for its efforts to mould public opinion over the previous four years. "Only a few years ago, said President Parry, "trade unionism unrestrained and militant was rapidly forcing the industries of this country to a closed shop basis." Public favor and press sympathy had made it "almost a crime" to criticize the unions. Strikes, assaults on scabs, violence and even murder were generally condoned. Lawmakers feared political death unless they supported "semi-socialistic" legislation. Labor denounced judges who sought to uphold the law. But the NAM "rendered a service to the nation of the first magnitude" through its efforts to reverse labor power in these areas. In the years since 1900, labor, although winning certain "reforms," had clearly lost footing in both the ideological and material struggle as it faced an increasingly organized business community. Labor's "propaganda of evil" had been neutralized by a "propaganda of good." President Parry claimed that four years of effort had widely extended the open shop, and supported legislators in "resisting organized coercion" to compel them to enact labor legislation. Strikes were no longer popular, the press

no longer biased toward unions, and police do their duty in tracking down criminals. "What has brought about these changes," asked the President? Organization. "The results achieved through organization during the past years are proofs of the power of organization."⁵⁵

By 1910, its efforts of the previous seven years convinced much of the public and many of its elected officials to offer major opposition to labor's efforts. "The Courts, the newspapers and enlightened public sentiment all over the country," said Van Cleave, dealt "hard blows" to the AF of L. Its autocracy has been curbed. The arrogance and ignorance of its leaders are not displayed so freely or so openly as they were before the law reached out for (them). Today the life of the AF of L is hanging by a thread."⁵⁶

Certainly, the Association's claims were too broad and difficult to measure, and its control over labor ideology less secure than it boasted, but these claims serve to indicate the goals of its organized struggle on the material and ideological level. And they indicate the victory it could at least partly claim, based on destruction of unions and of the open shop, defeat of labor legislation, increasing control over trade education, a growing national worker acquiescence to employer-led reforms, and a national mood, that, while accepting Progressive reforms designed in part to defuse class radicalism and preserve property

rights, also acquiesced in the use of state power to deny labor any control over social change in the period.

III. The Ideological Struggle

The ideological issues that the Association raised centered around asking and answering four basic questions: What is labor? Do labor organizations have the right to exist, and if so, under what conditions? Which best serves the interests of society, capital or labor? And, what are the respective social consequences of labor and businessmen's organizations?

NAM definitions of labor fell into two general categories: assertions about the nature of the class of working people, and definitions of labor organizations. The NAM saw the labor question as combat between the forces of reason, law, liberty and individualism, on one hand, and the forces of anarchy, tyranny and mob rule. Organized labor was at best pathetic, requiring mature leadership, unaware of its true interests or natural leaders. At worst, it represented violence, evil and the destruction of society. In his initial call to arms in 1903, President Parry outlined the Association's definition of unions:

Organized labor knows but one law and . . . that is the law of physical force - the law of the Huns and Vandals, the law of the savage. All its purposes are accomplished either by actual force or by the threat of force. It does not place its reliance upon reason and justice, but in strikes, boycotts, and coercion. It is...a mob power knowing no master except its own will.

Its history is stained with blood and ruin....
 It extends its tactics of coercion and
 intimidation over all classes, dictating to the
 press and to the politicians and strangling
 independence of thought....⁵⁷

The Association discredited labor by linking it to uncivilized and savage behavior; labor was a primitive mob gone wild, to be feared for its indiscriminate use of force. Labor was not reasonable, deliberate or given to mature debate; in short, not civilized. Lacking reason, labor employed the methods of unreason: threatening social peace, denying individualism challenging the rule of reason and law. To NAM leaders, this situation demanded that, in the interests of society, employers embodying the opposing forces actively meet labor's influence.

In the Association's view, labor did not ascribe to ordinary moral norms, rather, it demanded exemption from commonly accepted moral and civil standards. It was motivated instead by expediency and the perpetuation of its own interests which were contrary to those of the social whole. "I stand here and say - because it is true," explained one official, "that labor stands today without a soul, without an ideal, without an ambition, without an incentive, without a motive other than 'self' and the needs of the hour."⁵⁸ The essence of the definition of labor was the very antithesis of social desirability.

In the period 1900-1910, NAM ideology expressed growing class fears apropos the manner that modern capital

viewed labor: paranoia and the fear of appropriation. In the NAM view, labor expressed an attitude toward property that belied a simultaneous coveting and resentment of wealth. This caused labor to mistake the source of its misery in other's ownership of wealth and be blind to its true source, labor's not deserving wealth in the first place. Thus, labor's attack on property found its source in the baser human impulses: hate, envy and jealousy. Workers "oftentimes strike out blindly against capital as though it were a public enemy, attempting to destroy that which they themselves are greedy to possess, because it happens to be in the hands of others." Labor leaders generated a hatred of wealth and ability among those who possessed neither. Their "incendiary speeches attempt to stir up men to seize by physical force that which their merit cannot obtain for them." AF of L sponsored anti-injunction bills, said James Emery, were "an attempt to obliterate the property rights they cannot deny."⁵⁹

The Reverend Maurice Wilson incited class anxiety in the assembled Association as he described labor's anger:

[they] sting themselves into a rage against the educated classes since they could not be educated themselves; they cannot endure what seems like superiority on the part of others. So in every department of life men are seeking to destroy that which they cannot enjoy themselves rather than see it enjoyed by others.⁶⁰

So long as popular discontent was a "rational and

manly attempt" to bring reform, continued Reverend Wilson, "it is acceptable." But when popular discontent turns to "bitterness, envy and jealousy, it...becomes manifestly evil and a menace to social order. It retards growth and social betterment."⁶¹

NAM ideology consistently divorced moral and economic spheres, claiming the existence of essential differences in the requirements of economic law and moral law. Within this context, that business is business and moral considerations something else, the NAM sought to reduce the element of labor to its basic economic function and deny its human qualities, reserving these to itself. Labor, to the NAM, was a commodity to be bought in the cheapest market without further obligation, as one would acquire any other item necessary for production. As a material commodity, each of labor's individual parts functioned equally in the market; each had an equal chance to share its benefits. The only obligation to labor owners incurred was an economic one, discharged fully by the payment of a wage, determined by the "inevitable operation" of the law of supply and demand. NAM officials insisted that if labor could be forced to deal with capital on such a naked economic plane, without resort to its old tricks, then they could easily manipulate the labor issue to their own ends, reducing social or political questions to ones of "pure" economics. If labor was a commodity, the education of

labor had a commercial value, and, as noted earlier, it was on this level - the reduction of production costs - that the NAM approached the trade school question. But although labor was a commodity, the stimulus to work performance, until the advent of Scientific Management, was largely a matter of moral exhortation.

Unions were a special enemy for which the bitterest venom was reserved. Employers had regarded early unions such as the Knights of labor as criminal offenses, even before the Supreme Court specified their status as combinations in restraint of trade. In countering union influence, most employers were certain that they fulfilled a civil duty by protecting and upholding the law. Although the Association acknowledged and approved of "true" union principles and practices, these had been perverted by "anarchistic and socialistic tendencies" through which labor had engineered its own difficulties.⁶² Repeatedly claiming that it did not oppose organized labor per se, the Association nevertheless centered the debate over unions around conditions for their very existence, branding almost all union activity as extralegal and justifying its attack on these grounds. Union activity was largely "lawless and socialistic", and many union regulations "contrary to the law and rights of man." For these reasons, the employer should take his stand against them. The message was clear. Theoretically unions were legitimate; in reality, socially harmful and inviting

repression. "It is manifestly to the interests of the people at large," advised President Kirby at the 1903 convention, "that organized labor be denied recognition everywhere until its past blackened record is blotted out."⁶³ Thus employers of the NAM met union presence with dismissals, removal of leaders, blacklists and lockouts. Labor unions deserved the right to exist only when they did not threaten capital.

The Association detailed "just causes" for its denunciation of labor: unions were guilty of demanding the privilege of violating laws forbidding property destruction and violence; maintaining power through terrorism, intimidating other classes, and dictating to employers, the press and the politicians; destroying individual rights, especially due process; coercing unwilling labor into their ranks; demanding an arbitrary division of wealth; causing depressions by curtailing production; and forming the grandest trust of the times, the muscle trust.⁶⁴

To the NAM, one of the most insidious threats to social peace the AF of L posed was its existence as an alien entity, not loyal to the United States. "There has grown up in our midst," said Counsel Emery, "imperium in imperio, a state within a state, appealing and nourishing that peculiar thing...class consciousness." The AF of L "sets the decrees of its leaders above the laws of the land," representing an "absolutism which violates the orders of its courts, denounces its judges and repudiates the authority of the

nation." And even Holy Writ "tells us that a house divided against itself cannot stand." Citing the example of the Five Civilized Tribes as "a government within a government," Emery recounted their abolition as separate nations and forced merging "into the mass of the citizenship." The U.S. government, he said, should deal with the AF of L threat just as it dealt with the Indian, overpowering leaders and forcing them to adhere to "accepted" legal and social norms.⁶⁵

The Association took no more absolute position than that of its "unalterable antagonism" to the closed shop. After 1903, it joined trade associations in the attack on closed shop.⁶⁶ The NAM always claimed to promote peace between labor and capital, but a closer examination reveals it to be the peace of the open shop. Industrial peace was contingent on liberty, which in turn depended on the critical freedom of the individual to work: in short, the open shop. For this reason, the Association billed the open shop as the "fundamental, basic principle of American liberty," for it was synonymous with individual freedom. "As American independence was to our forefathers," declared a member, "so the open shop is to the employer to today."⁶⁷ And it interlocked notions of individual liberty and open shop with reward according to merit, ascribing to them the energy which generated progress, individual and national. Only the open shop provided the opportunity for free

individuals to demonstrate their superior merit. The free individual was compelled to think out his own problems and rely on his own ability and industry, and it was by these skills that he was rightly hired and justly paid by businessmen:

The efficient produce more than the inefficient and reap a higher reward. This is only common justice. A man is entitled to what he earns, no more, no less, and no manner how much a hewer of wood or drawer of water he may be, he must constantly feel the prod or incentive to make himself more proficient and intelligent.⁶⁸

Conversely, the closed shop was an invasion of the constitutional rights of the U.S. workman and thus the manhood of the individual, and would destroy the "most sacred national ideals" if not reversed.

To the Association, the irresponsibility and violence unions manifested could be curbed by forcing their incorporation. If unions incorporated, courts could compel them to respect their contracts. "They should be legally responsible," said Van Cleave, "so that the law can reach them," just as incorporated capital is punishable when it violates its agreements. Citing the arbitrariness of union leaders and their disregard of pledges, and noting the diligence and good intentions of employers in fulfilling theirs, Van Cleave insisted that the law step in and force the duties and responsibilities of both sides to be "reciprocal and equal."⁶⁹

Overtly and by implication, much of NAM ideology

branded labor as unintelligent and ignorant. The Association insulted the intelligence of labor and attacked its leaders. The ignorance of labor, Association leaders explained, meant that it was destined to follow, not lead, said C.W. Post in an address to his fellow members. "Physical labor cannot create; it can only execute," he continued; "mind is the only creator and it uses physical and material tools to carry out and express in material, its creations."⁷⁰ Chief Counsel James Emery, in an address to the American Academy of Political and Social Science which followed one by Samuel Gompers, ridiculed the labor leader to the assemblage. Gompers' discussion was an "illustration of the confusions" which arise from failure to clearly grasp the facts; Mr. Gompers defended "that which he but half-apprehended." He proved none of his contentions, but rather violated fundamental principles of justice in attacking court injunctions.⁷¹

Association pronouncements held that laborers constituted a "thoughtless mob full of ignorant men," and this, coupled with their savagery, would eventually spell the downfall of the Republic if uncontrolled by "mind." Labor's willingness to use violence indicated a more serious problem rooted in an ignorance of economic laws. Although sound economic principles had been established with the "clear and coherent propositions laid down by the fathers of the Republic," labor paid no attention. Rather, it deferred

to the "evil influence" of the AF of L's "specious theories and meaningless platitudes on the subject of economics," the "exploded theories of Carl Marx" and the ingenuous sophistries of Samuel Gompers."⁷² To the Association, this basic lack of understanding led to erroneous theories that labor's condition could be improved by "checking production and making life and property insecure," i.e., the use of strikes. Ignorant men generate ignorant theories, observed Mr. Post:

There is a misleading theory put forth by some socialistic labor theorists that 'labor creates all wealth and therefore all wealth belongs to labor.' This false theory sometimes produces...an inference that the workmen created the factory, and why not take it and run it. That idea is the underlying cause of some labor disturbances that never would occur if every workman had a clean cut knowledge of the facts and rights of the citizen.⁷³

To the NAM, the unsuccessful strikes of 1903 put labor's economic doctrines to an extreme test, and they were found wanting. The failure of the strikes offered organized labor a "valuable lesson in economics and law observance," declared President Parry.⁷⁴ As capital increasingly won in labor disputes after 1900, unions lost footing, open shops proliferated, and strikes were increasingly broken or negotiated. These events, Parry held, at once vindicated capital's economic theories and preached to labor the falsity of theirs.

To NAM officials, labor's lack of intelligence

created three additional problems: labor did not recognize its own true interests or see its situation clearly; it did not follow its natural leaders or recognize its true benefactors, and it fell prey to demagogues who, for their own evil ends, manipulated it against the owning class. Given the baneful influence of labor leaders, the issue of industrial leadership could be settled by labor's rightful, natural leaders, their bosses who held in their hands labor's very livelihood. If labor officials were not true leaders, but only "so-called labor leaders, a ravenous band of pretenders," then, apart from its ignorance, why did labor not recognize owners as its rightful leaders? NAM officials evinced a historical understanding of the problem:

Our greatest troubles have been brought upon us due to the fact that we have allowed ourselves to drift away from our men, and permitted the walking delegate and others antagonistic or indifferent to the interests of the employer to mold the opinions of those who work for us with their hands.⁷⁵

NAM officials recognized the paternalism and social harmony of an age gone by when ideological control by owners seemingly guaranteed an identity of interests between capital and labor. But the socioeconomic transformations after 1870 precipitated a crisis in labor leadership. Unable to lead itself efficiently, labor fell prey to demagogues. To the NAM, the problem was to regain paternal control, to wrest labor from the hands of its "unnatural" leaders and it was partly from this perspective that after

1910 it began to support employer sponsored "reforms" in the workplace.⁷⁶

By its refusal to accept the leadership of capital, labor suffered from the "corrupt and malicious rule of the least intelligent portion of labor," the "socialist agitators and demagogues," the "rampant labor men" who, armed with the knowledge of labor's lack of understanding, "appealed to prejudice and envy" and "filled [labor's] collective mind with evil thoughts and successfully encouraged them to defy the very source of their daily bread."⁷⁷ The Association reserved special attacks for Gompers and Eugene Debs, branding them as ignoramuses, bloodless criminals, featherbeds and mountebanks. Union leaders were agents who forced the intellectual tone of unionism down to the lowest level by fomenting class hatred and violence. Rational, thinking men, NAM leaders believed, do not fall prey to such sophistry, as do the thoughtless and ignorant.

Labor leadership was identified as the dangerous element behind strikes, an element that represented an anarchic force since it instigated labor violence and defied the state. "There are no such dangerous anarchists in our midst," warned President Kirby "as those labor leaders who instigate strikes and then aid and abet the thugs who perpetrate the murderous assaults on men who see fit to go to work when the strike is on."⁷⁸ President Van Cleave cited

the alien source of labor radicalism, criminals and outcasts from other nations, all the more dangerous because unrestrained by nationalist loyalty, the "spiritual kinsman of persons who, in Russia, Turkey or other semi-civilized communities, throw bombs into churches, public halls or crowded streets and murder innocent people."⁷⁹

The laboring population's portrait emerged as that of a mindless mob which followed any agitator who could inflame its class passions. Labor could not reason, could not evaluate leadership, but only followed. By themselves, laborers would not hatch dangerous schemes or violate property; it took the catalyst of leadership to spur them to action.

Underlying all its accusations, the NAM consistently pressed the idea that there was something inherently conspiratorial in labor. The Reverend Maurice Wilson admitted to the membership that unionism constituted a "conspiracy against both the individual and the state." It exercises a "despotism that is without mercy," he charged, and even worse, it is "violent and virulent in its methods, defiant of the laws of the land and contemptuous of its courts." Directed at the heart of the nation, the conspiracy was carried out by the use of the un-American boycott and picket, the "methods not of strikers but of highwaymen."⁸⁰

Officials branded all labor activity as conspiracy

and subversion: "organized labor is teaching principles...that are subversive of government. Strikes are criminal conspiracies, boycotts are crimes; limitation of apprentices is murder to the nation; the eight hour law is socialism; and anti-injunction is anarchy."⁸¹ The spectre of anarchy engendered a vehement response from the Reverend Wilson, addressing the 1909 convention on the forthcoming moral and economic battles between labor and capital in the twentieth century. Labor anarchy abounded in the land, he warned, constituting a "treason still to be put down." In the U.S., the "poisonous doctrines of the red flag [must] receive no quarter in the land of the Stars and Stripes."⁸²

Anarchy, treason, conspiracy, despotism, amorality, ignorance, corruption. In contrast to this picture of labor demagoguery, NAM rhetoric offered a definition of capital and its social function, portraying manufacturers and businessmen as broad minded and public spirited, a civilizing and even divinely inspired force, the very embodiment of the Victorian social ideal. The directors of capital represented a "body of men who are attempting upon sound principles and with right motives, and through kindness, courtesy and self sacrifice...to establish permanently peaceable and sound relations between master and man."⁸³ Annually, the assembled membership heard a ministerial exhortation affirming the rightness and social beneficence of their efforts; businessmen were "righteous

people" and, by contrast, labor loved unrighteousness and therefore was evil. God himself, the Reverend S. Edward Young told the Association, was the "Great Manufacturer"; lesser manufacturers carried out his work on earth. "We take thy material in our hands and make it more marketable," he assured the Association.⁸⁴ Frequent use of the phrase "the gospel of industrial truth" further suggested divine origin of the tenets of capital.

Second only to the divine was patriotic legitimacy for the power of capital, which, to Association members, preserved "Americanism": the liberty and property rights which were the "cornerstone of modern civilization." The chief aim of the NAM, said President Parry was

the purely patriotic one of defending human liberty. Business and patriotism go hand in hand. Industrialism is beneficent, civilizing and uplifting. It is the enemy of war, of despotism, of ignorance and poverty. In truth, its foes are the foes of mankind.⁸⁵

Finally, Association leaders offered historical justification for their cause and its principles, asserting that "all history proves that progress is the universal law of nature and that the truth ever comes uppermost, and ever is justice done."⁸⁶

The NAM promoted the rigidity and rightness of natural law upon which much of their ideology was based. To curb labor's "improper theories and unsound principles", it offered "unrepealed and unrepealable," economically sound

and just theories which "cannot be assailed on any sensible grounds." In contrast to labor which believed that "every question is susceptible of arbitration," that there are "no fundamental verities upon which human life is based," that it would be possible by legislation to "repeal the law of gravity", the NAM promoted the existence of "elementary theories which cannot be sacrificed," for if they were surrendered or compromised, then "all is gone and truth itself becomes a shadow."⁸⁷

The "soundness" of Association economic principles derived from their adherence to the rigidities of natural law and classical economics, themselves ensconced in a constitution written by and for men of property. In the words of one Association official, "the principles for which we stand are determined and fixed principles," they are "not your ideas or mine," but rather the "heritage we have received from others, the wisdom of all the past." Determined ever since the "foundations of English and American law began," these great and eternal principles were passed on through the "immortal document that announced our freedom," through the U.S. Constitution, to the "decisions of our courts in modern days...." The economic guidelines of the NAM were nothing more than the "same old principles of American government applied once and forever to the solution of the industrial question." And it was upon those principles that the NAM sought to establish in industry

those economic policies for which "the country" stood. Asserting these principles, NAM labor policy held that no person should be "discriminated against" by union practices, but that the worker "should work where he pleases and for what he pleases."⁸⁸ These were not privileges for working men, but "natural rights born of God and guaranteed by the government." And it was upon these ironclad guarantees that the Association, conscious of the "correctness and justness of its position," decided labor policy. And there would never be a "permanent and satisfactory and complete industrial peace," warned James Emery, "except it be a peace founded upon sound economics and fundamental American principles."⁸⁹

Although the NAM itself actively promoted class interests in its propaganda appeal, it concealed such interests under those of society as a whole. President Parry explained the identity of industrial interests and the common good:

The Association does not exist for political power, for aggression of the rights of others or for the individual profit of its members. It stands solely for the common good - not the common good of its members alone, but the common good of the whole people constituting the nation. Its one platform is that whatever advances American industry advances the material prosperity of the entire American people, and whatever is detrimental to American industry reduces the wages, the profits, and the material comforts of the entire people. This platform breathes the spirit of true patriotism. It also breathes the spirit of good will to all. It is the highest form of altruism.

Since the development of industry is for

the highest good of the entire people, it follows that every industrial question must be considered from the standpoint of its bearing upon industrial development."⁹⁰

To the NAM, anything which brings benefit to industry automatically guarantees prosperity and progress for the social whole. Whatever does this is patriotic, well meaning and free of selfishness. The social and political function of capital was to guarantee the industrial interests against losses which would perforce be fatal both to them and, by extension, to the working people and the whole country. Capital must consider all issues, especially labor questions, from the standpoint of what will benefit industry=the people=the nation. Any other viewpoint, particularly labor's viewpoint, is based upon "prejudice, class hatred, misplaced sympathy or visionary ideas." As stated in the Declaration of Principles, "all forms of class legislation are un-American and detrimental to our common goal." "We ask for no class privileges," said an Association leader, "and only insist that none be granted to others."⁹¹

Thus, while maintaining that its goals and methods remained untainted by self interest, capital castigated labor for promoting the narrow interests of class. Since capital best understood and embodied social interests, by implication it served all its components, including labor. Therefore capital must oppose attempts to force a narrow range of conditions favorable only to labor on the larger social body. The NAM declared that it used "every single

force that [it] could possibly exert," to protect the "fundamental rights" of citizens against either combinations that attempted to "monopolize any market in material... or any market in its labor."⁹² And it rendered an essential service to society in protecting it from the range of evils personified by unions and their leaders. Capital representatives of the NAM pictured themselves as offering an inspiring example to the lower orders. A speaker at the 1908 annual meeting in the banquet room of New York City's Waldorf Astoria surveyed the floor with its dining tables and well dressed gentlemen and observed:

that the wage earner of the present day (should) look on this picture and be inspired with determination to work upward to your level instead of imbibing the spirit of anarchy and socialism, which aims downward toward equilization with the lowest.⁹³

Officials encouraged members to stand as examples which would enforce military forms of obedience, to "create in the hearts of your employes (sic) the feeling of pride and devotion that a faithful soldiery has for a noble, true captain."⁹⁴

In contrast to the disruptive presence of labor, capital embodied the only force which attempted to preserve social peace. It lent the power of its efficiency, organization and influence to "control and quiet the national situation." Capital, the rational, natural leader of labor would rather avoid strife; capital used nonviolent methods. "It seems repugnant to our ideas of twentieth

century civilization to fight out this question in the gladiatorial arena. [We] do not desire strife and labor should not seek it."⁹⁵ Association leaders denigrated labor gains achieved through the use of force "because those things which are gained by violence are half lost in the gaining;" preferring instead to employ reason, for "those things which are gained by reason are gained forever."⁹⁶

Through its major activities, the NAM, representing a powerful and prominent capitalist elite, injected a significant body of ideas into the ideological universe of the Gilded Age, a package of ideas that proclaimed and legitimated the status and power of capital and its representatives. Because power was unequally divided, so was advantage, and the greatest advantage is social authority. Authority implies authorship; those with the power to define the truths largely determine the truths and rights by which society operates. The social control inherent in the power to DEFINE some people and ideas as embodying desirable norms and other ideas or people as opposite the desirable norm is immense. By virtue of such negations, undesirable groups can be repressed, their ideas censored, their organizations condemned, their spokesmen silenced. Such is the essence of nihilation.

NAM ideology functioned to disguise the nature if its intentions behind democracy and patriotism. It sought to confine the debate between labor and capital to a few ideas

rather than let it expose the contradictions of society, and within this to assign individual blame for failure, avoiding larger questions about the fundamental working of the system. NAM ideology sought to abstract labor, fitting it into the larger, formally abstract isms of the age and their economic absolutism. It sought to prevent the formation of an anti-capitalist collective will, and to deny the counter arguments, communism, radical unionism, that posed alternatives. It prescribed labor docility and exhorted hard work and deference. And it insisted that economics was an independent activity which could not be circumscribed by morality. This attitude itself established a morality; to say that economic activity owed nothing to morality was a distinct moral proposition in itself.

Propagated in a highly emotional pitch, often reflecting hatred of certain manifestations of the working class and fear of being overrun, NAM propaganda heightened the class consciousness of its members. As they formulated and articulated their ideology and created national platforms for its propagation, they generated a mood of solidarity and affirmed a sense of rightness among themselves which, coupled with previously existing legitimations of right, gave them a moral, legal, ethical and scientific mandate for their actions.

ENDNOTES: CHAPTER V

- 1 Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the National Association of Manufacturers 1903, hereafter cited Proceedings , p. 329.
- 2 Clarence Bonnett, Employers' Associations in the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 14; Philip S. Foner, History of the Labor Movement in the United States vol. 3 (New York: International Publishers, 1964), pp. 31-39; C. H. Parker, "The Decline in Trade Union Membership" Quarterly Journal of Economics vol. 24 (1909-1910), pp. 564-569.
- 3 William F. Willoughby, "Employers' Associations for Dealing With Labor in the United States" Quarterly Journal of Economics vol. 20 (1905-1906), pp. 110-150.
- 4 Proceedings , 1904, p. 146; 1909, p. 68; the average NAM member represented a middle sized manufacturing firm.
- 5 Ibid ., 1904, p. 202.
- 6 Ibid ., 1903, p. 17; The new, hostile attitude on the part of the NAM conformed to the general hardening of attitudes by several major trade associations whose directors were also NAM members and whose 1902 led them to accuse unions of failing to abide by the terms of the agreements, and to adopt a policy of opposition to unions in general. Thus, National Metal Trades Association in 1901 terminated its trade agreement with the International Association of Machinists; the National Founders' Association opposed the Iron Moulders' Union beginning in 1904, as did the National Erectors' Association the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers. In 1906, the United Typothetae of America eliminated the closed shop of the International Typographical Union. By 1910, Samuel Gompers could remark, "Today the United States Steel Corporation is practically free from any 'inconvenience' from the organized labor movement. Peace in its plant is the sort of peace

that the Czar of Russia had when he proclaimed 'Peace reigns in Warsaw'." Samuel Gompers, "Address to the Annual Meeting" Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science , vol. 44 (July 1912), p. 58; Willoughby, "Employers' Associations", p. 119-123; Bonnett, Employers Associations , p. 14.

- 7 Proceedings , 1903, pp. 60-61. By 1914, the Association has softened its anti-union stance to conform with then current attempts to gain favor with and control over labor groups by promoting company unions, shop committees and industrial councils. Ibid ., 1914, pp. 4-15. Such Programs instituted partly by the Federal War Labor Board were favored by the NAM, itself having to make concessions to demands for collective bargaining, because they were initiated by the employer or the federal government and thus their legitimacy rested on a power base other than that of organized labor. This constituted a recognition by the NAM of the ideological importance of the source of reform.
- 8 Phillip G. Wright, "The Contest in Congress between Organized Labor and Organized Business", Quarterly Journal of Economics , vol. 29 (February 1915), p. 239.
- 9 Proceedings , 1903, p. 13.
- 10 Ibid ., 1904, pp. 243-244.
- 11 Ibid ., 1903, p. 16.
- 12 Ibid ., 1904, p. 15.
- 13 Ibid ., 1903, p. 133.
- 14 Ibid ., pp. 14-15.
- 15 Ibid ., pp. 229-230.
- 16 Ibid ., pp. 16-17; 1908, p. 325.
- 17 Ibid ., 1903, p. 17; 1907, p. 136.
- 18 Ibid ., 1907, p. 44.
- 19 Ibid ., 1904, p. 202.
- 20 Ibid ., 1910, p. 97.

- 21 Ibid ., p. 96; 1911, p. 78; 1909, p. 95.
- 22 Ibid ., 1904, p. 24; The National Association of Manufactureres, Open Shop Encyclopedia for Debaters (New York: National Association of Manufacturers, 1921).
- 23 Proceedings ., 1907, p. 116.
- 24 Ibid ., 1905, p. 144.
- 25 Ibid ., 1906, pp. 56, 81; 1907, p. 115.
- 26 Ibid ., 1908, p. 36; 1907, p. 113.
- 27 Ibid ., 1907, p. 112; 1908, p. 23.
- 29 Ibid ., 1908, p. 23.
- 30 Ibid ., 1906, p. 77; 1908, p. 20.
- 31 Ibid ., 1906, p. 82.
- 32 Ibid ., 1908, p. 325; 1906, p. 77.
- 33 Ibid ., 1906, p. 81.
- 34 Ibid .
- 35 Ibid ., 1908, pp. 115-116.
- 36 Ibid ., 1906, p. 154; 1907, pp. 116, 134.
- 37 Ibid ., 1907, p. 134.
- 38 Ibid ., 1906, p. 63; 1907, p. 137.
- 39 Ibid ., p. 1906, pp. 55, 61, 63; 1907, p. 111; 1909, p. 18; Robert Wuest, "Industrial Betterment Activities of the National Metal Trades Association", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science vol. 44 (July 1912), pp. 75-85.
- 40 Proceedings , 1906, p. 50.
- 41 Ibid ., p. 114; James W. Van Cleave, "The Work of Employers' Associations in the Settlement of Labor Disputes", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science vol. 36 (September 1910), p. 122.
- 42 Proceedings , 1908, p. 189.

- 43 Proceedings ., 1903, p. 15.
- 44 Ibid ., 1910, p. 92; 1903, p. 15; 1906, pp. 25-26.
- 45 Ibid ., 1910, p. 94; 1908, pp. 107, 295; Van Cleave, "Employers' Associations", pp. 122-123.
- 46 Proceedings ., 1908, p. 285. NCID membership included, in addition to the NAM, the American Anti-Boycott Association (League for Industrial Rights), the American Cotton Manufacturers' Association, the National Erectors' Association, the National Founders' Association, the National Metal Trades Association, the United Typothetae of America, the National Association of Implement and Vehicle Manufacturers, the National Association of Cotton Manufacturers, the American Hardware Manufacturers' Association. Source, National Industrial Council Bulletin , cited in Albion Taylor, Labor Policies of the National Association of Manufacturers (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1927), p. 29.
- 47 Proceedings , 1909, p. 112.
- 48 Ibid ., 1906, p. 90.
- 49 Ibid ., 1908, pp. 289, 107, 121; 1906, p. 90.
- 50 Ibid ., 1907, p. 14; Foner, History of Labor , p. 337.
- 51 Proceedings , 1906, p. 24; 1908, p. 108; Foner, History of Labor vol. 3, p. 299.
- 52 Proceedings , 1908, p. 108; 1909, p. 59.
- 53 Ibid ., p. 59; Foner, History of Labor vol. 3, p. 305.
- 54 Proceedings , 1910, pp. 81, 92; 1909, p. 59.
- 55 Ibid ., 1906, pp. 15-16; Foner, History of Labor vol. 3, pp. 55, 59.
- 56 Proceedings , 1909, p. 60.
- 57 Ibid ., 1903, p. 18.
- 58 Ibid ., 1906, p. 78.
- 59 Ibid ., 1909, p. 263; 1907, p. 19; 1908, p. 286.

- 60 Proceedings ., 1909, p. 263.
- 61 Ibid .
- 62 Ibid ., 1904, p. 73.
- 63 Proceedings ., 1903, p. 199. .
- 64 Ibid , p. 17.
- 65 Ibid ., 1909, pp. 212, 67.
- 66 In industry, the first declaration for open against closed shop came from the National Metal Trades Association in 1901.
- 67 Proceedings ., 1907, p. 237; 1904, p. 76.
- 68 Ibid ., 1906, p. 13; an official of the United States Steel Corporation stated "We consider the principle of the 'open shop' only another aspect of the principle upon which the government of this country was founded and has been maintained, and in that belief we think the people of this country are with us." Raynal Bolling, "The United States Steel Corporation and Labor Conditions" Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science , vol. XLII (July 1912), pp. 353-362.
- 69 Van Cleave, "Employers' Associations", pp. 121-122.
- 70 Proceedings , 1905, p. 282.
- 71 James A. Emery, "Use and Abuse of Injunctions in Trade Disputes" Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science vol. 36 (July 1910), p. 127.
- 72 Proceedings , 1910, p. 95.
- 73 Ibid ., 1905, p. 282.
- 74 Ibid ., 1904, p. 15.
- 75 Ibid ., p. 75.
- 76 National Association of Manufacturers, Accident Prevention and Relief (New York: National Association of Manufacturers, 1911); Foner, History of Labor vol. 3, p. 43.

- 77 Proceedings , 1903, pp. 7-20; 1907, p. 44-45.
- 78 Ibid ., 1903, p. 199.
- 79 Ibid ., 1907, p. 46.
- 80 Ibid ., 1909, p. 264.
- 81 Ibid ., 1905, p. 220.
- 82 Proceedings ., 1909, p. 264.
- 83 Ibid ., 1906, pp. 68-69.
- 84 Ibid ., 1908, p. 187; 1910, p. 3
- 85 Proceedings ., 1906, p. 13.
- 86 Ibid ., p. 50.
- 87 Ibid ., 1910, p. 96; 1906, p. 68.
- 88 Ibid ., 1905, pp. 207-208; 1906, p. 75.
- 89 Ibid ., 1906, p. 68.
- 90 Ibid ., 1906, pp. 11-12.
- 91 Ibid ., 1905, p. 87; 1903, p. 95; 1910, p. 96.
- 92 Ibid ., 1906, p. 71.
- 93 Ibid ., 1908, p. 327.
- 94 Ibid ., 1904, p. 75.
- 95 Ibid ., p. 16.
- 96 Ibid ., 1905, p. 209.

CHAPTER VI

THE LABOR IDEOLOGY OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

All employes should bear in mind that each shop exists, first and last, and all the time, for the purpose of paying dividends to its owners.

Scientific Management will mean, for the employers and the workmen who adopt it...the elimination of almost all causes for dispute and disagreement among them.

Frederick Taylor 1

The trend toward rationalization of production after 1890 produced a great transformation in U.S. manufacturing which included the financial reorganization and the consolidation of competing firms, the formation of manufacturers' trade associations and the incorporation of most of the nation's largest firms. The very scale and complexity of industrial production necessitated the increase in control of all its elements, especially the human factor. In the late 1890s, this necessity gave rise to management theory in industry, an effort more efficiently to utilize materiel and workers. The system known as scientific management, or Taylorism, after its founder Frederick Taylor, quickly gained acceptance in industry where it produced a structural reorganization of the productive process using "scientific" techniques. Not surprisingly, modern management arose from a new breed of engineers who provided a direct link between the technological advances of the age and its social development. Engineers had been those who used science to analyze and control production, and it

was in his capacity as an engineer that Taylor devised his system of scientific management, a system which ultimately restructured the labor force and promoted the work and social habits demanded by corporate capitalism.

At the outbreak of World War I, more than 30 factories had adopted one form or another of scientific management, but it was the war itself which spurred interest in efficient production. By the 1920s, an overwhelming majority of U.S. industries had adopted the main elements of scientific management: some form of incentive pay, standardization of tasks, direct supervision under a formal hierarchical administrative authority, cost accounting and general planning and coordination of all factory operations. In 1935, economist John R. Commons reported that the essential ideas of scientific management had been so widely accepted that they had become "commonplaces of American industrial practice."²

To Taylor, as with many first generation professional managers, increased productivity rested on employer control of the material labor process. More fully than the owners and managers of his day, however, Taylor understood the ideological nature of their labor problems and the relationship between ideology on one hand and technology and material objects on the other. He was the first management theorist to recognize the necessity of effecting total ideological control over the workforce and

the possibility of achieving this through material changes in the work process. He also apparently understood that the workplace was the primary site where workers defined themselves and their relations to capital and thus the place where those definitions could more easily be controlled by employers.

For these reasons, Taylor's method was originally conceived as a means of stopping the industrial warfare of the age through an ideological transformation of the worker, what he called a mental revolution. His first paper, "A Piece Rate System", read before the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in 1905, prescribed in its subtitle "A Step Toward Partial Solution of the Labor Problem". Throughout his career, Taylor sold his management techniques to employers as a method of controlling labor and breaking unions. He especially attacked craft unions' power to determine and enforce standard work rates and rules and, in so doing, to resist individual rates of pay. In the late nineteenth century, the strength of organized labor rested in part on the enforcement of rules that protected the skilled craftsman. Craft union standards were not established in formal agreements between unions and employers, but were adopted by unions and enforced at the shop level by individual workmen and committees of the union local.³ Union enforcement of work standards was already under attack by employers' trade associations when those committed to

scientific management took up the fight. In dealing with skilled workers on an individual basis, they sought to destroy collective enforcement of craft union rules by individually determining such factors as wage rates, work classification, daily output, and by individually settling workers' grievances. The ultimate effect of Scientific Management, David Montgomery explained, "undermined the very foundation of craftsmens' functional autonomy" by disrupting their "styles of work, their union rules and standard rates, and their mutualistic ethic...."4 After the widespread application of scientific management, Montgomery found, "some degree of worker restriction remained, but on a guerilla basis...."5 But concerted, union directed, collectively enforced work restriction had disappeared. By the decade of the 1920s, the combination of scientific management and welfare activity had "succeeded in excluding unions from most industries and persuading union leaders to oppose their members' restrictive practices in others."6

The adoption of scientific management by U.S. industry resulted in greater control of labor consciousness. Taylorism prescribed various methods of governing worker ideology through a) shifting control of the entire work process from workers to employers; b) by destroying unions and replacing workplace solidarity and collectivism with an atomized individualism which generated worker loyalty to the supposed common interests of capital and labor; and, c)

through tying worker self image to employer determined criteria, self image that rose and fell with the individual worker's degree of fulfillment of daily task assignments.

Taylorism itself was an ideology that in its widest application defended industrialization and the machine process while at the same time justified an extension of employer authority over large masses of workers. This justification, couched in the prevailing language of class legitimacy, held sway in the name of individualism, self-advancement, efficiency and order, the work ethic, progress and social beneficence, in particular the well-being and advancement of the individual worker. It masked the creation of a more rigid and authoritarian management structure which effectively eliminated labor's control of the work process and formation of worker ideology, replacing it with management control and management ideas about work and workers.

In addition to the material requirements of production, the legitimacy of natural law and the prestige of scientific technology also shaped the ideology of Taylorism. In addition, Taylorism adopted the legitimacy of natural law doctrine. Taylor's insistence on his "one best method" of performing every work task presupposed that there existed an absolute, numerically verifiable, perfectly exact way of executing that task.⁷ "Under Scientific Management," Taylor explained, "every single subject, large

and small, becomes the question for scientific investigation, for reduction to law...."8 The best management was a "true science, resting upon clearly defined laws, rules, and principles, as a foundation."9 Once discovered through scientific inquiry, Taylor's "one best way" was defended in the same manner that scientists defended what they took to be the undeniable certainty of the laws of physics or mathematics - in an age which stood in awe of the power of science to produce wonders. This defense was made easier, in Samuel Haber's words, "for Science had a lustre all its own....For a generation in which most people believed that progress was written into the laws of the universe, true and good seemed indistinguishable." 10 To an age which had begun to question absolutes, science rose in prestige, becoming the primary vehicle by which truth was established. As one of the laws of nature, the law of scientific management drew its authority and legitimacy from its formal scientific application of that law.

Along with belief in the authority and certainty of natural law, nineteenth century ideology held the notion of the absolute impartiality and objectivity of scientific data, and by extension, of Taylor's methods. Applied to industry, scientific management replaced the arbitrary, controversial and competing authority of skilled workers and floor bosses with the uncontestable, class neutral authority

of science. "Science, claimed one Taylorite, "plays no favorites."¹¹ Basing its legitimacy on the application of science to social good, Taylorism impersonalized and legitimated owner interest. However, the supposed scientific basis twisted this legitimation, for the class interest of capital was redefined as not only class neutral and beneficial to society, but as a matter of incontrovertible, cosmic, natural principle. The 'legitimate' authority of science furnished the facade for the exercise of the class power of employers. Taylor's system was less a science than an ideology which, under the guise of scientific neutrality, functioned to obscure and conceal capital's attempt to control labor.¹²

Taylor's offer of scientific rationalization of industry and efficient labor control dovetailed with the general Progressive urge of the age, itself part of the larger struggle of capitalist interests to protect themselves from the social and economic disruptions of rapid industrialization. As with other instruments of social control developed in the nineteenth century, scientific management was necessary to the creation of a worker who fit into the mechanistic order of rationalized mass production, assembly lines, and, above all, into a "scientifically" managed work environment. Taylor intended for the social benefits that scientific control brought to industry to be applied on a wide scale. More than a provision for

industrial efficiency, his system promised an entire social transformation. The ideological or "mental revolution" inherent in Taylorism was designed to alleviate the social problems of industrial society, problems arising largely from a grossly unequal distribution of wealth, and from on-the-job disputes between management and labor. Taylor's solution was to control industrial society by a neutral, scientific law, which served neither capital nor labor, but the rigid standards of work performance and shop management. When followed exactly, his methods promised to increase production, decrease its costs, raise wages and profits, remove the source of social tension in industry, reduce consumer prices, raise the material standard of living, and thereby promote civilization and progress. Taylor envisioned a general social revolution through the application of his techniques for industrial efficiency and ideological control to "all social activities," in homes, farms, churches, philanthropic institutions, universities and government.¹³

The idea of social perfection through adherence to scientific law formed part of the larger impulse of the Progressive Era toward systematization, rationalization, centralization, bureaucratization and control. An age enamored with material efficiency in machine output and in business enterprise saw the possibility of resolving questions of social control with machine-like efficiency.¹⁴ And Taylor's prescription fit the diagnosis of the age:

eliminate irrational, violent, anti-social, nonconformist, unproductive behavior and one would achieve a predictable, controlled, orderly social whole that operated according to the dictates of science.

Taylor's system grew out of his on-the-job experience as an engineer and shop foreman at the Midvale Steel Company between 1878 and 1890. In an attempt to increase production in the machine shop, he conducted experiments which led him to assess prevailing shop management practices, and, eventually, to scrutinize the entire factory system. Conditions he analyzed at Midvale represented practices that pervaded most factory organization in the late nineteenth century. Like many contemporary observers, Taylor saw the shop floor as the site of a struggle over productivity theretofore won by workers because of inefficient management, but potentially winnable by owners if they could control the work process and secure worker loyalty. His analysis of this struggle resulted in a call for an entirely new and revolutionary management system designed to effect total control over production, eliminating elements in the factory system that both inhibited production and furnished grounds for dispute between owners and workers.

To Taylor, the faults of the factory system of his day fell into two categories: the tyranny it allowed managers and bosses and the autonomy it gave workers. As

factories grew larger and more complex in the late nineteenth century, and the delegated power of managers increased, so did their use of arbitrary power, a condition which, to Taylor, produced the most visible form of the struggle between capital and labor. The unhappy and almost impossible task, given the large degree of worker autonomy, of forcing work efficiency and productivity fell to managers whose methods of coercion ranged all the way from merely accounting for each worker's presence and diligence during the day to summary firings. The managerial hierarchy, which led from worker through foreman to floor boss, allowed considerable individual discretion at every level.¹⁵ And it was understood that each manager used this discretionary power to force the greatest amount of work from those under his supervision.

The most glaring faults Taylor identified in the factory system lay with the degree of autonomy allowed workers. Although the factory system had assembled large numbers of workers in one spot into various kinds of individual and group work situations, it had not internalized labor discipline, nor had it completely removed workers' discretion in the control of their own work productivity. Skilled workers' expertise was the basis of this control. In the course of a work day, Midvale machinists not only worked at their machines cutting and shaping metal, but largely controlled the production manner

and rate of their tasks, procured their own tools or supplies, and governed their rest periods and their informal social interaction. Because workers understood that it did not serve their interests to work hard, they also practiced many forms of deliberate output restriction from soldiering, the deliberate restriction of work, to outright sabotage.

At least to his own satisfaction, Taylor recognized and explained the reasons for such behavior. In most shops which utilized a range of labor skills, a hierarchy of labor existed in which the skilled craftsman enjoyed the highest wages and the greatest degree of workplace autonomy. Not by coincidence, skilled workers were the most scarce and formed the only viable labor organizations in Taylor's day. Furthermore, the apprentice system placed the skilled craftsman at the top of a labor controlled ideological and technological hierarchy, within which apprentices absorbed craft know-how and labor ideology from mentors on the same side in the capital-labor struggle. This hierarchy of exclusiveness, high pay, leadership, and relative autonomy furnished skilled labor an authority and untouchability that had to be broken if owners were to control worker activity and ideology.

In Taylor's day, the most telling manifestation of worker autonomy was deliberate restriction of work output. He devoted a great deal of attention to the problem of soldiering, a practice which he found "almost universal in

industrial establishments" and which "constitute(d) the greatest evil with which the working-people of both England and America are now afflicted."¹⁶ Workers deliberately practiced soldiering, Taylor surmised, to keep employers ignorant of the work process and thus of how much time any task would actually take to be performed. In doing so, they reserved to themselves control of the actual amount and exclusive knowledge of the potential amount of production.

Taylor identified three causes for overt, systematic soldiering.¹⁷ First, workers believed that it was against their best interests to work at maximum output because the increase in production reduced the total number of jobs. Thus, both individual workers and trade union policy enforced restriction of output. Second, because employers had no idea how much work constituted a full day's work, they had to defer to the workers' knowledge of the work process. Employers, Taylor explained,

derive their knowledge of how much of a given class of work can be done in a day from either their own experience, which has frequently grown hazy with age, from casual and unsystematic observation of their men, or at best from records which are kept, showing the quickest time in which each job has been done. In many cases the employer will feel almost certain that a given job can be done faster than it has been, but he rarely cares to take the drastic measures necessary to force men to do it in the quickest time.... It evidently becomes for each man's interest then, to see that no job is done faster than it has been in the past.¹⁸

Third, the work and payment system of piece work spurred workers to develop soldiering to a fine art. Under

the piece rate system, employers determined a maximum amount which workers "should" be paid for each piece of work, and restricted wages accordingly. Workers realized that when employers became convinced that they could produce more than that amount, they forced that increase in production without a corresponding increase in pay.¹⁹ Or, workers found that when they themselves speeded up piece production to increase their earnings, employers reduced the rate accordingly. Thus, Taylor reasoned that

after a workman has had the price per piece of the work he is doing lowered two or three times as a result of his having worked harder and increased his output, he is likely to lose sight of his employer's side of the case and become imbued with a grim determination to have no more cuts if soldiering can prevent it.
20

Because it involved a struggle over control of the basic elements in the labor process, Taylor explained, soldiering led to the root of the dispute between capital and labor. Workers' "deliberate attempt to mislead and deceive" employers as to their true work capacities caused them to view the employer as "an antagonist, if not an enemy."²¹ Taylor explained further,

The feeling of antagonism under the ordinary piece-work system becomes in many cases so marked on the part of the men that any proposition made by their employers, however reasonable, is looked upon with suspicion, and soldiering becomes such a fixed habit that men will frequently take pains to restrict the product of machines which they are running when even a large increase in output would involve no more work on their part.²²

Thus, to a great degree, workers were able to control the work process - speeding it up or slowing it down at will - because of employer's lack of knowledge about that very process.²³ Two factors determined worker monopoly of knowledge in the work process. First, Taylor observed workers "had their knowledge handed down to them by word of mouth," or they learned by observation or experience. Workmen learned from other workmen to restrict output.

The younger and less experienced men are taught this by their elders, and all possible persuasion and social pressure is brought to bear upon the greedy and selfish men to keep them from making new records which result in temporarily increasing their wages, while all those who come after them are made to work harder for the same old pay....²⁴

Lessons in output restriction demonstrated to young or immigrant workers new to the factory that their own interests conflicted with those of their employers and could be served only by subverting those of the latter.

The second factor in workers' monopoly was what Taylor called traditional or "rule-of-thumb" knowledge, "the principal asset or possession of every tradesman, and a monopoly because it remained largely unknown to employers. ²⁵ Taylor discovered that even managers, almost all of whom had risen from the ranks of skilled labor, knew "better than any one else that their knowledge and personal skills fall far short of the combined knowledge and dexterity of all the workmen under them."²⁶ Thus employers and their managers

were forced to drive workers to obtain the greatest amount of work. Thus, the "greatest obstacle to harmonious cooperation between the workmen and the management..." Taylor identified as "the ignorance of the management as to what really constitutes a proper day's work...."²⁷ To Taylor, voluntary cooperation between management and labor remained impossible as long as workers had more knowledge than managers, workers distrusted giving their best effort, and workers controlled work.

Taylor characterized his system of scientific management as a solution to the management problems inherent in the work process as it was practiced in the factory systems of his era. To eliminate soldiering, Taylor made fundamental changes in the material elements of the work process itself: a) shifting worker technological control of and judgement in the work process from workers to managers, and b) destroying the power of skilled craftsmen.

The Material Objectives

In the factory, Taylor realized the material goals of his system through governing, standardizing, systematizing and rationalizing all facets of the utilization of labor, raw materials, tools and time. In doing this, he caused a revolution in both the work process and its management. In the machine tool industry, as in many industries in the late nineteenth century, this revolution

was made possible by rapid advances in technology which forced the faster and more efficient utilization of economic inputs. During his investigations of machine speeds for metal cutting at Midvale Steel, Taylor himself invented high speed steel for cutting tools and drills, which, because it retained its edge at high temperatures, tripled the speed of metal cutting and finishing.²⁸ As machine operators produced more quickly, the flow of materials to and from their machines had to speed up correspondingly, necessitating both the speed up of the entire production process and a more efficient use of machine operators' time. In Taylor's judgment, "the one element...most vital to both employer and workman [was]...the speed at which work was done...." Human speed must be increased to equal machine capacity. Thus the "essence of task management lay in effecting total management control of factors governing work speed."²⁹

Control over the speed of the work process involved a dramatic intensification of the division of labor. Industrialization had caused a division of labor which destroyed skilled worker control of the work process from raw material to finished product. It also eliminated workers' conceptual knowledge of the entire work process. After 1880, most skilled craftsmen fashioned parts for larger constructions over which they had little knowledge and even less control. Their knowledge, skill and control of

individual tasks was real, but limited to the piece they made or a portion of a larger project.

To accomplish the speed-up, Taylor analyzed each work task, subdividing it into separate components and assigning each to an individual worker. For example, he turned a single job for the lathe work on steel locomotive wheels into a series of 22 different operations, each with seven separate specifications.³⁰ He then scrutinized these duly specialized and subdivided work tasks to determine how workers' movements could be speeded up and made more efficient by using less motion, time, and fewer materials, thus lowering production costs per unit. Since, under the old factory system, skilled workers performed many tasks besides the primary one to which they were assigned, this subdivision of tasks had the effect of delegating the unskilled portions of a job to ordinary laborers, limiting skilled workers to more highly paid, "important" tasks, and increasing the need for management control. In the metal working industries, Taylorism so subdivided and governed machinists' jobs that it turned many jobs held by skilled craftsmen into tasks for machine tenders. His system converted untrained laborers into specialized machine operatives using prefabricated jigs, subdivided jobs with easily learned segments which were repeated over and over, and increased supervision. This greatly reduced the number of skilled craftsmen and increased that of less skilled and

costly machine tenders and of supervisory personnel.³¹

Taylor often stated that he had reduced and subdivided work operations to the point where automatons or gorillas could perform them. "Of the men in the machine shop of the Bethlehem Steel Company," he said of workers who first experienced the differential piece rate plan, "engaged in running the roughing machines...about 95 per cent. were handymen trained up from laborers. And on the finishing machine, working on bonus, about 25 per cent. were handy men."³² Even when a task such as lathe operation could not be subdivided and had to be left in the care of a skilled workman, it was planned in advance, described in written instructions, closely governed by a new standardized time rate, observed by scientific managers, recorded in the planning office, and otherwise circumscribed by managerial control. Taylor's system, driven by the logic of the division of labor, achieved the final destruction of worker authority over even the divided labor processes of the day. It replaced the relative autonomy of the skilled craftsman with mindless, repetitive and further subdivided tasks. Under Taylorism, the worker became less an individual than a reproducible, standardized, interchangeable, controllable, machine-like cog in the factory wheel.

Taylor attacked the problem of job speed and worker efficiency with a skilled system of wage bonuses called the differential piece rate which generated worker incentive to

follow instructions and increase output.³³ This system tied output speed and incentive factors together with coercive measures designed to destroy both workers' desire and ability to govern output. The differential piece rate system exhorted an individual worker to utmost exertion by scaling wage rates to individual piece work performance, paying bonuses of 30 to 60 per cent more when a worker achieved a predetermined "fair" day's work. Taylor usually introduced the piece rate system in a ununionized shop, placing one worker under his guidance and allowing him to earn 30 per cent or more than his previous earnings "until he wants the new system badly." Then "almost invariably" other men in the shop also asked for the new system.³⁴

Taylor's argument with the old piece work or day wage system was that all workmen were paid the same rate or wage regardless of efficiency.³⁵ In his system, piece rate bonus payment increased with all output over a certain amount. However, the piece rate system "not only pulls the man up from the top but pushed him equally hard from the bottom."³⁶ In cases where a worker failed to do a task correctly in the allotted time, he not only forfeited the bonus, but suffered the "direct loss of the piece price for each piece by which he falls short."³⁷ These bonuses were always tied to management discretion and control: in choosing the "right" worker for the job, in determining the nature of the tasks, in doling out incentive bonuses, in

calculating, timing, charting and otherwise quantifying all elements of the work process. Control of work filtered one way down from the management "brains" to the operatives.

Another factor in the elimination of skilled labor control on the shop floor involved overturning old labor hierarchies which led from skilled workers to common laborers. In his experience as a gang boss at Midvale Steel, Taylor engaged in a three year long "piece work fight," doing everything in his power to prevent soldiering and increase shop production. Machinists at the top of the shop hierarchy, meanwhile, remained "absolutely determined that output should not be increased," and they deliberately kept work performance at levels they knew were lower than possible.³⁸ Only by working in concert could workers enforce these restrictions. Taylor's urging and demonstrations to no avail, he dismissed several workers, replacing them with new machinists who "turned right around and joined the other fellows and refused to do any more work than the rest."³⁹ In order to break the informal authority of the machinists, he took an admittedly "durned mean" step, a step "contrary to...[the] interest of machinists":

When I had trained enough of these laborers so that they could run the lathes, I went to them and said, "Now, you men to whom I have taught a trade are in a totally different position from the machinists who were running these lathes before you came here. Every one of you agreed to do a certain thing for me if I taught you a trade, and now not one of you will keep his word. I did not break my word with you, but every one of you has broken his word with

me. Now, I have not any mercy on you; I have not the slightest hesitation in treating you entirely differently from the machinists.' I said, 'I know that very heavy social pressure has been put upon you outside the works to keep you from carrying out your agreement with me, and it is very difficult for you to stand out against this pressure, but you ought not to have made your bargain with me if you did not intend to keep your end of it. Now, I am going to cut your rate in two tomorrow and you are going to work for half price from now on. But all you will have to do is to turn out a fair day's work and you can earn better wages than you have been earning.'

These men, of course, went to the management, and protested I was a tyrant, and a nigger driver, and for a long time they stood right by the rest of the men in the shop and refused to increase their output a particle. Finally, they all of a sudden gave right in and did a fair day's work.⁴⁰

At this point the older machinists began deliberately to break their machines "as an object lesson to demonstrate to the management that a fool foreman was driving the men...."⁴¹ Taylor then resorted to a system of fines to prevent overt sabotage, and when these men "got sick and tired of being fined, their opposition broke down, and they promised to do a fair day's work."⁴²

This struggle took three years of "hard fighting" to resolve and taught Taylor that an increase in worker output could be had only when management directly controlled the pace and method of work, eliminated the control of skilled over apprentice labor, prevented group coercion of new workers, and diluted loyalty to working class interests. In bringing in ordinary laborers to perform formerly skilled

jobs, instilling loyalty to the new instructor and desire for the new bonus, Taylor's system broke the informal worker imposed work rates and eliminated worker discretion in job control. This process often replaced workers at the top of the labor hierarchy with those at the bottom, removing the old authority of the skilled mechanics over new workers and over unskilled workers, and instituting new lines of authority over work speed that ran from management to worker rather than from worker to worker.

Abolishing the traditional forms of foreman and manager control, the Taylor system created a new class of scientific or "functional" managers who achieved a scientific work process by gathering "all of the traditional knowledge which in the past had been possessed by the workmen and then...classifying, tabulating, and reducing this knowledge to rules, laws, and formulae...."⁴³ Armed with scientific expertise, functional managers occupied a separate planning room with the tools of their trade, books, charts, records, desks. Ideally, the planning room was situated in the center of the factory work area, visible but physically separated from the workmen. The planning department eliminated the need for the floor bosses and foremen of the old management system, replacing them with the daily task description and a network of functional managers.⁴⁴

The most visible material characteristic of

scientific management, Taylor explained, was that "each workman, instead of coming in direct contact with the management at one point only, namely, through his gang boss, receives his daily orders and help directly from eight different bosses."⁴⁵ The four planning bosses were the order of work and route clerk, the instruction card clerk, the time and cost clerk, and the shop disciplinarian. The four shop bosses governed execution: the gang boss, the speed boss, the inspector and the repair boss.

By acquiring workers' knowledge and transforming it into a "science", Taylor's system replaced workers' informal application of knowledge with new rules and prescriptions for its use. "The development of a science," argued Taylor, "involves the establishment of many rules, laws and formulae which replace the judgment of the individual workman..."⁴⁶

Thus all of the planning which under the old system was done by the workman, as a result of his personal experience, must of necessity under the new system be done by the management in accordance with the laws of science; because even if the workman was well suited to the development and use of scientific data, it would be physically impossible for him to work at his machine and at a desk at the same time. It is also clear that in most cases one type of man is needed to plan ahead and an entirely different type to execute the work.⁴⁷

The removal of "brain work" from the shop floor to the planning department placed control over the speed, nature and planning of work in the hands of scientific managers. In place of workers choosing their own work and acquiring training from their fellow workers, the new

managers assumed the power to "scientifically select and then train, teach and develop the workman...."48 Under the old system, management was "looked upon as a question of men...."49 Now, the new rules and formulae were boss, administered by men from behind glass walls, legitimated by the irrefutable sovereignty of numbers. Indeed, control of task management constituted the essence of Taylor's entire system - a system, which through tighter and more integrated management control of work, effectively eliminated worker control.

Once management acquired workers' formal knowledge, it assumed the burden of planning and control of the entire shop floor and its human and material elements. The need for "complete standardization of all details and methods, for keeping elaborate records, providing written work instructions, governing the storage and movement of tools and parts, and increased the percentage of scientific managers over that of the old number of foremen and gang bosses. The old management philosophy, Taylor explained, had kept low the proportion of non-producers to producers in a factory, non-producers being "all the general officers, the clerks, the foremen, gang bosses, watchmen, messenger boys, draftsmen [and] salesmen," and producers, "only those who actually work with their hands."50 In factories Taylor investigated, the proportion of non-producers to producers varied from 1-6 to 1-11 or more. His system involved an

admittedly large increase in the number of non-producers to producers, to a proportion of 1 to 4. But he defended these changes by pointing to increased production and reduced costs under his system.⁵¹

Although scientific management increased the number of managers relative to the old system, it allowed them less authority. Taylor often insisted that his system could not function without the same principles being applied to management as to workers. Functional management involved similar automatization and subdivision of management as of workers' tasks, "so dividing the work of management that each man from the assistant superintendant down will have as few functions as possible to perform."⁵² This had the same effect on management linkage to the task orders as did the subdivision of labor among workmen, necessitating the same replacement of personal authority and discretion with deference to scientifically determined work rules. Each functional manager had to perform a prearranged, carefully described, hierarchically controlled function within an integrated management system. And, for a manager to reject his role implied rejection of the entire order.

Taken together, the material changes effected by Taylor's method of organizing production revolutionized the factory workplace, achieving a dramatic speed-up of production. Taylorism geared incentive to speed-up, increased the ratio of control personnel to workers, removed

brain work from workers, subdivided labor and relegated workmens' status to that of objects, sliced away the human and autonomous elements of the work process, and insisted on absolute obedience to the authority of planners. In accomplishing these changes, Taylorism effectively removed the individual judgment and technological knowledge of ordinary craftsmen and the workplace authority and autonomy this carried, and replaced these with the rules of scientific management. By forcing the rationality of machine production on the labor process, Taylorism extended owner control over all previously worker controlled or uncontrolled factors.

The Social and Ideological Objectives

The result of this radical transformation in the material work process was not just speed and efficiency. The material changes wrought social and ideological changes - a reorganization of workers' interests and loyalties, an internalization of work discipline, a new orientation toward authority, and a drastic curtailment of union power. The material subordination of the worker to a method was, in fact, his social and ideological subordination to the supposedly class neutral demands of machine production in a capitalist context. The grounds of the argument for this subordination formed the bulk of the ideological content of Taylor's system. However, the ideological changes resulted

less from the rhetoric of Taylor and his followers or the new group of scientific managers than by integral, systemic, ideological factors inherent in the material objects and processes of Taylorism. Thus scientific management demonstrated the ideological power of technology and material objects, what Alvin Gouldner termed the dialectic of ideology and technology, what Marx called the "intellectual potencies of the material process of production", and what Taylor himself recognized as the dependence of the "mental" revolution upon the material lessons.⁵³ "Let no one imagine," Taylor cautioned, "that this great change in the mental attitude of the men and the increase in their activity can be brought about by merely talking to them. Their real instruction...must come through a series of object lessons. It is only with these object lessons in plain sight that the new theories can be made to stick."⁵⁴

Taylor's method prodded workers into accepting owners definitions and thinking about almost every human and material aspect of the productive process. The key to that acceptance involved internalizing work discipline and redirecting workers' interests and loyalties away from themselves and the working class, toward those of capital. Taylor did not attempt to accomplish these changes nakedly by insisting that workers should adopt capital's interests, or crudely, by repeating the National Association of

Manufacturers' assertion that workers were ignorant of their own interests. He knew the futility of such attempts given the social reality of his times. There was no question, he often said,

that, throughout the industrial world, a large part of the organization of employers, as well as employees, is for war rather than for peace, and that perhaps the majority on either side do not believe that it is possible to so arrange their mutual relations that their interests become identical. The majority of these men believe that the fundamental interests of employees and employers are necessarily antagonistic.⁵⁵

Almost alone among the spokesmen for capital in his age, Taylor acknowledged the rational basis for both workers' hostility toward employers and for soldiering. Given "generations of bitter experiences" within an antagonistic social setting, he said, workers behaved in a reasonable, purposeful manner, entirely consistent with their immediate individual and class interests.⁵⁶ What Taylor saw as rational behavior, members of the NAM, for instance, condemned as irrational and contrary to the real interests of workers. When Midvale workers asked Taylor whether "for their own best interest", they should turn out more work, he answered that were he in their place, he would "fight against turning out any more work, just as they were doing." And his reason reflected theirs: "because under the piece work system they would be allowed to earn no more wages than they had been earning, and yet they would be made to work harder."⁵⁷

Taylor's "firm conviction that the true interests of the two are one and the same..." meant, ultimately, that the interests of labor had to be secured for the service of capital. To Taylor, the fact that workers acted rationally in their own self interest was the central element of worker consciousness which had to be transformed into what amounted to loyalty to employer interests. Their initiative followed their interest. Their interest must be changed. The task of managers, then, lay in "inducing each workman to use his best endeavors, his hardest work, all his traditional knowledge, his skill, his ingenuity, and his good-will - in a word, his 'initiative,'" so as to "do everything that he can to further his employer's interest."⁵⁸ In other words, he sought to internalize work discipline which had been externally imposed by managerial authority under the old factory system. The worker must drive himself.

Given worker antagonism toward employers, however, this transformation of loyalty and internalization of work discipline had to occur indirectly. Labor must serve the interests of capital without realizing it. To accomplish this, scientific management redirected the self interest of both capital and labor to a new "unity of interests"- to the class neutral interests of "science." Taylorism redefined worker interests by convincing them of the legitimacy and value of scientific goals. In place of the divergence of interests and class warfare, and in lieu of shifting

workers' interests directly to those of capital, the new unity of interests created an ideology which geared worker loyalty to the more acceptable goal of scientifically increasing production for mutual benefit. Taylor understood that the struggle between capital and labor was over the division of surplus profits known to both sides. Rather than deny the existence of these profits, he used the goal of scientifically controlled production to shift the focus of both capital and labor, to "take their eyes off the division of the surplus as the important matter, and together turn their attention toward increasing the size of the surplus...."59

By and large, Taylorism sought to achieve the "unity of interests" through the ideology inherent in a system of individual wage incentives, in this case, the differential piece rate system. It was at this point that technology and its material expression as ideology informed worker ideology. The piece rate system generated worker initiative by gearing their interests not directly to those of capital, but to a higher set of long range interests, scientifically determined and ostensibly free from class bias. This redirection of interests effectively replaced workers' desire to soldier with a desire to achieve maximum output for individual gain through compliance not with employer demands, but with a scientific prescription for higher productivity. The system spoke to workers in terms of these

higher interests, legitimating its demands by offering immediate, individual material reward to those giving 100 per cent allegiance to the rules for task performance. Offering bonuses as incentive aimed at individual effort, the system made individual desire and ability constitute the difference between success and failure. The piece rate system created an extra spur to productivity in the form of fear of losing the entire piece payment or even being discharged if one could not work at Taylor's extreme speeds.

To affix workers' initiative and interest to the getting of money within a system, to gear his individual reward to his individual productivity was to give him a greater stake in the efficient working of that system. Monetary incentive provided worker compliance more easily than did coercion. A worker who believed he was working for himself in both an immediate and long range sense did not need to be coerced, but he welcomed any method which increased his own productivity. "The feeling that substantial justice is being done," Taylor explained,

renders them, on the whole, much more manly, straightforward and truthful. They work more cheerfully and are more obliging to one another and their employers. They are not soured, as under the old system, by brooding over the injustice done them; and their spare minutes are not spent to the same extent in criticising their employers and their bosses.⁶⁰

Thus the system of individualized wages and bonuses subverted collective governance of output and deflected

antagonism toward the system and erased notions of changing the system as a whole. In this manner, technology provided the grounds whereby the interests of labor in maximum labor utilization became one with those of capital. The shift in worker loyalty constituted a revolutionary transformation of worker consciousness. Taylor claimed that scientific management "in its essence",

involves a complete mental revolution on the part of the workingman engaged in any particular establishment or industry - a complete mental revolution on the part of these men as to their duties toward their work, toward their fellow man, and toward their employers.⁶¹

Taylor's system worked to defuse the issue of the surplus by redirecting the interests of both sides toward the goal of higher productivity governed by scientific rationality. With the deference of both capital and labor to the demands of scientific managers, the ideology of the latter assumed large proportions. Through a total control of work, scientific managers could impart a "scientific" ideology - directed toward achieving more efficient production. But this goal was, in effect, capital's goal, the reconciliation of interests achieved under owners' terms, directed by managers whose deference to science masked their allegiance to the ever increasing demands of capitalist production.⁶² The process of shifting allegiance to a scientific process impersonalized owner interests under the legitimacy of machine rationality and scientific law. By delivering allegiance of both capital and labor to functional

managers, the smoothly run, conflict free, highly productive factory could be made real.

In its myriad of control techniques, Taylorism created a new orientation toward authority which destroyed old labor and management hierarchies, reduced worker to worker input and interaction and strengthened communication with owners. The most obvious elements of control inherent in Taylorism were a) demands for 100 per cent compliance, b) the proliferation of direct authority figures over workmen; c) the uniformity demanded by the subdivision, standardization ritualization and habituation of each job; and d) the mystification of the technological basis of the work process.

All the techniques of management and control in Taylorism were forced upon the worker in a manner that made it impossible for him to refuse. Taylor structured scientific management so that workers had to participate fully in all aspects of the work plan or refuse the system in toto. "Anything short of complete utilization of the whole system," he insisted, "leaves such a large part of the game in the hands of the workmen that it becomes largely a matter of whim or caprice on their part as to whether they will allow you to have any results or not."⁶³ Scientific managers planned each work task in advance, so integrating it into the master work plan of the entire plant that refusing, or soldiering affected the flow of work within the

larger process. This integration demanded a degree of cooperation, coupled with management leadership, which made "entirely impossible...the independent individualism which characterizes the old type of management."⁶⁴ Each worker received detailed written instructions describing "not only what is to be done but how it is to be done and the exact time allowed for doing it."⁶⁵ In any shop under scientific management, Taylor explained, "there is hardly a single act or piece of work done by any workman in the shop which is not preceded and followed by some act on the part of...the management."⁶⁶ Worker discretion was removed, 100 per cent compliance forced, and no one allowed to work without manager directives.

Under the old factory system, the authority structure contained both formal and informal elements. As noted, other workers, in particular skilled craftsmen, constituted the informal network, and management, usually the shop or yard foremen, constituted the workers' only contact with a formal representative of the owner. Having abolished the informal structure of worker control, scientific management greatly expanded the number of bosses having direct control over workers. Under the new system, the close, daily contact and the integration of workers and managers into one system was designed to preclude arguments and compel cooperation. "All day long, every workman's acts are dovetailed in between corresponding acts of the

management. First the workman does something, and then a man on the management's side does something..., and under this intimate, close, personal cooperation between the two it becomes practically impossible to have a serious quarrel."67 Taylor recognized the importance of avoiding arguments, or even an exchange of ideas between management and labor. The manager should particularly "avoid matching his wits with the workmen. Make dogmatic statements and let it go at that. Argument is the beginning of mental opposition...."68

Although Taylor often claimed that the new authority structure allowed for worker participation in decision making, this was not the case. Taylor and most of his followers did not ascribe to the philosophy of industrial democracy, which pretended to labor participation in management, promoted by the National Civic Federation. On the contrary, Taylorism demanded " enforced standardization of methods, enforced adoption of the best implements and working conditions, and enforced cooperation.... And the duty of enforcing the adoption of standards and of enforcing this cooperation rests with the management alone."69 Scientific management was still management. Despite claims to the contrary, it could "in the hands of a grasping employer," as James Mapes Dodge cautioned, "be made as much an instrument of oppression as any other method of handling labor now in force."70

Under Taylor's system, work was "deliberately taken

out of the workman's hands" for control purposes. When knowledge and control of work were removed, workers also lost the knowledge of how to control work to their advantage, making workers' control more difficult and cooperation much easier. And if work was controlled by management, and the goal of management to increase production, then, ultimately, all decisions were guided by that goal. Workers had to leave decisions they once made to the inevitably prejudiced judgment of the bosses.

Taylor compared the expanded authority structure of functional management to the management of a "large, up-to-date school" wherein children are daily "taken in hand" and given individualized training by specialists, rather than the old style of one teacher to a class.⁷¹ This analogy demonstrated the didactic, paternalistic, disciplinary, intimidating value in the increase in ratio of control personnel to workers. It also suggests the degree to which managers assumed a more authoritarian attitude, a condition Hugh Atiken discovered in scientific managers at the Watertown arsenal:

To an appreciable degree one of the side effects of Taylorism was to make persons of executive and supervisory rank regard themselves as more important people, with greater control over what happened in the plant than before.⁷²

Yet another factor in the expansion of managerial authority under scientific management was the dramatic increase in the uniformity of action which necessarily

accompanied the subdivision and ritualization of work tasks. The habituation of work guaranteed the mindless repetition of management prescribed tasks. Factors which divide and atomize the members of a group dilute its cohesiveness and increase the hegemonic power of those who govern. As Harry Braverman rightly noted, the division of labor not only cheapens its parts but adds to the control possibilities.⁷³ Taylor lamented the " great unevenness " and the "lack of uniformity" of worker behavior in even the best run shops of his day.⁷⁴ Under scientific management, standardizing, subdividing and ritualizing work elements throughout a shop were preliminary to specifying the amount of time allotted for each task, to insisting that the job be done in that time, preventing worker discretion in the use of tools and time, and in habituating the worker to new work rituals which accustomed the worker to "continually and habitually [work] in accordance with scientific laws which have been developed by someone else."⁷⁵ The worker acquired the habit of learning what management taught. "The lives of men," Taylor argued, "are more affected by the habits which they form than by any other one influence."⁷⁶ And these habits govern behavior in and out of the shop:

When men spend the greater part of their active working hours in regulating their every movement in accordance with clear-cut formulated laws, they form habits which inevitably affect and in many cases control them in their family life, and in all of their acts outside of

working hours. With almost certainty they begin to guide the rest of their lives according to the principles and laws, and to try to insist upon those around them doing the same.⁷⁷

The mystification and specialization of the scientific rationale underlying the work process furnished yet another element in the authority structure of scientific management. "Scientific" law replaced worker knowledge and control, but law become so complicated that without the help of college trained scientific managers the ordinary workman could not fully understand it.⁷⁸ And the same was true with skilled mechanics, "men who are more capable of generalization, and who would be more likely...to choose the more scientific and better methods."⁷⁹ But even the scientific laws governing skilled jobs "are so intricate that the high priced mechanic needs (even more than the cheap laborer) the cooperation of men better educated than himself in finding the laws...."⁸⁰ While this may not have been the case, transferring technological expertise and legitimacy to the planning department guaranteed the result.

Taken together, the direct control management techniques, the subdivision of labor, the uniformity demanded by standardization, habituation and ritualization of work and the deliberate obscuring of technological data under scientific management, all prevented the exercise of workers' will and greatly increased the direct authority of owners.

Although the most potent input came from factors

within its material operation, scientific management offered a heavy dose of verbal pronouncements on the nature of laborers and their organizations. As with most employer ideology in the late nineteenth century, contemporary assumptions about natural law and human nature conditioned Taylor's image of the worker.

In assessing the nature of men, scientific management drew many distinctions: first between the laboring population and everyone else, and second, within the laboring population itself. In an address to the faculty and students of the Harvard Business School in 1909, for instance, Taylor explained the difference between the class of men represented by his audience and the class of workmen. He referred to these groups as "us" and "them." Although claiming that "both classes of men are essentially the same," he cited environmental forces which "temporarily accentuate and intensify certain qualities," creating "actual differences between the two classes." Thus, rightly, each class perceived the other as "a different kind of animal," the academic group seeing workers "slouching along the street on their way back from work, with dirty clothes, chewing tobacco, in many cases hardly looking up as they pass by, stolid and indifferent-looking...", and the workers seeing "in men of our class merely the outward signs of prosperity--good clothes, and the possession of carriages and automobiles--the careless holiday look, accompanied by

short working hours...."81

Such class differences enabled Taylor to make clear certain characteristics of each class. Since workmen have "spent their lives in obeying other people's orders," while "they see men of our class frequently in our capacity of giving orders," they therefore "occupy the position of apparent inferiority to us." Although they regard themselves as "just as good and just as important as you and I," the appearance of inferiority makes them eternally suspicious that "many of us, at least, look upon them as our inferiors."82 Since pretensions to superiority were "fatal" to scientific management, college trained managers should cultivate an unassuming manner, dress plainly, speak to workers "on their own level," "carefully avoid the slightest semblance of snobbery," and otherwise obscure class differences with workers.83

In this vein, Taylor separated types of men who worked with their brains from those with limited mental capacities who worked with their hands. "In most cases," Taylor explained, "one type of man is needed to plan ahead and an entirely different type to execute the work."84 Because of the complicated nature of the scientifically controlled work process, the person "best suited to actually doing the work is incapable of fully understanding this science...."85 Conversely, those best able to understand science do brain work, not physical labor. Unlike workers,

these "intelligent and educated men" had acquired the "habit of generalizing and everywhere looking for laws" and therefore assumed the responsibility of "mak(ing) a science out of work."⁸⁶ Even if a workman were given the necessary education and habits of generalization, the demands of his work would leave neither time nor opportunity for developing scientific laws. This hierarchy of types cemented intellectual with class characteristics and explained to men of Taylor's class why workers could not comprehend the entire productive process.

Within the laboring class, Taylor's distinctions implied a degree of desirability and undesirability ultimately predicated on workers' capacity and willingness to fulfill the demands of employers. Taylorism differentiated a range of mental and physical competence, from "first class" men such as machinists down to "very ordinary" workers such as shovelers and pig iron handlers. This physical description often used analogies with animal labor such as that of horses or oxen, pointing to the ideas of an unmechanized age which utilized human labor for heavy moving. The difference between "first class men and the poor ones is quite as great as between fine dray horses and donkeys."⁸⁷ "There are big powerful men," he often said, "suited to heavy work just as dray horses are suited to the coal wagon." And he used these distinctions to belittle and discredit the "absurdity" of the trade union position that

all workmen on a particular job should be paid the same wage or rate. This injures the better workman, he argued, and drives the work performance of all workers down to the level of the slowest, poorest worker, which was "quite as absurd as limiting the work of a fine dray house to that of a donkey."⁸⁸ "Men are not born equal", he insisted, "and any attempt to make them so is contrary to nature's laws and will fail."⁸⁹

Taylor identified the "enormous differences between the amount of work which a first class man can do under favorable circumstances and the work which is actually done by the average man."⁹⁰ Claiming that a "definite clear cut law existed as to what constitutes a full day's work for a first class laborer," Taylorism scientifically ascertained this law and then extracted a full day's work from workers.⁹¹ A work task should "purposely" be made so difficult, He advised, that it can only be accomplished by a first class man.⁹² Taylor admitted that this amount of work was often four times or more greater than the worker had performed under ordinary management and that "not more than one out of 5 laborers could keep up."⁹³

Given these extreme work demands, and the vast differences in physical abilities among working men, scientific management selected from this range of ability the strongest and most able, for only these were capable of working under great strain at an accelerated pace. In his

famous experiments with pig iron handlers in the Bethlehem Steel yard in the spring of 1899, Taylor, through selecting the most fit worker and utilizing scientific techniques, increased the average daily weight of iron each man handled from 12 1/2 to 47 tons. In these experiments, only one man in eight selected had the physical capacity to sustain a "fair day's work."⁹⁴ But, he added, when first class men applied themselves to pig iron loading, "none of them were (sic) overworked."⁹⁵

Between these "first class men" and the "losers," Taylorism drew a harsh line. Although the system guaranteed high wages for the few who successfully accomplished work tasks, it also demanded that workers suffer "loss in case of failure." When a worker failed, Taylor explained, "he should be sure that sooner or later he will be the loser by it."⁹⁶ Since failure was the worker's fault in the moral universe of Taylor's day, he rightly suffered the consequences. Ignoring the notion that he might be asking, by his own definitions, a donkey to do draft horse work, Taylor blamed failure to perform on workers' shortcomings, in particular their laziness. Any worker in any job, he maintained, could become a first class man if he put forth the effort. Taylor insisted that the accelerated pace was not injurious over a long period of time, but on the contrary, made the worker "stronger, happier and more contented in doing it."⁹⁷ Thus, "the only man who does not come under 'first class' is the

man who can work and won't work."⁹⁸ Such men were analogous to otherwise first class dray horses who balk, who

"are so absolutely lazy that they won't haul a coal wagon. And in the same way...we have some balky workmen...who, physically well able to work, are simply lazy, and who through no amount of teaching...[or] kindly treatment can be brought into the 'first-class'."⁹⁹

Although first class clearly implied the existence of other classes, no place existed in Taylorism for any but first class workers. And this pointed up the critical importance of scientific selection of workers in order to separate those who are "willing and able to adopt the new methods" from the others.¹⁰⁰

The material conditions of labor surplus in a period of widespread unemployment also shaped Taylor's image of workers. Workers in a factory who "failed to rise to certain standards are discharged," he explained, "and a fresh supply of carefully selected men are given work in their places."¹⁰¹ This notion was born in the atmosphere of a buyer's market for labor which said, in effect, sift through the pack until you get what you want. The pack is always there outside the factory gate. Given the workers' even present fear of being replaced, this condition enabled Taylorism to demand high levels of extreme exertion from "first class men." Taylor often admitted the extreme pace and exertion, but the odds of securing a "fresh supply" were in his favor.

Taylorism described workers' mental as well as

physical attributes. Their inability to understand the scientific complexities of the work process within a modern factory resulted from either a "lack of education" or an "insufficient mental capacity."¹⁰² They were either stupid or ignorant. The degree to which Taylor actually believed this is questionable, since he had personal acquaintance with many skilled and unskilled workers, and he clearly respected the technological expertise of the former. But such distinctions made legitimate the exploitative nature of labor utilization, particularly of the unskilled. As Braverman put it, "a belief in the original stupidity of the worker is a necessity for management; otherwise it would have to admit that it is engaged in a wholesale enterprise of prizing and fostering stupidity."¹⁰³

While deploring what he considered the mental incapacity of many workers, Taylor based increased production, in part, on the "scientific" utilization of their labor. Scientific managers selected workers whose mental abilities, they thought, best fit the requirements of the job, assigning skilled mechanics to the best jobs and dull men to dull jobs. A pig iron handler, for instance, "must be so stupid and phlegmatic that he more nearly resembles in his mental makeup an ox...."¹⁰⁴ "A man of the type of the ox" was "no rare specimen of humanity," and therefore was neither rare nor "highly prized." On the contrary, Taylor explained,

"he was a man so stupid that he was unfitted to do most kinds of laboring work..., so stupid that the word 'percentage' has no meaning to him, and he must consequently be trained by a man more intelligent than himself...." "A man with only the intelligence of an average laborer can be taught to do the most difficult and delicate work if it is repeated enough times; and his lower mental caliber renders him more fit than the mechanic to stand the monotony of repetition."105

Workers had moral as well as physical and intellectual differences. To Taylor, workers by nature ascribed to ordinary goals of getting ahead, and were motivated primarily by money. Most men aspired to betterment and would work hard if assured a permanent liberal wage increase. However, Taylor cautioned against much of an increase over 30 to 60 per cent of the usual amount of pay. If "overpaid, many will work irregularly and tend to become more or less shiftless, extravagant and dissipated."106 Thus, all workers, even first class men were potentially, perhaps fundamentally, lazy, and therefore required externally applied control and incentive. Taylor often insisted that any worker who so wished could secure a job, and that those without work were merely lazy and irresponsible. He discounted evidence which demonstrated annual unemployment of one to four million.107

Morally shocked by men who failed to perform at their best, Taylor used the moral implications of the work ethic in differentiating between hardworking and therefore moral, and lazy and thus immoral workers.108 He often

emphasized the virtues of first class men who possessed "character and special ability of a high order"; they were practically all sober men (a steady drinker could not keep up the pace), they saved money and, as a consequence, they lived better. But the workman who produced less than first class men did not and ought not live as well. Otherwise "that would imply that all those in the world were entitled to live equally well whether they worked or whether they were idle, and that is certainly not the case."¹⁰⁹

To Taylor, the most telling distinction was first class workers' willingness to defer to employers' interests. The "most notable difference" between these and ordinary workers "lay in their changed mental attitude toward their employers and their work, and in the total absence of soldiering on their part."¹¹⁰ Furthermore, a subtle distinction divided even those willing to serve employers:

Quite a large proportion of young men set out deliberately to do barely enough to satisfy their employer - in fact, many of them would feel happy to do as little as they can and still satisfy their employer. Another set of men propose to do just what their (sic) employer wants. They, however, are at all times exceedingly careful to guard their own rights and not to give a single thing in the way of service that they are not paid for. About one man, however, in twenty takes the real, quick road to success. He makes up his mind deliberately that in all cases he will not only give his employer all that he wants, but that he will surprise him with something unexpected, something beyond what his employer has any right to ask or expect, and it is astonishing how fast this line of action leads to success.¹¹¹

The preface to the first French edition of Principles of Scientific Management reflected the general opinion of the day on the working class perception of its own interests. "The ignorance of man on the subject of his real interests is prodigious," the preface maintained. "Especially is this true in the case of the working man," largely because "they do not as yet have the smallest knowledge of the economic sciences."¹¹² Taylor, as noted, deferred to workers' assessment of their immediate, personal and class interests, but despaired of their failure to understand "the broad principles which affect their best interests."¹¹³ And a poor perception of interests, clouded by that working class bane, immediate gratification, inevitably led to false assumptions on the part of workers such as restriction of output, antagonism toward capital, and the choice of the wrong methods for redress, such as unions.

False assumptions led workers to "begrudge a fair and even a large profit to their employers," and worse, to "feel that all the fruits of their labor should belong to them." ¹¹⁴ Since limited perceptions precluded correct knowledge, false assumptions derived less from "wrong motives" than from being "ignorant of the underlying truths of political economy."¹¹⁵ This placed the burden not on the ignorant, but on the middle class, the "literary class," whose "duty" was to "see that the community is properly

educated."116

Taylor's notorious hostility toward the "dangers" of trade unions was formed in the context of extracting the maximum effort from each worker. Since unions were at the center of maintaining class solidarity in the skilled trades, "one of the most...difficult problems with the art of management," he lamented, "is how to persuade union men to do a full day's work if the union does not wish them to do it."117 Citing their "serious delusions" and "cant phrases", he castigated unions for formally enforcing standard day wages and piece rates and for encouraging workers informally to maintain craft traditions and rules. All these practices he lumped under the label "soldiering." Craft union rules limiting the amount of work, to Taylor, made workers "lazy, demoralized and uncompetitive."118 The existence of employer recognized unions and their insistence upon the use of official representatives precluded the individual treatment of workers so necessary in scientific management. "Therefore," Taylor cautioned,

all precautions should be taken which prevent the formation of a union. Workmen should...never be addressed collectively, either in a meeting or through printed notices, because if they are talked to in a body, or through notices and circulars the logical answer is for them to appoint a committee or a spokesman to represent them, and this is the starting point for a combination or union.119

Scientific management broke union enforcement with

individualism. The offer of individual bonus incentives had a "moral suasion on the workman which is powerful," and thus the differential piece rate drove a wedge between union members advocating a uniform daily rate for all workers, and those aspiring to individual advancement. It was not in the interests of highly paid men to join a union with "cheap men."¹²⁰ That Midvale Steel escaped the steel strikes of the decade after 1881, he attributed to all the "best men" recognizing that the "success of a labor organization meant the lowering of their wages in order that the inferior men might earn more; and of course, could not be persuaded to join."¹²¹ Again, he drew the distinction between the "best men" who correctly identified union subversion of their real interests in the name of group solidarity, and the "inferior men" who joined unions.

Taylor's view of unions was also formed in the context of achieving scientific control over all elements of production, especially the human element. To him, unions subverted this control on various levels. The quest for control and predictability in production effectively eliminated the desirability of bargaining over any of its elements. In this light, he saw unions as a separate power bloc within the factory which purposely undermined the process of rationalizing industry, and in so doing violated the natural laws governing the work process.¹²² Ultimately, unions constituted disruptive forces; their formation "is

almost invariably followed by strikes and almost open war between the management and the men."¹²³

Aside from their intervention in the process of production, unions exerted baneful social influences. "The boycott, the use of force or intimidation, and the oppression of non-union workmen by labor unions are damnable; these acts of tyranny are thoroughly un-American and will not be tolerated by the American people."¹²⁴ In this vein, restriction of output was "deliberate robbery of the poor of the fruits of industrial production."¹²⁵ Taylor reserved special ire for labor leaders who agitate only to give men a good return on their union dues, "scaring up grievances whether they exist or not."¹²⁶ Opportunism motivated some union leaders such as the "blatant demagogue" Samuel Gompers, while others "out of ignorance...misdirected their followers, teaching them "wrong doctrines."¹²⁷

In conclusion, scientific management created for employers new ways of looking at labor utilization. As a managerial revolution, it achieved a despotic organization of work oriented around discipline, docility, obedience and the work ethic. It established the social legitimacy of the scientific managerial class, on the shop floor and in society at large, a class which evolved into a full scale technocratic bureaucracy which regarded human workers in the same terms that they used in discussing the material organization of work. Workers were seen simply as a source

of work unattainable by machines, and the scientific managers' aim was to make the most efficient use of them. The model of the scientific treatment of workers is time and motion study, an efficiency cult in Taylor's day and the norm of ours.

As an ideology based on technology, Taylorism promoted the unity of interests of capital and labor while obscuring the class bias inherent in the rationalization of capitalist-owned production. The problems it identified were those of employers, and likewise, its solutions. As it instructed the worker in the rationality of industry and in the authority of that rationality, it redefined the role of employer and employee, their relationship to one another, to industrial production, to society.

Against organized labor's commitment to collective bargaining, Taylorism urged the individual contract. Blaming the victims, it absolved rationalized monopoly capital. Identifying workers as obstacles to production and progress, it discredited craft union practices and the labor movement itself. Presenting a mechanism for eliminating undesirable human traits, it required obedience and efficiency which promoted rationalized social behavior in and outside the factory. And, finally, Taylorism reshaped and reoriented previously held values and assumptions.

It is not the purpose of this essay to advance a theory of technological determinism. Behavior of owners and

workers was and is conditioned by culture and history as well as technological demands in the industrial context. Its purpose is, rather, to isolate those technological factors in scientific management and show how that influenced/guided capital's notions of what material, social and ideological changes should and could be achieved by its application. And the degree to which it informed the dominant ideological universe indicates the degree to which efficiency standards pervaded the general culture, and in particular, labor consciousness. The importance of this lies in the centrality of the value system which continues to be the ethos of modern industrial organization.

ENDNOTES: CHAPTER VI

- 1 Frederick Taylor, The Principles of Scientific Management, 1911, reprinted in Frederick Taylor, Scientific Management (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947; this collection also includes Shop Management, 1903, and Testimony Before the Special House Committee Investigating Taylor and Other Systems of Management, 1912; first quotation, Shop Management, p. 143; second, Principles, p. 142.
- 2 Frank Copley, Frederick Winslow Taylor: Father of Scientific Management (New York: Harper and Row, 1923), vol. 1, p. 31
- 3 David Montgomery, Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 3; on the formation of modern means of labor control in England during the industrial revolution see Sidney Pollard, Genesis of Modern Management (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), chapter "Adaptation of the Labor Force", pp. 160-208.
- 4 Ibid ., p. 26.
- 5 Ibid ., p. 102.
- 6 Ibid ., pp. 44, 116.
- 7 See Henri Le Chatelier, "Preface to the French Edition" of Principles of Scientific Management (no date) in Clarence B. Thompson Scientific Management: A Collection of the More Significant Articles Describing the Taylor System of Management (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), pp. 842-859, for a discussion of how Taylor's principles reflected natural law and were grounded in the economic determinism of the day.

- 8 U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Hearings Before the Special Committee of the House of Representatives to Investigate the Taylor and Other Systems of Shop Management Three Volumes (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1912), p. 212.
- 9 Taylor, Principles , p. 7.
- 10 Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era 1890-1920 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 11
- 11 Hollis Godfrey, "The Attitude of Labor Toward Scientific Management" Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science vol. 44 (July 1912), p. 71.
- 12 Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p. 86; Judith Merkle, Management and Ideology: The Legacy of the International Scientific Management Movement (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 14-15.
- 13 Harlow Person in the forward to the 1947 edition of Taylor's major works continued to promote the social benefits of scientific management: "The very survival of democratic institutions may depend on a lifting of productivity to new degrees of adequacy which will rapidly eliminate starvation, establish a feeling of greater economic security, and destroy impulses to follow false leaders along the paths of violence toward a totalitarian world." Taylor, Scientific Management , p. xvi; for a general discussion of the social and institutional consequences of technological change, see John Rae "The Application of Science to Industry" in Oleson and Voss, Organization of Knowledge , pp. 249-268. This essay also recounts the growth of the engineering profession from 7,300 in 1870 to 136,000 in 1920.
- 14 Haber, Efficiency and Uplift , p. x.
- 15 Ibid ., p. 25.
- 16 Taylor, Principles , p. 14.
- 17 Ibid ., p. 17.
- 18 Ibid ., p. 22.

- 19 Taylor, Principles , p. 22.
- 20 Ibid .
- 21 Ibid ., p. 23.
- 22 Ibid ., p. 24.
- 23 At Midvale Steel, Taylor estimated that workers and management "had about equal weight in deciding how fast the work should be done." Taylor, Shop Management , p. 44.
- 24 Taylor, Principles , p. 22.
- 25 Ibid ., p. 32.
- 26 Ibid .
- 27 Ibid ., p. 53.
- 28 Taylor, Testimony , p. 176.
- 29 Taylor, Shop Management , pp. 44-45; see also Daniel Nelson, "Scientific Management, Systematic Management and Labor, 1880-1915" Business History Review , 48 (1974), pp. 479-500.
- 30 Taylor, Shop Management ., pp. 85-86.
- 31 David Montgomery found that by 1918, specialized machine tenders and not craftsmen formed the largest group of workers in metal industries such as auto, electrical, machine tool and farm equipment. Montgomery Workers' Control , p. 117.
- 32 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 106.
- 33 Although the differential piece rate system of wage payment disappeared, incentive pay, time study, and subdivided and differentiated task descriptions persist in U.S. industry. Individual incentive remains geared to pay, itself determined by the skill classification of each job. See Daniel Nelson Frederick W. Taylor and the Rise of Scientific Management (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), p. 141, 200.
- 34 Taylor, Testimony , p. 165.

- 35 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 20.
- 36 Ibid ., p. 76.
- 37 Ibid .
- 38 Taylor, Testimony , p. 80.
- 39 Ibid ., p. 83.
- 40 Taylor, Testimony , pp. 83-84.
- 41 Ibid , p. 84.
- 42 Ibid ., p. 85.
- 43 Taylor, Principles , p. 36.
- 44 The proliferation of functional management created a new industrial bureaucracy, called by sociologists a technocracy. For a discussion of Taylor's system as a bureaucratic revolution, see Dan Clawson Bureaucracy and the Labor Process: The Transformation of U.S. Industry, 1860-1920 , Chapter 6.
- 45 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 99.
- 46 Taylor, Principles , p. 37.
- 47 Ibid ., p. 38.
- 48 Ibid , p. 36.
- 49 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 18.
- 50 Ibid ., p. 122.
- 51 Ibid .
- 52 Ibid ., p. 99.
- 53 Alvin Gouldner, The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology: The Origins, Grammar and Future of Ideology (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976), and Karl Marx, Capital three vols., (Chicago, 1906), 1:396-397, cited in Montgomery, Workers' Control , p. 34.

- 54 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 133; for an outline of the debate among sociologists over the extent to which technology determines shop-floor attitudes and behavior, see Frank Berkhofer, "Relationship Between Technology and Shop-floor Behaviour" in J. N. Wolf and D. D. Edge, eds., Meaning and Control: Essays in the Social Aspects of Science and Technology (London: Tavistock Publications, 1973); for other studies of the the role of ideology in engineering see David Noble, America by Design , and William Akin Technocracy and the American Dream (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Michael Burawoy, Manufacturing Consent (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), and Richard Pfeffer, Working for Capitalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).
- 55 Taylor, Principles , p. 10; for a progressive scientific management approach which considers workers' habits and needs see Richard Hartness, The Human Factor in Works Management (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1912).
- 56 Ibid ., p. 52; Shop Management , p. 137; Braverman, Labor , p. 99.
- 57 Taylor, Principles , p. 52.
- 58 Taylor, Testimony , p. 36; Principles , p. 32.
- 59 Copley, Frederick Taylor , 2:404.
- 60 Taylor, "Workmen and Their Management", unpublished manuscript of a lecture given in 1909 at the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration (after 1922, Harvard Business School), Carl Barth papers, Ms. Division, Baker Library, Harvard Business School.
- 61 Copley, Frederick Taylor , 2:404.
- 62 Braverman, Labor , pp. 86, 97; the prevailing business ethos admitted that wage theory rested upon subsistence, see Science and The Practice of Management (New York: Engineering Magazine, 1914), Chapter, "The Labor Question", p. 397; see also Henry Gantt, Work, Wages and Profits (New York: The Engineering Magazine, 1919).

- 63 Quoted in Hugh Aitken, Taylorism at Watertown Arsenal: Scientific Management in Action 1908-1915 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 77.
- 64 Taylor, Testimony , p. 76.
- 65 Taylor, Principles , p. 39.
- 66 Ibid ., p. 45.
- 67 Taylor, Testimony , p. 45.
- 68 Taylor, "Workmen and Their Management", p. 25.
- 69 Taylor, Principles , p. 83; Taylor's italics.
- 70 Milton Nadworny, Scientific Management and the Unions, 1900-1932 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 94.
- 71 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 109.
- 72 Aitken, Taylorism at Watertown . p. 120.
- 73 Braverman, Labor , p. 78.
- 74 Taylor's italics.
- 75 Taylor, Principles , p. 63.
- 76 Taylor, "Workmen and Their Management", p. 5.
- 77 Ibid ., pp. 6-7.
- 78 Taylor, Principles , pp. 25-26.
- 79 Ibid ., p. 97.
- 80 Ibid .
- 81 Taylor, "Workmen and Their Management", p. 14.
- 82 Ibid .
- 83 Ibid ., pp. 15-18.
- 84 Taylor, Principles , p. 38.
- 85 Ibid ., p. 25.
- 86 Taylor, Testimony , p. 96.

- 87 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 189.
- 88 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 190.
- 89 Ibid .
- 90 Ibid ., p. 24.
- 91 Taylor, Principles , pp. 55-56.
- 92 Taylor, Shop Management , pp. 54-55, 64.
- 93 Ibid ., pp. 54-55.
- 94 Taylor, Principles , p. 61.
- 95 Taylor, Testimony , p. 64.
- 96 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 64.
- 97 Taylor, Testimony , p. 123.
- 98 Ibid ., p. 176.
- 99 Ibid ., p. 174.
- 100 Ibid ., p. 75.
- 101 Taylor, Principles , p. 23.
- 102 Ibid ., p. 25.
- 103 Braverman, Labor , p. 108.
- 104 Taylor, Principles , p. 59.
- 105 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 28; Principles ,
pp. 59, 62.
- 106 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 27.
- 107 U.S. Congress Hearings, vol. 3, p. 1457 cited
in Nadworny, Scientific Management , p. 165.
- 108 Copley, Frederick Taylor , 1:207.
- 109 Taylor, Testimony , p. 168.
- 110 Taylor, Shop Management , pp. 55-57.
- 111 Ibid ., p. 56.

- 112 Thompson, Scientific Management , p. 847.
- 113 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 187.
- 114 Taylor, Principles , pp. 10-11.
- 115 Taylor, Testimony , p. 11.
- 116 Ibid . , p. 10.
- 117 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 191.
- 118 Ibid . , p. 189.
- 119 Taylor, "Workmen and Their Management", p. 24.
- 120 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 183; for a discussion of the response of union leaders to scientific management see Robert Hoxie, Scientific Management and Labor (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1915), p. 120.
- 121 Ibid .
- 122 Nadworny, Scientific Management , p. 49.
- 123 Taylor, "Workmen and Their Management", p. 24.
- 124 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 191.
- 125 Taylor, Testimony , p. 21.
- 126 Taylor, Shop Management , p. 188.
- 127 Taylor, Testimony , p. 21; Nadworny, Scientific Management , p. 48.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This study has focused on one aspect of the rise of monopoly corporate capitalism, the labor ideology of employers. In the critical years between 1880 and 1910, a prominent capitalist elite exercised increasingly greater material and ideological power over the remainder of society in a period when American social thought was consciously reformulated. The development of a skillfully articulated and forcefully promoted labor ideology provided an important tool for labor control and thus formed an integral part of the maturing process of capitalism. Through three case studies, this work demonstrated the historical development and social role of ideology as a mechanism of class rule in the U.S. It examined the class bias in the legitimating rhetoric of capitalist elites and the means by which that bias was pressed upon the laboring population and the larger society.

This study asked the question of how certain ideas become accepted as given in a society. It answered by using hegemonic theory and the sociology of knowledge to show that the social basis of knowledge reflects social hierarchies. Social authority and legitimacy placed dominant elites in a position to achieve a near ideological monopoly. For these

reasons, employer labor ideology formed a great part of the social body of knowledge which served as an objective description of the institution of labor. This body of knowledge provided the vocabulary, circumscribed the debate and determined, at least in part, the consciousness of all members of society.

Between 1880 and 1910, owners increasingly controlled a great amount of the machinery of information in this period and utilized various institutions as transmitters and legitimators of their beliefs: schools, churches, the mass media, political parties, and, after 1900, the trade unions. Into these institutions, owners injected their labor ideology, and as those institutions and their leaders influenced behavior and thought, they moved their members toward acceptance of capitalist ideas.

In all three case studies, capitalist ideology developed and was proselytized under the pressure of labor's ideological challenge. During a time of highly polarized class conflict, the debate over relations between capital and labor and the nature of the economic system occupied the center of the social stage. The stress of labor disruptions and challenges forced capital to confront labor ideologies critical or subversive of capitalism, to promote and justify a radical new management system, and to confront a material challenge by a strong union. Thus employers geared their arguments to those of labor, the open against the closed

shop, social service against social disruption, hard work against soldiering, scientific management against low productivity, order against chaos. On a larger scale, business labor ideology arose from social contradictions which required elites to justify economic reality in terms of class or national ideals.

Responding to these pressures, the ideologues of the National Association of Manufacturers, Scientific Management, the Pullman Company and the railroads formulated a body of propaganda which served as a rationalization for their actions. The rhetoric of capitalist elites furnished the means to ideologically bind workers to the new industrial system by legitimating existing socioeconomic realities: the distribution of wealth, patterns of property ownership and labor utilization, and state and private methods of social control. This legitimation was accomplished, in part, by portraying the prevailing system as logical, valid, natural and reasonable. Elite ideology sought to stabilize and maintain the industrial order through the creation of a docile and diligent labor force, and through the subordination of workers to a rationalized, owner controlled labor process.

Businessmen directed their ideas toward two specific audiences: the working class and the public. Their labor ideology portrayed capital as the very embodiment of values the society held dear. It pitted class neutral entities such

as "public opinion" or "society," which implied the well being and survival of the social whole, against labor's social subversiveness. In this vein, it utilized a selective historical tradition to rest the power of employers on the supposed universal moral values and historical experience of the "nation" against the unpatriotic historical experience and social needs of the working class. Employer ideology took liberal republican notions such as freedom, equal opportunity and individual rights, and made them into their own class arguments, tenets of the capitalist market.

At the same time it was directed at convincing the public of the inherent wrongness of workers' ideas and activities. It selected definitions of labor and descriptions of labor activities and goals which discredited or nihilated that institution. Except for certain leaders who were villified, labor appeared in owners' rhetoric as a faceless generalization which reflected owners' stereotypes and prejudices. This generalization relied upon the traditions, conventions and agreed-upon codes of understanding among employers rather than on direct observation of the working class. Employers' labor ideology readied the public consciousness for new ways of thinking about the relationship of capital and labor. It attempted to disrupt labor's activities, discredit its leaders and realign its allegiances.

Through the exercise of hegemony in the period

1880-1910, businessmen sought to prescribe the limits of the debate, confining it to fine tuning or adjusting the existing system, but discrediting or eliminating its criticism. Their ideology attempted to prevent any examination of its own ideas or of the material relationships upon which they rested. Elite ideology sought to prevent the working class from generating competing ideas or popularizing an alternative economic system. Employer ideology sought to avoid the real conflict of interests that militant labor ideology offered, and preserve, instead, a status quo in which a small group owned and most of the remainder worked for them. It sought to diffuse or redistribute direct conflict between capital and labor or between workers and managers by obscuring the elements of the debate. Thus employer propaganda disguised the increasing subordination of workers to an employer controlled, despotically organized work process in a rhetorical cloak of a supposed unity of capital and labor's interests. Where the avowed effects of the market worked to capital's advantage, in wage policy for example, elite ideology asserted the naked power of the market. Where it likewise was advantageous, it constituted workers as individuals rather than members of a class, factors rather than humans. Employer rhetoric hid its actions behind the facade of classical economics, justifying its behavior by insisting that it was governed by economic laws and owed

nothing to morality. But its exhortations to work and obedience were moral.

In a period when business consolidation pointed toward less inter-elite strife and more cooperation, the crystallization of an effective labor ideology reinforced owners' determination to unite against what they perceived as a common enemy. In one sense, employers directed their labor ideology toward each other and gained in strength and identity by juxtaposing themselves against labor. The articulation, exchange and propagation of their ideas provided coherence to the ruling class and furnished a social solidarity necessary to maintain class bonds. Employer ideology evinced little ambivalence and much certainty. It provided a motivation for action, a coordination of tactics, and fostered a favorable public opinion for a more free and legitimate exercise of owners' power.¹ The propagandists in the three studies, although apparently having no direct communication with one another, shared similar and often identical patterns of analysis and belief indicating common definitions of the problem and shared practical solutions to the dispute between capital and labor.

The radical labor ideology of U.S. workmen declined in force in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Although radical labor organizations continued to challenge business ideology, labor's mainstream leadership emerged

from this period having adopted many of employers ideas concerning the relations between capital and labor. With the growth of arbitration in the period 1900-1920, workers achieved a voice in determining wages and work conditions. Arbitration took place, however, under the employer's terms, within a context which sustained the essential economic relationships of the status quo. This context narrowed the debate to a question of obtaining benefits within the system. Organized labor in the U.S. turned away from its early radical position and began to cast its lot with employers. The result was that, between 1880 and 1910, trade unions increasingly acted as legitimators of the ideology of another class.

The process of subordinating oppositional working class ideas under the dominant employer ideology was not entirely due to the hegemonic power of employers. Their ideology did not unilaterally determine what was thought about labor, but brought to bear a network of ideas and interests that profoundly influenced any discussion about workers, unions or strikes. In short, their power was not absolute or monolithic, but it was systemic and legitimating. It rested, ultimately, on the coercive power of the state. It did not instantly drive out working class ideology, but in the long run, it prevailed. Radical ideas exist today among members of the U.S. workforce, but they are so discredited and penalized that they cannot be

considered part of any mainstream challenge. Today, most U.S. citizens and unionized labor support capitalist political economy for reasons that repeat many of the ideas expressed by owners in this period, ideas about work, workers, unions, rights, and the social function of capital.² The dominant national consciousness has been and is biased against unions.

The outcome of the dialogue between capital and labor in this period was the result, in part, of systematic, ideological control on the part of capital. It did not result in the triumph of the better argument about how society should be constituted or how capital and labor should relate to each other. It resulted, instead, in the triumph of the force of the "better argument" as society came to perceive it. Better, not because it provided for society a greater degree of freedom or justice, but better merely because it prevailed.

ENDNOTES: CHAPTER 7

- 1 Robert Sobel, The Entrepreneur: Explorations Within the American Business Tradition (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1974), p. 337.
- 2 Roger Blough. The Free Man and the Corporation (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959); the author, Chairman of United States Steel Corporation restates much of the nineteenth century entrepreneurial ideology, such as unions constitute a loss of freedom.

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