

'A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN
ATTITUDE VARIATIONS BETWEEN TWO
GROUPS OF MOTOR VEHICLE
ASSEMBLY WORKERS'

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S U M M A R Y

The research on which this thesis is based was undertaken in CAB 2 Shop at British Leyland Ltd., Longbridge, and at Jensen Motors Ltd., West Bromwich. Fifty men engaged in motor vehicle assembly work at each place answered a series of questions put to them individually. They were asked to comment freely on matters they felt to be related to the issues raised. What follows is partly concerned with recording the responses to the questions put and suggesting why they were made.

The aim of the research was to inquire into the nature of workers' attitudes about their jobs, their colleagues, their unions, their firms and their firms' products. In addition to questions which sought to elicit views about these matters, information was also sought about the respondents' social and education backgrounds.

British Leyland was a large organisation with a history of industrial unrest, making popular products: Jensen Motors was a small, practically dispute-free organisation making quality products. We were concerned to investigate to what extent these, and other variations, contributed to the marked differences in industrial relations.

The thesis is presented in the form indicated in the table of contents, but falls into three major sections. The first is concerned with reporting responses to questions and comments to which the questions gave rise. In the second part we discuss possible reasons for the views and attitudes encountered. We go on to consider the aptness of the views of some distinguished industrial psychologists and industrial sociologists to the situations obtaining in our area of inquiry.

The third section is a summary of discussion.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The aim of this study was to ascertain the nature of the attitudes of two groups of workers in motor vehicle assembly work with regard to their employers, unions, supervisors, colleagues, their firm's products and the work place environment. The two groups each consisted of fifty workers involved in various aspects of motor vehicle assembly work and were drawn from CAB 2, British Leyland Ltd., Longbridge, and Jensen Motors Ltd., West Bromwich. The field work was done between April 1968 and January 1970 at the respective plants. Acknowledgement is made here to the management and unions of both organisations without whose sympathetic consideration this study would have been impossible.

The study was undertaken in the context of a clear difference in industrial relations at the two firms. No one interested in the industrial activity of the West Midlands could fail to be aware of unrest in the motor industry. Hardly a day and certainly not a week, goes by without news of a disruption causing the loss of thousands of man hours. The larger firms in the industry appear to be the focal points of unrest and no single organisation suffers more than British Leyland. Their lot appears doubly unfortunate because they suffer not only from their own internal disputes but also from those of their component suppliers. In contrast, a small firm like Jensen Motors had an almost trouble free record.

Thus, in a period of six months from January to June 1969, while this research was being undertaken at Longbridge, no fewer than 92 disputes occurred involving the loss of more than three-hundred thousand man hours. During the two years 1969 and 1970, Jensen Motors suffered from only one dispute, which arose from the siting of a machine. The issue was resolved in an afternoon and lasted little

more than two hours. Twenty men were involved.

The research reported here explores the possible causes of this difference. The thesis considers the effect of such factors as the difference in size, technology, organisation, personalities and product variation in the two firms. An attempt is also made to examine the effects of more elusive and perhaps inter-related factors such as the ethos, history and sociology of the organisations.

The material is presented in three parts. Part 1 outlines the situations studied, the circumstances of those involved and the methods used to evaluate the information obtained. Part 2 is a discussion section dealing with the possible causes and consequences of the obtaining situations. Part 3 is a review of the ideas to which the research gave rise.

P A R T 1

THE FIELD WORK.

The Nature of the Firms studied.

CAB 2 is by any standards a large workshop covering an area of some 300,000 square yards, the roof height is between 40 and 60 feet at the top of an acutely angled roof section. A thousand workers were employed there. Vehicles were assembled on tracks and each worker had a station along either one side or the other. Lighting and ventilation were generally felt to be satisfactory. There was a high level of noise, (no measurements were taken), about which many workers complained but some conversation was possible from very short range. The track was stopped for ten minutes in every hour.

The Jensen factory employed a work force of just over four hundred in an area of over 500,000 square yards and was therefore less crowded. The working space was divided into a number of smaller areas in which particular operations were performed. There was no track, vehicles were moved around on bogies. Noise levels were generally much lower than at British Leyland but varied from area to area. Lighting and ventilation were adequate but there were no complaints, as at British Leyland, about extreme seasonal heat and cold. Conversation was possible almost everywhere.

METHODS

The Selection of the Samples.

Most of the information collected was obtained from interviews with the samples of workers and from supplementary interviews with supervisory staff personnel.

At both British Leyland and Jensen Motors, the worker samples consisted of fifty adult, married males, each of whom had more than

two years service with his firm. At British Leyland the Personnel Department supplied a nominal roll of likely respondents. This was not proportionally representative of the complete occupation range in CAB 2 but did include workers from the major job classifications. The roll contained one hundred names in alphabetical order. Participants were taken from as many different job classifications as possible and were otherwise selected by drawing random numbers. Men were asked individually to participate.

At British Leyland the agreement of the senior union officials in the shop was obtained to their members' participation in the research and this was given subject to the individual's approval.

At Jensen Motors a nominal roll of likely respondents was supplied, with management approval, by the shop stewards of the N.U.V.W. and the Metalworkers' Union. As was the case at British Leyland, the roll contained one hundred names but was not proportionally representative of the complete occupational range. The participant selection criteria at Jensens were the same as those used at British Leyland.

Most of the workers interviewed from both samples did in fact have common job descriptions. These included finishers, recitifiers, trimmers, painters, mechanics and sub assemblers although, because of the product differences, there were inevitable differences in the actual task performed and in the job cycle. Some jobs at one plant did not exist at the other, for example, two fibre glass workers were interviewed at Jensens and two marshallers were interviewed at British Leyland.

Interview Procedures.

All the interviews were conducted by the writer who completed an interview schedule for each respondent as shown in Appendix 1.

The same interview schedules were used at both British Leyland and Jensen Motors.

Since interviewing is essentially a stimulus-response situation, it was important to ensure that variations in response were not due to variations in stimulus. This required that the form of wording and the sequence of the questions should be the same for all the respondents; since the writer alone interviewed, no problem of interviewer difference was present.

All interviews began with an introduction and preamble which contained the assurance that whatever passed between the research worker and his subject would be treated by the former as personal and confidential. Respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their answers if they thought it useful to do so.

The men were interviewed separately in a room provided by the management. Each interview lasted about thirty minutes. All the men showed a keen interest in the procedure and there was no difficulty in getting them to talk. The men were asked individually to participate. The participants, at British Leyland, were then asked by their shop floor supervisors to go along for interview. At Jensens the subject was asked to go for interview either by a shop steward or the preceding respondent.

No-one chosen at either place refused to participate. All of the chosen sample at Jensens were eventually interviewed. If it was not possible to meet a respondent straight away then he came for interview later. At British Leyland three of the originally chosen sample were unable to participate. They were replaced by workers from the same job classifications.

Treatment of Data.

The interview included a number of questions of the multiple

choice type in which the respondent was required to indicate his attitude on either a five or a three point scale. On the five point scale the values used were +2, +1, 0, -1, -2, and on the three point scale +1, 0, -1. These values were used to calculate means for each group. To test the hypothesis that there was no difference between the attitudes of the two samples as represented by these means, i.e. they belonged to the same population, the t-test was used. The larger the value of t, the more significant is any difference in the measures of group opinion and the less likelihood of the null hypothesis being correct.

Where the value of t is less than 2 the difference between the samples is regarded as non significant: the null hypothesis cannot be rejected at the 5% level. Where the value of t ranges from 2 to 2.7 the null hypothesis is rejected at the 5% level but not at 1%. This indicates that the difference is probably significant because there is less than a 1 in 20 chance of this result if the samples are equal. Where the value of t ranges from more than 2.7 to 3.5, it is highly probable that there is a difference between the samples because there is less than 1 chance in 100 of the null hypothesis obtaining. Where t is greater than 3.5 there is less than 1 chance in 1,000 of the null hypothesis obtaining. A difference between the samples is very highly probable.

In the questions that follow a significance rating is given to the value of t. Where t is less than 2 the difference between the samples is rated as non significant: when t is between 2 and 2.7 it is significant, from 2.7 to 3.5 highly significant and when t is greater than 3.5 it is rated as very highly significant. The initial letters N.S., S., H.S., and V.H.S. are used to represent these four significance ratings.

The same values as those taken for t-testing were used, where

appropriate, in determining indices of satisfaction. An index was calculated, in both five and three point questions, by applying the scales of value referred to above to both the favourable and unfavourable responses, subtracting one from the other and dividing the answer by one hundred. An index derived could have either a negative or a positive value. If for example, in a three point question using the values +1, 0, -1, and the total + response for the group is 40, the 0 response is 38 and the - response is 22 then the index of satisfaction would be 0.18. This is obtained by subtracting 22 from 40 and dividing by 100. In a case where the + value is 14, the 0 value is 48 and the - value is 38 then the index of satisfaction would be -0.24.

Separate interviews with the shop floor supervisory staff were conducted by the writer using the interview schedule shown in Appendix 2. The choice of respondents was restricted because there were relatively few of them and because of the need to interview those who had 'most to do' with the shop floor samples. As a result, the supervisory staff interviewed at both British Leyland and Jensens practically selected themselves in accordance with the limitations imposed by the situation.

THE NATURE OF THE SAMPLES

Table 1. Age and service of the two samples.

		British Leyland Sample				
Age Range	%					Total
		2-5 years	5-10	10-15	15 plus	
25/29	28(14)	20(10)	8(4)	0(0)	0(0)	28(14)
30/34	40(20)	20(10)	20(10)	0(0)	0(0)	40(20)
35/39	20(10)	4(2)	14(7)	2(1)	0(0)	20(10)
40/44	6(3)	0(0)	2(1)	4(2)	0(0)	6(3)
45 plus	6(3)	0(0)	2(1)	2(1)	2(1)	6(3)
		Jensen Motors Sample				
25/29	18(9)	14(7)	4(2)	0(0)	0(0)	18(9)
30/34	22(11)	8(4)	14(7)	0(0)	0(0)	22(11)
35/39	22(11)	12(6)	8(4)	2(1)	0(0)	22(11)
40/44	18(9)	4(2)	6(3)	6(3)	2(1)	18(9)
45 plus	20(10)	6(3)	6(3)	4(2)	4(2)	20(10)

Unbracketed figures are percentages.

Bracketed figures show the actual numbers.

Age distribution details for the whole workforce at each place were not available but impressions formed, over the considerable amount of time taken for the field work, suggested that the samples were reasonably representative. British Leyland did not have a deliberate policy of engaging relatively younger personnel as the table above might suggest, but CAB 2 was a comparatively new shop at British Leyland where the tendency, perhaps unconsciously, was to prefer younger and apparently more adaptable personnel. At Jensens, at times of economic difficulty such as that firm had experienced, the tendency was to retain those with the longest service.

THE NATURE OF THE SAMPLES

Table 2. Social and Educational Background of the Samples.

	British Leyland.	%	Jensens.
Those born outside the West Midlands	14(7)		6(3)
Those whose previous occupations were of a non-engineering nature	2(1)		0(0)
Those who were first generation industrial workers	28(14)		44(22)
Those who left school before they were 16	100(50)		96(48)
Those who undertook some form of further education	6(3)		60(30)
Those who lived in areas where industrial workers predominated	80(40)		80(40)
Those living in owner/occupied property	54(27)		58(29)
Those living in rented property	46(23)		42(21)
Those whose particular friends were industrial workers	72(36)		66(33)
Those who met their work mates socially	28(14)		22(11)
Those who did not meet their work mates socially	44(22)		60(30)
Those who met their work mates socially occasionally	28(14)		18(9)

The figures placed in brackets show the actual numbers.

Unbracketed figures are percentages.

The average number of different jobs since leaving school, for both samples, was the same, namely 5-6.

The data in Table 2 was obtained from the interviews.

Table 2 shows that both samples consisted of predominantly local people in that they were born in the West Midlands. This was particularly so at Jensens where only three of the sample came from elsewhere, eighteen of the complete sample of fifty having been born in West Bromwich or in the neighbouring borough of Smethwick. Likewise few of the British Leyland sample were born outside the West Midlands, although it might have been anticipated that the lure of employment in the motor industry and the national reputation of British Leyland would have attracted some personnel from further afield.

Taking both samples together only one worker had previously worked outside engineering. The picture clearly indicates two groups of workers 'born with spanners in their mouths'. This phrase was used by Mr. Carl Duerr, Managing Director of Jensens, in a film made about him called, 'Turn About Man', to describe a work force drawn from an environment where engineering is such a predominant feature.

All the British Leyland sample left school at either fourteen or fifteen and only three followed any further education courses. Impressions of school education varied; the most common of these was its inadequacy compared with the opportunities available today. A number of workers complained that their education left them unprepared for work. Others regretted 'not making the most of their chances' and four complained of lack of teacher interest in them. One car assembler in his early twenties, who looked upon his job simply as a means of providing a livelihood, said that he was anxious to improve his general education and was plainly seeking guidance to this end. In this he was unique.

All but two of the Jensen Sample left school at either fourteen or fifteen but thirty of them had undertaken some form of part time further education. This was mainly technical in, for example, sheet

metal work, electrical or mechanical engineering, but two others had taken courses in trade union work. General impressions of school education varied widely, but, on balance, the responses were more favourable than those obtained from the British Leyland sample. The answers to this question could be construed as indicating that favourable impressions of school education were related to the undertaking of further education. One painter there who felt he had gained little from his schooling thought that further education was not for him so he was not interested in it.

Table 2 shows that fourteen of the British Leyland sample were first generation industrial workers compared with twenty-two of the Jensen sample. Thirty-nine of the Jensen sample and thirty-seven of the British Leyland sample came from families in which other members were industrial workers. Given that there were a few in each sample who were only children, the figures reinforce the impression of two work forces drawn from an environment where industrial work, and particularly engineering, is a strongly imprinted feature of the culture.

Forty of the fifty respondents in each sample lived in neighbourhoods where the majority of householders were industrial workers. The remainder lived in neighbourhoods in which the occupations of the householders were more varied.

Slightly over half of each sample lived in owner occupied accommodation. The remainder lived in some form of rented accommodation. As would be expected, the majority of each sample lived in the West Midland conurbation, but not necessarily near either to Longbridge or West Bromwich. Indeed, there were workers at both factories who lived in the locality of the other one. Three of the British Leyland sample lived in rural areas.

Between two-thirds and three-quarters of both samples said that their particular friends were industrial workers, but Table 2 suggests that particular friends were unlikely to be work mates. Only fourteen of the British Leyland sample and eleven of the Jensen sample said that they met their work mates socially. Indeed, many of the responses indicated that work and social life were, and ought to be, exclusive. For example, it was suggested by one respondent that the most agreeable thing about his job was getting away from it. This understandable response to what many considered to be limiting, irksome and tedious work had a 'carry over' effect. A common feeling was that in his free time a man ought to get away from his job and also the people associated with it.

Both the British Leyland and the Jensen workers had had approximately the same number of different jobs on average since leaving school, i.e. five or six. In the case of the Jensen sample, ten sheet metal workers had been considerably more mobile than any other group, but their job opportunity range extended outside motor work. The remainder of the Jensen sample had therefore been slightly less mobile on average, than the British Leyland sample.

SHOP FLOOR WORK FORCE - RESULTING ATTITUDES

The series of questions which sought to elicit information about social and educational background was followed by others which sought to discover attitudes about the firm, the management, the supervision, the unions, the product, communications and the work place environment.

A copy of the interview schedule containing the questions put to the respondents is included in the appendix to this paper. The idea that a table might have been constructed to combine all the questions and responses was considered. It was felt to be inappropriate because of the inconvenience involved in constant reference back to it. It would also have the effect of divorcing comment and observation from questions to which such matter was related. Questions appearing in the body of the paper are numbered to correspond with those on the interview schedule in the appendix.

QUESTION 1 - 'How do you like your present job?'

	<u>Jensen %</u>	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) I don't like it	0	4
(b) I'd prefer something else	4	12
(c) I just do it - neither liking nor disliking it	20	20
(d) All things considered I like it pretty well	42	46
(e) I like it very well	34	18

Indices of satisfaction: Jensen sample 1.06 - British Leyland 0.62

t-testing: $t = 3.3$ Difference Highly Significant (H.S.)

More subtle differences in attitudes were revealed by the manner adopted and the impressions conveyed by the respondents when answering the question. At British Leyland the following comments were recorded: 'Well, I suppose its not too bad a job really'. 'It's fairly well paid - it's in the dry'. 'Well the hours are short and you don't have

to take it home with you'. The responses conveyed an initial and perhaps instinctive disliking of the job which was somehow reflected by such comments as those recorded above, which were usually offered after a few moments of consideration.

This 'could be worse' attitude was particularly apparent at British Leyland and is probably attributable to a number of factors. Firstly it is likely to be the traditional or historic attitude towards the job that workers in this particular situation have had passed on to them, in other words it is an element of the psychological environment. Secondly it probably reflects the stress and pressure of the work on a conveyor. Tension is undoubtedly felt, is usually contained and is therefore often unnoticeable, but little is required to release it. Thirdly, since the interview represented a break from tension, the respondents were able to reflect on the relatively favourable nature of their occupation and its situation compared with those of many other industrial workers.

The stress and tension was noticeably less marked at Jensens where one particular response seemed to reflect the feeling of many. It was, 'Well given that a job is necessary to supply the means of a livelihood, then compared to other industrial work, you are not likely to do much better'. These were the actual words used. The relative lack of tension at Jensens was clearly, although only partially, because there was no conveyor system. The existence of good, clearly evident, direct contacts between management and shop stewards seemed to support a mutual confidence there. The suspicion that decisions affecting a workers livelihood were being made impersonally between almost unknown management and union figures in some remote office, was not aroused.

QUESTION 2 - Is the atmosphere of your work place

	<u>Jensens</u>	%	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Extremely hot, cold, draughty or dusty?	4		4
(b) Usually unpleasant?	6		4
(c) Occasionally unpleasant?	26		14
(d) Generally satisfactory?	50		70
(e) Excellent most of the time?	14		8

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.64

British Leyland sample 0.74

t-testing: $t = 0.8$. - Difference Non-significant (N.S.)

The percentages and the comments from both groups suggested that physical conditions did not appear to be a very significant cause of con attitudes towards the job. In the words of a number of workers at both plants, 'There did not seem to be much to complain about'. Such comments as this were actually made by the respondents who acknowledged them to be relative considerations, since the physical conditions of the work place were seen to be preferable to those experienced in both the building and ship building industries for example.

There were complaints about noise but most of the workers regarded this as a problem initially and they soon became used to it. There were also complaints about excessive seasonal cold and heat but it seemed to be generally accepted that discomfort caused by these elements was at a tolerable level. The overall impression was that the physical conditions of the work place were tolerable and no great cause in themselves, for anxiety. Perhaps this indicates that working conditions elsewhere in manufacturing industry are very little better, if at all, than those at the two places in question.

QUESTION 3 - For the most part fellow employees in my department are:

	<u>Jensens %</u>	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Unfriendly	0	0
(b) Indifferent to me	4	2
(c) All right	26	20
(d) Co-operative	20	38
(e) Very friendly	50	40

Indices of Satisfaction - Jensen sample 1.16

British Leyland sample 1.16

t-testing: $t = 0$. Difference - N.S.

The responses suggest in both cases that personal relationships were reasonably harmonious. There seemed to be little jealousy or rivalry between workers at either place, there was no suggestion for example, that some workers were favourites of the supervisory staff, or that any were 'gaffers narks'. Neither was there any suggestion of injustice in the allocation of what were considered desirable jobs.

Money was not mentioned in any of the comments made as being a cause of disharmony in the relationships between employees in the same department. This was probably because they were 'all in the same boat' since wages were made up from payment on piece rates and a share of the bonus earned by the gang apportioned according to the time worked. There was no rivalry between groups or gangs over the work done since they performed different tasks.

The relative equality in payment and status and the absence of competition were important elements in the relationship which existed amongst the workers. Further a similar work place situation was common to them all. These things taken together undoubtedly gave rise to a broad identification with one another, they belonged to the same group. This group identification was much more apparent at British

Leyland than at Jensens and is clearly related to the felt remoteness from the management. This 'us/them' distinction may be unjustified, naive, and emotional but it exists and needs to be recognised. This same attitude is directly related to much that follows.

QUESTION 4 - In his attitude towards you personally is your immediate supervisor:

	<u>Jensens</u>	%	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Always unfair?	0		0
(b) Often unfair?	2		0
(c) Sometimes fair - sometimes not?	28		14
(d) Usually fair?	46		58
(e) Fair at all times?	24		28

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.92

British Leyland sample 1.14

t-testing: $t = 0.7$. Difference - N.S.

On the face of it these responses were not what might have been expected because immediate supervisors appeared to be slightly more favourably viewed by the British Leyland sample than by Jensens. Unless familiarity breeds contempt we would expect supervisors in the small scale situation to have much closer personal involvement with the men and so be more favourably viewed by them. The explanation is probably to be found by looking at the nature of contact between workers and the whole supervisory range including management.

At British Leyland the work force rarely came into direct contact with anyone above senior foreman status, almost all contact was with supervisory staff of that level and below. Immediate supervisors were therefore accepted as 'natural features of the landscape' - they were us as opposed to them. At Jensens there was direct, and frequently daily contact between workers on the shop floor and all

ranks in the hierarchy. Stratification was barely evident. Therefore workers appeared to feel that they were regarded by the management as being equal with immediate supervisors: they were frequently present and involved in decision making on technical points. Thus status was apparently conferred. The immediate supervisor at Jensens was seen in this context, rather like the lance-corporal whose authority is seen to be limited and questionable but is required to exercise it.

At British Leyland the supervisory staff were not so exposed. They were stationed in the shop where their positions were not compromised, or thought to be compromised by the frequent presence of management personnel.

QUESTION 5 - In comparison with other employees in your community, how well does the company treat its employees?

	<u>Jensens</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Most other employers are better	0		2
(b) A few other employers are better	4		8
(c) About as well as the average employer	30		50
(d) Our company is better than most	54		32
(e) Our company is decidedly the best of all	12		8

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.74

British Leyland sample 0.36

t-testing: $t = 3.4$. Difference - H.S.

The marked difference in response had little to do with money, both groups were relatively well paid, in fact the British Leyland sample were slightly better paid than Jensens. The relative size of the organisations seemed much more significant. For example the British Leyland respondents commented as follows, 'You are just a

number as far as they are concerned', 'They don't want to know anything about you unless there's trouble' and 'They just use you to suit their own purposes'. Undoubtedly many workers felt that the firm regarded them as 'production fodder' in a vast organisation. This impersonality was widely interpreted as deliberate management indifference to them and the workers in their turn reflected this assumed attitude.

In one interesting respect the percentage of favourable responses of the Jensen sample was surprisingly large because in 1967 and 1968 a considerable amount of restructuring was forced upon the company by economic pressures. These led to ownership changing hands and consequent reorganisation and redundancy. Many of the respondents were affected by this, to the extent of redundancy in some cases, but these traumatic experiences, as they must have been for some, seem to have generated little rancour. Indeed several workers expressed the view that the company's treatment of employees had improved and there was optimism about further improvement in the future. Much appreciation was expressed of the friendliness and frankness of the management in its dealings with the work people. The respondents commented frequently, 'That the position had changed for the better with the new management'.

QUESTION 6 - Would you say the job was:

	Jensens	%	British Leyland
(a) Always boring	0		12
(b) Often boring?	14		22
(c) Sometimes boring - sometimes not?	20		46
(d) Usually interesting?	52		16
(e) Interesting at all times?	14		4

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.66

British Leyland sample-0.22

t-testing: $t = 6.6$. Difference - V.H.S.

The difference in attitude here undoubtedly had something to do with the difference between the products. There was clearly more satisfaction derived from working on a quality job which required a man to display his ability as a craftsman, than in the work on a popular mass produced job. Workers at Jensens frequently expressed 'pride' in their jobs. For example 'I like to turn out a good job and feel that I've done it: it's proof of your ability', and 'There's something about putting a finish on something that has been created, it's something that will be admired by prospective buyers. I get a lot of satisfaction out of it and it makes you feel proud when you look at it'.

80% of the British Leyland sample found their jobs boring to some degree, and this reaction was general throughout the job classifications since it included rectifiers, tester mechanics, car assemblers and paint workers. Some reactions were: 'I just accept the job and do it automatically. You can think about other things like family matters and what's on the television, that really interest you'. 'There's no feeling of craftsmanship - I suppose I'm only here for the pay', and 'It's dead monotonous. I feel I'm wasted on this job, I should like something where you could use your initiative more'. And yet in response to the question 'Does the product interest you?' almost 80% of the British Leyland sample said that it did and a considerable number of these said that they were car enthusiasts.

There would seem to be a paradox here since it is odd to find something of interest and yet find that work on it is boring. Nevertheless this was the case. The explanation was probably that repetition operations performed by individuals became monotonous and boring, yet the completed product was of interest. The same probably

applies in the large scale production of aircraft and in ship building.

The amount of time spent on a job, (the job cycle) was longer at Jensens than at British Leyland. This was partly because more time was taken over similar jobs but also because of greater variety in the operations performed. In its turn this stimulated interest, allowed for the greater use of skill and developed a feeling of responsibility. Another form of variety was provided by changes in the rate of working, which was more apparent at Jensens than at British Leyland.

The main sources of monotony were simplicity, uniformity and regularity, though some of the more complex operations were said to become monotonous through repetition. Conversely there were those who found the work distasteful and tedious originally but who found it became more tolerable as they became used to it. This gradual process of adaptation to a fundamentally uninteresting task would seem to be an important stabilising influence in industry. Incidents or events which formerly irritated or annoyed were overlooked or ignored, and work proceeded along the least line of resistance. The conditions of work remains the same - the outlook of the worker changes.

The difference in attitude clearly had something to do with the difference between the products, it also had something to do with scale. A large manufacturing firm must employ mass production methods, jobs must be broken down into component elements. Workers are therefore subjected to the repetition of relatively simple tasks. In these circumstances, which obtained at British Leyland, it would be very odd if considerable numbers of workers did not find their jobs monotonous and boring. The problem of stimulating interest in an intrinsically uninteresting task probably waits on further research, the hostility that such circumstances generates might be assuaged by better industrial relations, but more of this later.

QUESTION 7 - Would you say the management is:

	<u>Jensens</u> %	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Always interested in you as a person?	46	10
(b) Occasionally interested in you as a person?	42	40
(c) Never interested in you as a person?	12	50

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.34

British Leyland sample-0.40

t-testing: $t = 7.7$. Difference - V.H.S.

It was plain that the Jensen management was more successful in conveying its concern for its workers than British Leyland's management. This again has something to do with scale. In any community consisting of about 400 people working together in close proximity, it would be unusual if, over a period of time, everyone did not come to know everyone else. But this situation does not necessarily produce good human relations, although it must present a better chance of doing so. That Jensens were more successful in this respect seemed to have a great deal to do with personalities. Senior figures in the management there made efforts, not only to be seen and known, but to communicate on a person to person basis with the work people. The communications seemed to be very much a two way matter, not simply that of a management figure doing all the talking. Indeed some of the Jensen respondents jokingly said that the manager would listen to 'any old yarn', 'you could tell him anything'. If nothing else this conveyed an impression of sincere personal interest in the work people.

To the majority of the British Leyland sample the management was felt to consist of distant, practically unknown figures who resided

beyond glass doors at the end of long carpeted corridors. One respondent referred, perhaps jokingly, to the offices as 'the Kremlin'. People do incline to joke about things they fear and the offices were felt to be the remote centre of absolute power. This emotional reaction might be dispelled by a moment's calm consideration but the environment of the work place was stressful, it was not an ivory tower where calm rationality prevailed. So that in an environment of this sort prejudices were inclined to be reinforced rather than dispelled. The management's problem there, was how to establish and project an acceptable image, an image which communicated mutual trust and precluded unilateral suspicion.

At British Leyland management personnel were rarely seen on the shop floor and when one was he seemed out of place there.

Of those who answered that 'the management was occasionally interested in you as a person' in both samples, there were those who chose what they might have felt to be the middle way between the two extremes, but also those who stressed the word 'occasionally' either implying or stating explicitly that management concern was 'very occasional', and was probably related to there being 'something at the back of it'.

QUESTION 8 - Do you think of the Union as being:

	<u>Jensens</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Always interested in you as a person?	58		22
(b) Occasionally interested in you as a person?	34		50
(c) Never interested in you as a person	8		28

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.50

British Leyland sample-0.06

t-testing: $t = 5.8$. Difference - V.H.S.

Clearly the respondents at Jensens felt that their unions were more interested in them as persons than those at British Leyland did. Again size would seem to have something to do with it. The union leaders may in fact not have been more active but in the small scale situation they were seen and known to be active. It was evident that union leaders were meeting amongst themselves, with their members and with the management. Further, the unions at Jensens were involved in the hiring process. If a coachbuilder or a sheet metal worker was needed then the firm asked the district office to send someone along. Since many of the sample got their jobs through the Union, this in itself was held to demonstrate the Union's interest in workers. There were those, more numerous amongst the British Leyland sample, who saw unions as large, impersonal organisations which were as interested in their own survival as anything, and therefore having much in common with the management. This same tendency is referred to in (1) *The Affluent Worker - Industrial Attitudes*, by Goldthorpe. Some workers resented the self importance that official status in a union seemed to confer, suggesting that it gave a chap a chance 'to shoot off his mouth'.

QUESTION 9 - Would you say your immediate supervisor was:

	<u>Jensens</u>	%	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Job oriented?	80		84
(b) Person oriented?	20		16

Indices of satisfaction - inappropriate.

t-testing: $t = 0.7$. Difference - N.S.

(1) Goldthorpe J.H. & others. *The Affluent Worker - Industrial Attitudes*
Cambridge University Press 1968.

The term 'oriented' where not understood was explained by restating the question in the following way, 'Does your supervisor incline to be more interested in the job or in those doing the job?' A number of workers in both samples found it difficult to choose their answer, they would have preferred to reply 'fifty-fifty' and perhaps the framing of the question should have allowed for such a reply. In these cases the subject was asked to state whether or not he felt his supervisor to be person oriented or job oriented 'on balance'. When put this way the frequent answer was, 'Well I suppose he's really job oriented'. There was some surprise expressed at the question since supervisors, it was felt, could only be expected to be job oriented: after all they were judged by their superiors by the quality of the job for which they were responsible. There was therefore no resentment expressed by the workers about this, it was 'natural' and 'accepted' that a supervisor should be job oriented.

Two respondents, one from each sample, said that they thought their immediate supervisor was 'genuinely person oriented', thereby appearing to make a distinction between sincere personal interest and personal interest as a means to an end, the end being the job.

QUESTION 10 - Would you say that communication was:

	<u>Jensens</u>	%	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Good?	40		14
(b) Fair?	38		48
(c) Poor?	22		38

Indices of satisfaction - Jensen sample 0.18

British Leyland sample-0.24

t-testing: $t = 4.1$. Difference - H.S.

The term communication was explained in all cases, to mean information and instructions from the management and/or supervisory

staff to the shop floor, and from the shop floor to the supervisory staff and management. In commenting many of the British Leyland respondents said that they felt 'out of touch', with what was going on. Asked to explain this they said that the first they knew about things was then they happened. It must be pointed out however that the firm was aware of the need for good communications and conscious attempts were made by the management to improve them. Their limited success was probably due to two main causes: one, people generally pay little attention to written notices and two, the power of rumour. The first point is related to what might be called the notice board problem. Few people anywhere, it seems, read official notices thoroughly, anything appearing to be of this sort finds its way onto a notice board which is already 'cluttered up'. The 'communicator' feels he's done his part but he might as well have thrown his notice away.

The spoken word is much more effective but this form of communication is seldom used by management in direct dealings with the shop floor. It is usually left to the supervisory staff to speak for the management there. Hence what 'they' the management, want is conveyed and interpreted by an intermediary, who is usually regarded, since he is a familiar figure on the shop floor, as 'one of us'. This does nothing to bridge the gap between us and them. Therefore many of the respondents felt, perhaps unreasonably, that communication was a one way business and that they were on the receiving end.

In a large organisation where communication is relatively ineffective and which has a history of job insecurity, there is ground psychologically speaking for uncertainty and fear. This was the situation at British Leyland where sensitivity about redundancy, for example, was evident. In these circumstances, rumours abounded in the same way as they do amongst service men when they are to be drafted

abroad, about their destination. Men became very exercised if not expert, at interpreting 'straws in the wind' which became more than conjectures - they almost acquired the status of self evident truths. At British Leyland such rumours became an exceedingly effective form of communication, one which men were conditioned to assimilate and frequently believed.

The situation at Jensens was different principally because of the direct communication between management and the shop floor. This was mentioned earlier. Since there was this direct communication which was both formal and informal, whatever written communications there were, were balanced by personal contacts. Simply by speaking to the men on a person to person basis and by addressing them as an assembled group on the factory floor the members of the management became familiar figures. The 'us/them' gap was almost entirely eliminated and a sense of common purpose was established.

QUESTION 11 - Does your immediate supervisor involve you in decision making:

	<u>Jensens</u> %	<u>British Leyland</u>
Yes	64	40
No	36	60

Indices of satisfaction - inappropriate.

t-testing: $t = 3.5$. Difference - H.S.

The sense of the question was elaborated in all cases. It was explained that the question concerned the job and whether the workers were asked individually or together with others about how particular operations could be performed. The worker would not, it was understood, give the orders but was involved in the decision making process by being able to offer opinions which could be accepted, rejected or

modified. What happened in practice was that workers discussed a particular problem or an operation either amongst themselves or with a member of the supervisory staff and decided how to deal with it. These decisions were usually of a fairly limited nature and this was reflected in some of the comments. For instance a number of the respondents from both samples said that they felt they were concerned in decision making 'up to a point': 'the point', apparently was where the wider implications became involved.

The figures above show that there was more worker participation in decision making at Jensens than at British Leyland. This undoubtedly had something to do with technical necessity, since the Jensen product and production methods required and allowed more individual operation because theirs was not, in relative terms, a mass production situation. In the large scale situation operations were planned in greater detail, 'things are more cut and dried', hence the area in which decisions might be made was smaller.

QUESTION 12 - Does your immediate supervisor consult you about any aspect of the jobs you do?

	<u>Jensens</u> %	<u>British Leyland</u>
Yes	66	42
Sometimes/Occasionally	20	40
No	14	18

Indices of Satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.52

British Leyland sample 0.24

t-testing: $t = 2.7$. Difference - Significant.

In putting the question stress was laid on the word 'any' so that the sense of the question was understood to mean, 'Are you consulted in any way at all about the jobs you do?' A distinction was drawn between this question and the preceding one by pointing out

the difference between a consultative or advisory function and an executive one, although these terms were not necessarily used as a means of making the explanation.

The respondents answering 'Yes' were almost the same in number for both samples as in the previous question and this suggested a greater degree of worker/supervisor consultation in the Jensen than in the British Leyland situation. The main reason for this appeared to be the greater need for consultation which existed in the Jensen situation owing to technical necessity. This point was mentioned in a comment on the previous question and is valid here.

There were twice as many in the British Leyland sample who answered 'Sometimes/Occasionally' as in the Jensen's: nine of the British Leyland workers qualified or commented on their answers, only two of the Jensen group did so. The comments included: 'Occasionally - usually when there's been a complaint' -- 'The supervisor might consult you but there's not much notice taken of what you say' -- 'Consultation? Only when we're on a new job.' and 'Only at the beginning'. The last two comments are examples of consultation arising out of technical necessity. One respondent added that there was more consultation amongst workers than between a worker and the immediate supervisor.

Some workers felt that consultation bestowed status because it showed, 'Somebody had an interest in you and what you were doing'. Others saw it as what happened when something went wrong: they saw consultation as a device for voicing complaints against them. There were also those with experience of more than one immediate supervisor who pointed out that, 'the sort of consultation you had depended on what sort of bloke the supervisor was'.

QUESTION 13 - Does your immediate supervisor discuss personal matters with you?

	<u>Jensens</u> %	<u>British Leyland</u>
Yes	40	18
Sometimes/Occasionally	20	24
No	40	58

Indices of satisfaction: Jensen sample 0.0

British Leyland sample-0.40

t-testing: $t = 3.4$. Difference - H.S.

In every case the sense of the word 'personal' was explained by asking supplementary questions such as, 'Does he talk to you about your kids and/or his kids?' 'Does he talk about his or your holidays?' 'Do you discuss away from work activities such as sport or gardening with him?' The word personal was therefore used to have a broad rather than a narrow connotation. In view of this extensive use of the term the number of 'No' responses seemed large and particularly so at Jensens where a smaller number of workers in a much freer environment might be expected to discuss personal matters of this sort.

Again the British Leyland sample offered more comments and qualifications in their middle range answers. Their responses included, 'Yes, he'll discuss personal matters with you if you go to him' and 'It's very rare that he'll talk to you about anything'. One respondent said 'What he does talk about is usually trivial'. When asked to explain he said that the subject matter was either cars or sport neither of which interested him.

Of those who answered 'no' in the British Leyland sample two added 'never'. On being asked why not one respondent said that he felt his supervisor thought that familiarity caused contempt. A discussion followed about the possibility of a distinction between friendliness and familiarity. A number of workers clearly felt that personal

matters were essentially the business of the individual and nothing to do with an immediate supervisor. The impression was gained of a distinction between private and professional life and that personal matters fitted properly into the former.

This seems to have been reinforced by the responses, referred to earlier, to the question which asked whether the respondent met his work mates socially. The predominant response was 'No' and comments made suggested that working and social life ought to be exclusive.

QUESTION 14 - Do you think the problem of redundancy:

	<u>Jensens</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Hardly bothers you?	44		28
(b) Sometimes worrying - sometimes not?	22		30
(c) Very worrying	34		42

Indices of satisfaction: - Jensen sample 0.10

British Leyland sample-0.14

t-testing: $t = 2.0$. Difference: S.

The question was explained to be a personal one so in every case the respondent was asked to reply as though redundancy affected him and not to give his reaction to redundancy generally. The answers varied according to the operative's particular trades. The sheet metal workers and tester mechanics were much less bothered by redundancy than the finishers and rectifiers. Those less worried, understandably enough, were those whose particular trade would have enabled them easily to obtain work outside car factories. In fact a number of respondents said that their personal attitude to redundancy depended on the job situation outside.

The response of the Jensen sample in that 44% replied that redundancy hardly bothered them was perhaps surprising in view of the

recent history of redundancy at that plant. There seemed to be two main reasons for this. One was that the tradesmen, particularly the sheet metal workers, had been very mobile. They moved from firm to firm with much greater frequency than any other occupational group and had no fears of redundancy. The second reason was simply confidence in the product and management's ability to find and maintain markets for it. This confidence did not appear to stem from ignorance of economic realities since many workers appreciated the problems of servicing and selling an expensive, quality product to a small segment of the motoring public, when the firm had very limited distributor outlets. Yet despite this workers seemed to maintain faith in both management and the product.

When considering the cause of such faith it should be remembered that the firm was believed to have been saved by Carl Duerr, and he had done this within the memory of most of the workers there. Undoubtedly therefore, Mr. Duerr was very highly regarded, perhaps even felt to be infallible and with 'God for us, who could possibly be against us?'.

When asked the question, 'Why did you come to British Leyland?' half of the sample, 25 replied, 'For the money'. For the remainder, money was considered to have been the largest single reason, but there were other mixed motives, they included 'short hours', 'relatively clean conditions', 'My family have always been in this sort of work', and 'It was the best paid job I could get near where I live'.

When asked the question, 'Why did you come to Jensens?' seven of the sample replied, 'For the money', although two of these added that they had since come to like the job and found it satisfying. Of the fifty respondents fifteen said that they came to Jensens because it was at that time the only job available - that they had no choice. For the remainder the most important reason for obtaining employment

at Jensens was money but there were other considerations. These included 'No night work' (night work was deeply disliked by the British Leyland respondents and they made 'no bones' about expressing their opinions whether or not they were directly asked about the subject). One Jensen respondent said 'It's less of a rat-race here - more easy going', another said 'The firm had a reputation for being a friendly place where you were treated reasonably'.

For a number of workers the opportunity to work on quality cars and avoid the worst excesses of repetition work were important considerations. Many of the Jensen sample had worked in other car factories, principally 'the Austin', and their comments were made in the light of that experience. One young mechanic said he thought that there was a chance at Jensens to get promotion without the need to obtain formal qualifications. When asked what encouraged such belief, he said he didn't think the firm was rigid, from what he could see, in expecting people to have qualifications to advance. Another worker said that he felt that his job as a shop steward was valued and that there was more chance of communication with the management and other workers than existed elsewhere. Yet another said that he wanted to leave 'dirty, badly paid work to build cars instead of repairing them'. The use of the word 'build' here seemed significant since it suggested a craftsman's or enthusiast's attitude towards the job.

Had he used the words assemble, make, or produce he would have been using terms more appropriate to an operative in a mass production situation.

QUESTION 15 - Do you consider your job to be a secure one?

	<u>Jensens</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Yes	22		14
(b) Qualified answer	26		24
(c) No	52		62

Indices of satisfaction: Jensen sample -0.30

British Leyland sample -0.48

t-testing: $t = 1.6$. Difference - N.S.

The respondents were not pressed to an absolute answer but those who did reply either yes or no, did so unhesitatingly. The qualified answers included the following comments from the Jensen Group. 'This job is more secure than some others in motor vehicle work', 'This is a small company and there is more concern about the employee', and a remark that caused a good deal of mutual amusement, 'The future looks more secure now than it did in the past'. Asked to explain this the respondent said he felt more optimistic about job security under the new management. Another answer conveying the same impression was, 'It seems to have been very safe in the last two years'. One worker remarked that job security depended on whether the company was 'safe' and he was not sure how safe the company was.

Some of the British Leyland sample expressed similar opinions about the subject, fairly characteristic was, 'It's as safe as any job of this sort', and 'Well you accept that this sort of job is not very safe but you know that when you come into it'. Another of the respondents remarked, 'There's more security here than in the last place', (which was Jensens).

There are one or two general observations which need to be made to put the subject into its context. First job security is relative: what the teacher or the office worker would regard as

insecurity would probably not be so regarded by the vehicle assembly worker, who accepts that his job is at the mercy of the production process. He probably has a slightly higher expectation of job security than the building worker, but not much, it is an accepted feature of the situation.

QUESTION 16 - Does the product interest you?

	<u>Jensens</u>	%	<u>British Leyland</u>
(a) Yes	84		80
(b) No	16		20

Indices of satisfaction - inappropriate.

t-testing: $t = 0.7$. Difference - N.S.

There was clearly a high degree of interest from the respondents in both samples, indeed many from both groups said they were car enthusiasts. Some of the British Leyland respondents did own the sort of vehicle on which they worked which in itself probably added to interest. The nature of the workers' interest in the British Leyland product was diffused, some professed interest because 'it was a pretty good job' (in engineering terms), others indicated that they were not displeased to have it regarded as a representation of their efforts, yet others saw it as an important factor in the country's export policy.

The interest in the product contrasted oddly with the responses to two of the earlier questions. We would expect that workers who felt that the management had little interest in them as people and that the firm was no better than the average employer in the neighbourhood, would be unlikely to enthuse over the firm's product. The reasons for this will be discussed later.

Although none of the Jensen sample could reasonably contemplate owning such a vehicle there was a very considerable amount of interest in it. Such comments as 'there's more satisfaction in working on a high class job', and 'Of course high quality work is attractive', were commonplace, and clearly indicated something like the craftsman's pride in his job. Many men whose comments could be construed as showing pride in work were employed in finishing operations such as the final spraying and polishing of car bodies. There was clear indication of the desire to satisfy the customer, who might well be a celebrity, in the belief that he would admire and appreciate a perfect finish.

No doubt worker interest in the Jensen product was reinforced because members of the shop floor work force helped to staff the firm's stand at the Motor Show. Thus the public were able directly to associate them with the firm's product.

QUESTION 17 - In your free time (away from work) do you do another job?

	<u>Jensens</u>	%	<u>British Leyland</u>
Yes	12		20
No	88		80

Indices of satisfaction - inappropriate.

t-testing: $t = 0.7$. Difference - N.S.

In every case the question was explained to refer to additional work undertaken for payment. It was appreciated that the question was one to which a truthful answer might not be given, but the interviewer had no reason to suppose that this was the case.

Of the British Leyland respondents most of those undertaking additional paid work were involved with aspects of motor vehicle

repair work. This was generally undertaken on a casual basis. Few of them saw this as the first step in owning a garage, it was frequently regarded as a paid service whose prime function was to 'help somebody out'.

Other examples of additional paid work included employment as a pools agent, working in the family business, instructing in evening classes at a technical college and working as a disc jockey. By far the most common additional job was that of occasional barman, which fits in with the well known assumptions about 'moonlighting'. It should be noted however, that the incidence of additional paid work was low in these two samples, and was certainly lower than what popular belief would suggest.

The comments of those who said that they were not interested in additional paid work in another job were interesting. A number of respondents said that they'd had enough of it by knocking off time and by the time they'd got home and had tea there wasn't much time for anything else. There were also those who said that they valued their free time too much to look for more paid work. Some workers offered the opinion that much of this extra work was relatively poorly paid and was hardly worth doing even though it might be free of tax. Others said that they had plenty to do at home which they could hardly find time for.

There were many different responses to the question, 'What would you do if you had sufficient money not to have to work?'. No respondent in either sample said that he would be quite content to do nothing, but very few said that they would continue working at their present job. The members of the largest group in both samples expressed an interest in having a small business of their own. When asked what sort of business this might be, most seemed to favour a

little shop, the attractions of which were the freedom that this would seem to allow, and the social contact it would involve. These attractions would appear to compensate for the shortcomings of vehicle assembly work where a worker is 'tied to' the track and where his social contact is restricted by the physical conditions that were imposed.

Some of the comments made were interesting and they included, "Well I couldn't do nothing - I'd like a small business - just to give me an interest". When it was pointed out that even a small business would involve problems some of the appeal of the idea diminished. Further, it became increasingly clear as questioning proceeded that practically none had anything other than the vaguest notions about the running of a small business. When questioned about what sort of business they would choose the majority of the respondents were equally as vague.

The second largest group of respondents from both samples said that they would like to travel given sufficient money not to have to work, and the third largest group chose 'Do it yourself' work around the house.

There were only four men out of both samples who had really clear cut ideas about what to do in the circumstances postulated by the question, these were 'to design multi-hulled sailing craft: to design sport's cars: to travel and write, and to go farming'.

The general impressions gathered from the majority in response to the question were those of vagueness and escapism. Vagueness because no careful consideration had been given to the problem of leisure and escapism to compensate for the discipline and boredom imposed by the factory situation.

QUESTION 18 - Are there people in the shop, other than the official leaders, whom you would regard as leaders?

	<u>Jensens</u> %	<u>British Leyland</u>
Yes	74	42
No	26	58

Indices of satisfaction - inappropriate.

t-testing: $t = 4.8$. Difference - H.S.

For the purpose of the question the firm's supervisory staff, the shop stewards and other trades union leaders were regarded as 'official' leaders and this was stressed when the question was put to each respondent. The point of the question was to attempt to discover whether 'unofficial leaders' emerged. When the question required further clarification supplementary questions were asked such as, 'Are there workers who are looked to for a lead about aspects of the job, or about the foreman's attitude, or the firm's policy?'

The situation was more complicated at British Leyland than at Jensens because of the gang structure there. Men on track work were put into gangs which varied from ten to sixty-five in strength and shop stewards were usually the leaders of the larger gangs. For the small gangs there was perhaps one steward between three of them. The leader was not a company appointment but was nominated by 'the gang', he received no extra pay but since he was often a shop steward he was regarded, for the purpose of this question, as being an official leader.

Because of this situation, unofficial leaders of the type anticipated by the question, were fewer at British Leyland than might have been expected. One factor which probably accounted for the existence of some unofficial leaders at British Leyland was that gang members could be scattered along a section of track to the extent of

being inaccessible to one another. But the general thesis - that fewer unofficial leaders emerged because of the gang structure, holds.

This general point was illustrated in the replies to the question. For example, one worker said that there were some leaders but the type of job did not make them very noticeable. Another said that leaders emerged but not very clearly.

At Jensens, with the absence of mass production pressures, there was more opportunity for the interaction of personalities and so unofficial leaders emerged more readily. But much of the area of activity where unofficial leaders might have emerged was dominated by some extremely active and effective shop stewards. One worker at Jensens who seemed to express a widely held view said, 'Apart from shop stewards some senior workers emerged as leaders, but there was more of a tendency for people to emerge as personalities rather than noticeable leaders'.

SHOP FLOOR SUPERVISORS - RESULTING ATTITUDES

A series of questions was put to representative members of the shop floor supervisory staffs at British Leyland and at Jensens. The official job designations were Senior Foremen, Foremen and Deputy Foremen; five were from Jensens and six from British Leyland. Taking both samples together, service with the firm ranged from eight to thirty-five years and service in an official supervisory capacity ranged from three to twenty years. The members of both groups were 'local' people whose social and educational backgrounds were similar to those of the rank and file of the shop floor workforce.

Promotion to the supervisory staff at Jensens was by recommendation to the production manager, in so far as the members of this sample were concerned. At British Leyland promotion to the supervisory staff, over the years, seems to have followed a number of different lines, these include recommendation from a senior foreman, seeking the opinions of the existing supervisory staff, sending potential supervisors on a short course at a local factory and being selected for the job on merit by the superintendent. There was a recent tendency to send existing and potential supervisory staff on short training courses. Exceptionally, one of the senior foremen at British Leyland had attended a twenty week day-release course at Birmingham University.

ATTITUDES ENCOUNTERED

Each supervisor from both samples was asked what attitudes were particularly noticeable amongst the men. The question was elaborated in every case by asking whether he found them, for example, willingly cooperative, neutral or indifferent, or reluctant and resentful. The

supervisory sample at Jensens all said they found workers in their charge to be cooperative and willingly responsive. One foreman in fact said that good personal relations were fostered, another said that if the men were approached correctly, by which he meant politely, then cooperation was not difficult to obtain.

The answers given by the British Leyland supervisors were more varied. One supervisor for instance said that he felt about a quarter of the men were uncooperative, about thirty per cent cooperative and the remainder were consistently neither one way or the other: they seemed to fall in with the attitude prevailing at the moment. Another said that although there was cooperation forthcoming from a fair number many adopted the 'Jack' attitude. By this he meant that the reaction of workers to any particular situation depended on calculations of immediate self interest in that situation. Yet another supervisor mentioned that there were those 'with a chip on their shoulders'.

Asked what they thought caused the attitudes they encountered, the Jensen supervisors made such comments as, 'because there is goodwill on both sides', 'because personal relationships are good - many of the men are selected by me anyway' and 'because the men are treated like reasonable people'.

Again the answers given by the British Leyland supervisors were more varied. One senior foreman who said, in response to the previous question, that he felt workers in the main were willingly cooperative, attributed this to 'individual personal handling'. This respondent was the one who had attended a twenty week course on management at Birmingham University. Another said he felt that the attitudes encountered resulted from the frustration of being on repetition work and the anxieties about money and job security. Yet another supervisor offered the view that the younger generation of workers was more aggressive and there was difficulty maintaining a 'balance' when

dealing with both the older and younger workers. Further comments suggested that the absence of information and the strength of rumour were significant factors in the attitudes encountered.

HANDLING PROBLEMS

Both groups of supervisors were asked what they thought were the main problems in handling their men. The answers from the Jensen respondents followed predictably enough from their comments about the attitudes encountered in dealing with those in their charge. They said for example 'There are no particular problems', and 'Really there were very few problems'. One supervisor said that there were no problems at all. All of the respondents put this down to good direct personal relationships and it must be stressed that they were in no way prompted to do so.

In response to the same question, the British Leyland supervisors made the following comments. 'If you put them in the picture they're O.K. - full information and consultation is vital'. (This was the response of the man who attended the management course). 'You find a certain amount of reluctance with some of the men - they feel they're slaves to the system'. Another supervisor said, 'It all comes down to money; they compare their wages with those of other workers and they are inclined to think that they are inferior if they earn less'. Yet another respondent stressed the difficulties presented by absence. Workers resented the inconvenience and the threat to earnings which was entailed and supervisors had to make unpopular decisions about job reallocation in these circumstances.

One foreman felt that 'certain attitudes to the job' caused the difficulties in men handling. He said that the conditions of work imposed a lack of individuality and status which were the underlying causes of resentment.

A further question was asked which was, 'What would you say caused the problems you encounter in handling your men?' Some answers to this were given in response to the previous question, but since these seemed to follow naturally they have been included above. There were a number of other suggested causes, these included the suspicion, of change, frustration because of work speed and the view that the younger generation were over confident. Interestingly there were very few suggestions that problems were the consequence of physical factors.

ORIENTATION

The respondents were asked whether they considered themselves as supervisors to be job oriented or person oriented. The question was explained in each case by asking the further question, 'Do you find yourself to be more concerned about the job or the people doing the job?' Without hesitation one of the British Leyland men said that he was person oriented. The remaining respondents of both samples given an either/or choice said they were job oriented. This was not done in any case without some qualifying comment. Some of the respondents said that they thought they were 'about 50/50', but when it came to the point they accepted that they were paid for the job and that was what they were really judged by. Two of the respondents clearly implied a 'means/end' relationship although they did not use these terms. The sense of their point was that in order to get production they needed an appropriate response from the shop floor worker, so the two things were inextricably linked.

DECISION MAKING

Both groups were asked whether or not their men were involved in decision making. The sense of the question was elaborated in all

cases. It was explained that the question concerned the job and whether the workers were asked individually or together with others about how particular operations could be performed. The worker would not, it was understood, give the orders but was involved in the decision making process by being able to offer opinions which could be accepted, rejected or modified. The supervisors interviewed were told that the workers were asked whether they felt that they were involved in the decision making process.

Of the six supervisors interviewed at British Leyland, four stated that they did involve their men in decision making, one said he did not. The sixth respondent took the view that decision making was an executive function and was therefore the job of the supervisor. He did not question the value of discussion and consultation, but saw them as advisory aids. He was keenly aware that his executive power was threatened by involving the men in the decision making process which he saw as a form of creeping usurpation.

All of the Jensen supervisors said that they involved their men in decision making. From their comments, it was clear that the involvement varied in kind and degree. One foreman said that there was frequent discussion on the shop floor on the sort of matter outlined in the question. Another said that men would be involved in decision making in some cases, but this did not happen very often, they could however offer suggestions which would be considered. Yet another supervisor, who said his men were involved in decision making, observed that 'interest was uneven'. When asked to explain this he said that it was usually the same people who were involved in any discussion and, 'perhaps some men are more naturally involved in decision making'.

CAREER PROSPECTS

The next question sought to discover whether supervisory staff

discussed career prospects with those in their charge. The answers from both samples indicated that it was an unlikely topic of discussion. The actual replies included, 'only if they're interested' - 'not much' - 'sometimes' - 'very rarely' - 'only with the trainees' and 'doesn't seem possible in the system'. Asked what he had in mind in making this last comment the respondent said that there was no clear promotion structure (at British Leyland), for workers on the shop floor and in its absence there was little that one could discuss.

In retrospect it seems clear that the notion of career prospects is alien to the situation, even the term seems inappropriate. While a person may follow a career in journalism, in teaching or management taking a series of progressive steps toward a particular goal, people do not 'follow careers' in motor vehicle assembly work. These workers see the job as an end in itself and not as a means to some other end. There was some promotion to charge hand or foreman status but it happened to relatively few and those of the majority, in reacting to the situation, frequently did so with an amused cynicism. Many pointed out that the supervisors job would not be to their taste in any case.

DISCUSSION OF PERSONAL MATTERS

The supervisors from both samples were asked whether they discussed personal matters with workers for whom they were responsible. In each case the word 'personal' was given definition by asking such supplementary questions as, 'Do you, for example, talk to them about their families and/or your family?' 'Do you talk to them about your holidays or theirs?' 'Do you discuss away from work activities such as sport or gardening with them?' The intention here was to use the word 'personal' in the broadest sense.

In view of the breadth of definition and the apparently sociable nature of the total environment at Jensens, the responses from the

supervisors interviewed indicated very little discussion of personal matters. Representative comments included, 'Apart from a little human interest there's not much discussion on personal lines': 'No - except with the trainees', 'Only if there really seems to be something worth talking about like good news' and 'only with very few'.

The replies of the British Leyland sample indicated more discussion on personal matters, four of the respondents answered 'Yes'. There were however qualifications such as, 'Yes, but you've got to be careful not to overdo it, some of the men are quick to be suspicious about favouritism - either that or they think that you're buttering them up because you're after something'. Other answers recorded included 'sometimes' and 'not very much'. Two other points of view became clear, these were that discussion about personal matters was not looked for by a number of workers and even where it was a feature of the behaviour complex it was not necessarily welcomed. One respondent at British Leyland actually said 'that you need to be a psychologist in this job, you might think that everybody would like to be treated the same but you'll find people react differently. A remark may be treated as funny by one chap and as offensive by another'. The supervisory staffs at both firms were aware that some men regarded discussion about some personal matters to be unwarranted intrusion into private affairs: the line of demarcation between public and private matters, although imprecisely drawn, should be crossed only with the greatest circumspection.

JOB SECURITY

Neither group of supervisors seemed to have many serious worries about job security. This was reflected in answers to a question put on the subject. There were a number of comments made which suggested representative views on the subject. For example one of the Jensen

sample said, 'When you consider what's happened here in the past you can't say there's no reason to worry, although things have improved here recently'. Another comment reflecting the same sort of feeling was, 'We all have the same worries - we know what can happen'.

Of the British Leyland sample one respondent made an unqualified 'Yes' reply to the question, the others made qualified 'No' answers. The comments from those in the second category included, 'I suppose everyone in this sort of work has some worries about job security but we've become familiar with the situation: its like living with danger in the war, you forget its there after a while'. Another view expressed was that so far as supervisors were concerned there was little cause to worry, because the first people to go are those on the shop floor.

It became clear that concern amongst the supervisors of both samples about this subject varied from time to time according to developments in the respective plants. But since scares about job security were 'short lived affairs' the dominant attitude was one of resignation. They came to accept the situation as a fact of life.

THE FACTORY ENVIRONMENT

The supervisors were asked to express their views about the factory environment. It was explained that the question referred to physical conditions, e.g. noise, the light (or lack of it), the heat, the cold, the dirt and so on. One of the British Leyland sample said that he disliked the working environment but had to accept it, or something like it, as inevitable. Others conveyed the same sort of impression, for instance, 'I accept it but I still find it uncongenial' and 'It is acceptable particularly in view of the history of working conditions here'. It should be mentioned that this respondent had thirty years service with the company. Another of the British Leyland sample said that he was reasonably happy because he liked the job and

although there could be improvements in the working conditions they were by no means objectionable. What this respondent did object to was night work and while it was explained that this was not the area the question sought to investigate, the respondent pointed out that this was a very widely held view which ought to be mentioned.

The general response of the Jensen sample to the question was that they found the conditions under which they worked acceptable. A representative response was, 'Well working conditions are never ideal, they could be made better - they can always be improved, but when you compare our conditions with those in heavy industry like steel making, then we've not got much to complain about'. There was no night shift at Jensens.

FREE TIME INTERESTS

The next question put was, (a) Does your free time mean the opportunity to follow your interests?' If so (b) 'What are they?' The most popular area of interest to the British Leyland sample was sport, particular interests included football supporting, fishing, swimming and hiking. Most of the respondents also expressed an interest in motoring either as a sport or in touring. Other areas of interest, perhaps more accurately called hobbies included archeology, gardening, dog breeding, and studying bird life. Two men said that they were particularly interested in gardening while one man's particular interest was in helping to run a social club.

The Jensen sample were not so interested in sport as the British Leyland group. Their particular interests were mainly concerned with their homes and gardens. One man said that he liked reading and going to the theatre, another said that he played golf, (this was the only sport mentioned). Despite his working involvement with them, another respondent said that he was still very keen on cars, where other people

might be football fans or pigeon fanciers he was a car fancier. Yet another respondent said that he did not have a great deal of free time, he was obliged to work around his house and in the garden but he would not class these things as interests. As far as could be gathered no supervisor from either sample used his free time to undertake additional paid employment.

The supervisors were next asked what they would do if they had enough money not to have to work. Three respondents from the British Leyland sample, all with more than twenty years service with the firm, said that they would retire. Asked whether retirement would mean their having no intention of taking any form of paid job, they said that this was what they meant. Since these men were all middle aged with at least ten to fifteen years of their normal working life remaining they were asked whether they might change their minds. One supervisor's reply to this was characteristic - it represented the impression conveyed by the other two. The sense of his remarks was that one could not know what the future would hold, but feeling as he did he would welcome an indefinite break from the stress of the position he was in. All three felt that they would be quite adequately occupied with their families, their social interests and their hobbies.

One other supervisor at British Leyland with over thirty years service said that he would still work to keep occupied.

Of the others one said that his intention would be to relax and that he might consider another job later. This man, who was also middle aged, clearly felt the stress of the job as did those mentioned above. Another supervisor, the youngest of the group with eight years service and four in a supervisory post, said that he would want to keep busy and perhaps own his own business.

Of the Jensen sample one man said that he would retire and buy

a small holding. Another said that he wasn't sure if he would retire but whether he did or not he would still want to keep an interest in cars. This man had been with the firm for thirty years and had held a supervisory job for more than twelve of them. Another man with twelve years service, four of them as a supervisor, was a car enthusiast. He felt he would still do work with cars. One other respondent had no doubt at all that he would settle quite happily for a life of leisure. Asked why he felt this would suit him he said that when they had been on strike, sometimes for long spells, he had been quite content to study form in the newspapers, place a few bets and take the dog out for a walk in the country. The absence of stress symptoms was notable amongst the Jensen sample.

COMMUNICATIONS

The samples were asked to comment on communications and in doing so to say whether they were felt to be 'good', 'fair' or 'poor'. The term communication was explained in all cases to mean information and instructions from the management and/or supervisory staff to the shop floor and from the shop floor to the supervisory staff and management. The general view of the British Leyland sample was that there had been some general improvement in the channels and quality of communications but there were still variations. Questioned about this a number of the respondents felt that there were inconsistencies in that they were advised about matters which did not directly concern them and sometimes not informed of things that did.

One senior foreman said that in his view communications were fairly good although one had to acknowledge the complexity of the situation. There was such an enormous amount of information required about, for example, the supply of components, the production process and the availability of men, to mention a few matters, that it was not

surprising communication was felt to be deficient. Another respondent said that the channels were there but breakdowns occurred because of human error - one operator did not inform another. Much of the necessary communication had to be by word of mouth - 'You can't pass memos about all that's going on up and down the line'. One other supervisor, who said he felt communications were generally fair, said there was a need for more detailed production figures for night work.

There was a varied response from the Jensen sample in reply to the question. Two supervisors thought that communication was good, one added that there had been a considerable improvement in the recent past: the new management had established new channels and the information received was both more detailed and relevant. Of the other respondents, two said they thought communications were fair and another that there was a lot of room for improvement. Asked to explain, this respondent said that he was thinking particularly of modifications made to a job in another department which he didn't know about until it came to him. He also said that he was often the last to be informed about a development.

UNOFFICIAL LEADERS

Both samples were asked, 'Do unofficial leaders emerge?' For the purpose of the question supervisory staff, shop stewards and other trades union leaders were regarded as 'official' leaders and this was stressed in putting the question to each respondent. Where the question required further clarification supplementary questions were asked such as, 'Are there workers who are looked to by others for a lead about aspects of the job or about the firm's policy?'

The British Leyland sample's general view was that the gang leader situation there obscured the emergence of unofficial leaders because he, the gang leader, was nominated by the gang. This notwith-

standing, all except one of the sample said that other leaders were evident on the shop floor. This was borne out by such comments as, 'You notice some men, usually the same ones, who take the initiative', and 'If you watch what goes on, although little may be said, it becomes clear that some sort of pecking order shows up'. Another supervisor said that leaders did emerge and they were earmarked. This reply led to questions about the nature of earmarking and it appeared that there was no official list of 'likely lads' (or of unlikely lads for that matter), but that a mental note was made. Foremen would of course, discuss, together with other matters, leadership potential.

In comments from the Jensen sample two of the respondents said that 'very few unofficial leaders emerged' and that, 'unofficial leaders did not show up to any great extent although there was obviously a number of personalities'. The respondent here thought that people stood out more as characters and characters were not necessarily leaders. Another view expressed was that for anyone to set himself up as a leader would lead to his rejection. Those who took the view that unofficial leaders did emerge made such observations as, 'If you want to know what a group of men have got on their minds you'll usually get it from the same bloke', and 'There are those the others accept as leaders whether they think of them in that way or not'.

Unofficial leaders would probably have been more in evidence at Jensens were it not for the existence there of very able and active shop stewards, who commanded the area of activity in which unofficial leaders would have emerged.

SUPERVISORY QUALITIES

The supervisors were next asked, 'What in your opinion, are the main qualities a supervisor needs?' They were asked if they could, to put these in some order of priorities. Job ability was the most

frequently mentioned quality which was felt to be needed and it came high in the order of most respondents' scales although it was not necessarily first. Comments supporting this often included reference to the need to know the job because otherwise essential respect could not be expected. There was also the suggestion that knowledge of the job was what they were paid for.

A number of personal qualities were mentioned these included strength of character, firmness and self control. It was clear to some of the respondents that if they were to exercise authority that 'You must be a character to be reckoned with, any sign of weakness and your authority is lost'. One of the British Leyland sample stressed the need for self control by observing that, 'If you lost your temper often you would soon be thought of as being ridiculous'. He also commented, 'If I lose my temper, its the quickest way to make them lose theirs'.

A sense of justice and the need to be just were qualities which were felt to be important. 'You can't take a decision without thinking whether or not someone is going to think it unfair', and 'You get to put yourself in their place to see whether you would think something is unfair', were observations made. The need to be impartial was particularly stressed by one respondent.

Other qualities related to justice which were mentioned by respondents included the needs to be trustworthy and to have a sense of responsibility on the assumptions that if one expected these from others then one must display these qualities oneself.

The respondents were all aware of human relations skills, although significantly the only one to use the term was the senior foreman from British Leyland who had attended the management course. The values of tolerance, understanding, patience and a sense of humour were mentioned by the majority in both groups.

THE FOREMAN'S ROLE

Mixed feelings were expressed about the changed and changing role of the foreman. There was a certain nostalgia for the days when 'foremen knew where they stood'. They saw the position, probably inaccurately since recall is often inaccurate, as one where relationships were very much simplified. The foreman was a sort of senior N.C.O. who functioned as the accepted intermediary between the management and the shop floor. He took his orders from his supervisors and gave them to the workers on the shop floor. There was no questioning his authority either directly or indirectly. His powers were clearly defined and more importantly accepted by everyone.

As mentioned above this state of affairs almost certainly never existed, but the attraction of it and perhaps even the yearning for it can be easily appreciated. A person's belief system is a self buttressing structure.

The changing role of the foreman was attributed to a number of things. Those mentioned included the emergence of shop stewards. Situations could exist in which a steward was not only the men's leader but was also 'taken more notice of' by the management than the foreman. It was also pointed out that joint consultation arrangements could undermine the position of the foreman simply because representatives of the work force could be more immediately involved with management decision making than were the supervisory staff. In such circumstances foremen were by-passed. The apparent decline in the status of the foreman, according to one respondent, was accelerated by a general increase in the population at large of anti-authority attitudes. This he felt to be particularly noticeable amongst young people.

There were those who felt that the passing of the 'old style' foreman was really a good thing, although many of them were also critical of the present role of the foreman. It was felt that the

'old style' would be out of place and 'would not work today'. There were those, two British Leyland supervisors, who said that the most interesting aspect of their jobs was dealing with people and this would be of very much less importance if they were old style foremen. The general impression gathered from both samples was that reverting to the authoritarian role of the foreman would cause more problems than it would solve although the existing situation was felt at times to be most unsatisfactory.

The points of view represented in the last paragraph reflect a genuine dilemma. Do people work better under an authoritarian system, 'when they know where they stand', or do they work better under conditions approaching industrial democracy? This was appreciated to be a fundamental question: it is not suggested that it was considered in academic terms in discussion with the respondents, but it was appreciated by them very clearly. It was also appreciated that it was impossible to say which of the formulae or what synthesized formula would be appropriate because more than one course of action could not be followed at a time. 'If you adopt a strict policy and things go wrong, it doesn't necessarily follow that if you had adopted a lenient policy things would have gone right'.

TEAMWORK

In the comments made by the supervisory staff during interviews the term teamwork was used with some frequency. This concept represented one of their goals. They saw an important part of their job as establishing, fostering and perpetuating teamwork. It should be stressed that this was a supervisors' view and not one necessarily shared by workers who probably did not know of the goal and saw little evidence of it. The notion of teamwork seemed both attractive and appropriate to the supervisors, - attractive because it conveyed a

sense of common purpose, and because it played down the status of the leader. If attention can be focussed on winning the game or the war, whether economic or military, then other personal considerations, such as the resentment of a leader do not matter so much. The notion of teamwork contains the suggestion of a band of brothers working together thus bestowing the notion of equality. Equality should be felt to exist: the notion of teamwork upheld by the supervisors required it.

In simpler terms the supervisors saw teamwork as 'getting people to work together - if possible in harmony'. One man saw his efforts as 'social engineering' two others referred to being links in the chain. All saw the need for unity of aim and effort and they all saw the difficulty of attaining it.

P A R T 2 - D I S C U S S I O N

INTRODUCTION

The fact that British Leyland is by any standard a large organisation employing more than ten thousand people at Longbridge alone and that Jensens Motors is one of the smallest motor vehicle production units in the country would appear to be reflected in some workers' attitudes.

At Jensens everyone knew everyone else, the work force was reasonably stable, there was not a large labour turnover. Further the shop floor staff knew, or very soon came to know, by name, the office staff and the management. This might be thought to have been so because Jensens was formerly a family firm but this did not seem to be the reason. Many of those interviewed, both supervisory and shop floor staff, stated that personal relations had improved after the arrival of the new management. The workers knew particular members of the management staff by name and what jobs they did.

The same situation did not, and probably could not, obtain at British Leyland. There members of management were not known by name or function by the majority of the shop floor staff. The appearance of a besuited member of the office staff often seemed to be the occasion for a certain amount of wry amusement. This reaction was similar to that noted in a classroom on the introduction of a new teacher where students evince curiosity tinged with scepticism. The impersonality of the situation clearly had something to do with workers doubts. 'What's happening now?' or 'What's he doing here?' were questions either implied or spoken.

This is not to say that all besuited figures were unknown and regarded with suspicion, some were clearly well known, but many were not. It is significant that the supervisory staff in the shop were not so regarded.

COMMUNICATION

Differences in size require communications to be handled differently. Whereas 400 workers could be assembled and addressed in the factory by the Managing Director, as happened at Jensens, to address 10,000 required a football ground. C.I. Barnard writing on communication in 'Education for Executives' (1) says, 'To know your people is nearly as important as to know your language'. The nature of knowing and of communication were very different at the places studied.

Communication at Jensens tended to be direct in the sense that company policy, the views, and to some extent the feelings of the management, were made immediately apparent to the workers on the shop floor. At British Leyland where few figures in the hierarchy were known, personally, to the workers, direct communications from the management were viewed as the outpourings of the machine. Such communications invariably found their way on to notice boards with a welter of other material. Indirect communications from the management through the supervisory staff to the shop floor did not suffer from the same impersonality but they depended to a considerable degree for their utility on the skill of the intermediary.

Workers' responses to the question about communication were reported earlier and data showed that almost three times as many of the Jensen workers felt that communications there was good compared with the number giving that answer at British Leyland. Those who said communications were poor were almost twice as numerous at British Leyland as at Jensens.

Clearly the size of an organisation had a great deal to do with

(1) Barnard C.I. Education for Executives. The Journal of Business 18. pl79. Chicago 1945.

the methods of communication employed and to their effectiveness. Management would not be expected to be able to make the same direct impression on 10,000 workers as it would with 400 but perhaps direct person to person meeting might be supplemented judiciously by other means. Business and Government organisations have become increasingly aware of the need for satisfactory public relations and each uses television widely. Both forms of institution would find their approaches to the customers and to the electorate very limited without it. There would seem to be a case for judicious use of the medium by management in industrial communications.

An immediate objection to this suggestion might be that television would be a two edged weapon, that inadequate performers would worsen industrial relations rather than improve them. The reply to which would be, 'Don't have inadequate performers - ensure you have well trained ones'. Another objection might be that initially workers would be suspicious of an 'intruding eye' but a television receiver is not a spying device. The objection might also be made that the level of noise at the work place would make it impossible for the spoken word to be heard. This argument also is easily countered. At British Leyland the line was stopped in the morning, the afternoon and during the night shift for short tea breaks at which time the shop floor area was relatively quiet. If the period of the breaks were extended for say five minutes on appropriate occasions this would enable broadcasts to be received.

WORKERS' ATTITUDES

The sample of workers from the large scale organisation, British Leyland, found their work generally was inherently less rewarding than those in the Jensen sample. Job time scales were on balance much shorter at British Leyland than at Jensens where job satisfaction was

considerably higher. There was little evidence of the accuracy of Zweig's thesis being borne out by the British Leyland sample. Zweig concluded in his book, 'The Worker in an Affluent Society',⁽²⁾ that industrial work is now more positively evaluated by those who perform it than ever before, and that the majority of men on the shop floor are 'enjoying or liking, or good humouredly tolerating their job'. This 'changing ethos of work' was very little in evidence at Longbridge. There the respondents from the shop floor sample appeared very largely to have taken their jobs, not for the variety, the opportunities for initiative and autonomy afforded in more skilled work but for the highest going rate of economic return.

The primary, almost exclusive purpose of taking the job was to provide a livelihood. In this 'instrumental' calculation non economic satisfactions, particularly those of a social kind, were discounted or disregarded. Ways and means of making the work tasks less tedious, mechanical or frustrating were quite frequently matters of some concern, even though it was felt that little could be done, but the possibility of compensating for inherently unsatisfying work by having rewarding relationships with work mates, superiors or other work associates was not an initial attraction for the respondents, particularly those from British Leyland.

In this respect it was noticeable that they were seldom involved in any of the firm's sponsored clubs or activities. At first this would appear strange because amenities and facilities belonging to or sponsored by the firm were generally of a higher standard than were available elsewhere. There was either little or no expense involved in membership. Football pitches, tennis courts, club houses and so on

(2) Zweig F. 'The Worker in an Affluent Society' p.117 - London 1961.

were supplied free and yet the worker of our sample interested in such matters, was generally prepared to pay more for inferior amenities away from his work.

There were however inter-departmental football and cricket competitions which were both traditional and popular. In these events shop floor workers would 'turn out' and their work mates would show considerable interest. In view of this, the obvious question to ask is why a worker is prepared to 'turn out' for his department and not for the firm. The answer is relatively simple. He does not identify with, or even wish to identify with, the firm: when he identifies with his department he is identifying with his work mates. This may seem a particularly naive piece of analysis in view of the suggestion made earlier that workers were unlikely to compensate for unsatisfying work by having rewarding relationships with their work mates. But the initial 'instrumental' calculation does not govern all behaviour at work, and here we are not considering a relationship but sporting occasions, in which, because of the challenges from another department, a corporate identity and a sense of common purpose emerges. It could be viewed as a demonstration, that in some areas of activity, 'we are to be reckoned with', despite what the firm thinks of us.

The creation of rewarding relationships with work mates was usually seen in the context, or against the background of the firm which was itself seen as necessary and instrumental in economic terms. The work situation no longer seemed to be accepted by the men, if it ever was, as the place which was favourable to the creation of relationships from which such rewards as approval, recognition, or a sense of belonging might be derived. A distinction between work and 'non work' appeared to exist, the latter was seen as the realm of freedom where the satisfaction of expressive and affective needs could be properly pursued.

EXTENDED SOCIAL CONTACTS

The workers of both samples although friendly enough at work, tended not to form close ties with one another away from the firm. This is not to say though that their 'social' friends were not industrial workers, because they generally were, but they were not usually their work mates. For these men, workplace friends, or mates, and friends outside work were largely separate social categories.

There was similarly very little evidence of any interest in developing personal relationships with their supervisors. The sort of comment made about a foreman which was fairly common was that he was 'all right' or that he was generally 'fairly reasonable'. Most remarks made about foremen were of this 'neutral' nature, they were rarely described, initially anyway, as being for example, friendly or approachable. No one described his foreman as 'a good bloke' though many said 'he was not a bad bloke'. The further removed a foreman was from being an irritant the more acceptable he seemed to be, but he was unlikely to advance in the men's regard much further than being acceptable or 'O.K.'

Expectations from work in terms of 'social rewards' were not anticipated. This was the general impression gathered from the British Leyland sample. It would appear that the work place was where they came to earn their living, to sell their labour for the best return they could get, it was not thought of as the place where significant and rewarding social relationships were sought or expected. We think there is a difference here between appearance and reality, but more of this later.

The situation was different at Jensens in some noteworthy respects. It was not the case that workers generally formed social relationships that endured outside the factory with either work mates or supervisors but rather that the work itself and interest in the

finished product, were found to be rewarding. A number of the Jensen work force had been invited to staff the stand at the Motor Show, this was appreciated because of the confidence in them it conferred and because they experienced public appreciation. The status thus bestowed was appreciated particularly since they found themselves in certain matters to be better able to inform the public than the sales staff.

The situation at Jensens differed from that at British Leyland in that the firm generally 'meant' more to the workers. It will be remembered that Jensen Motors passed through a time of considerable economic difficulty in the mid 1960's in which control changed hands, the manufacture of items which represented a sizeable proportion of the firm's production was discontinued, the firm was restructured and the work force was reduced by fifty per cent.

It would seem in these circumstances that a firm would be unlikely to 'mean' anything to its work people, for to introduce redundancy which inevitably discriminates would be likely to generate resentment and hostility. This is not to say that resentment, hostility and other con attitudes, not inclined to cause the firm to 'mean' something to work people were not experienced, they must have been. What is significant is that bitterness, resentment and suspicion did not linger. That this is so is attributed by many workers to Carl Duerr who, as the incoming Managing Director, had the responsibility for making unpopular decisions, but was able to explain the position to the work force well enough to carry them with him.

The accomplishment of this most difficult feat, could be easily over dramatized. It could be regarded as an infusion of the Dunkirk spirit, the turning of defeat into victory by forging the bond of common purpose. This is somewhat too extravagant but as Dubin in 'Human Relations and Administration (3) pointed out, social cohesion,

(3) Dubin R. Human Relations in Administration - New York, Prentice Hall 1951.

the acceptance of mutual goals, was usually the product of acute crises in the social system. Duerr's achievement was a significant factor in the profile of industrial relations at Jensens when this research was undertaken. It was the key to understanding why work people there, the majority of whom were at Jensens at the time of economic difficulty, felt the firm 'meant' something to them.

This comradeship of common difficulty was communicated to and accepted by the work people there but one or two observations about its strength seem necessary. Workers had a low key, matter of fact reaction to it, for although the management may have thought or even spoken in Dunkirk terms, the work people did not see the issue as a matter of life or death, indeed many of them could have left, have taken work elsewhere and not given a further thought to Jensen Motors. The firm 'meant' something to Jensen work people in relatively unemotional terms, true there is something in the comradeship of common difficulty as an emotional bond argument, but more than this Jensen workers felt the firm had been frank with them, had put them 'in the picture'. The firm was considered, for the first time, to have been completely open with the men and it was felt that this confidence deserved to be respected. The men also quickly appreciated the economic implications of the situation, that their survival as Jensen employees was inextricably linked with the firm's own survival.

These two factors, common economic interest and respect for the implicit mutual obligation forged at the time of economic difficulty between Carl Duerr and the work people, were the reasons why the firm 'meant' something to the work force. To repeat, there was nothing very emotional in the relationship as far as the Jensen workers were concerned. Their confidence was based on the firm's sincerity which deserved respect. Their attitude was thoroughly realistic.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTEGRATION

Maslow notes, in 'Motivation and Personality' (4) "that the organism is most unified in its integration when it is successfully facing either a great joy or a creative moment or else a major problem or a great emergency". The Jensen sample were more integrated into their firm than the British Leyland group for some of these very reasons.

As shown above, and because of the situation there, Jensen workers came to have an identification with the firm's economic objectives. This is not to say however that there was any greater involvement with the firm's sponsored social affairs. There was little interest in clubs and societies providing leisure time activities at, or associated with, the place of work. The reason frequently offered for this is apathy, but this would hardly seem to be a sufficient explanation. The impression gathered, particularly from the British Leyland sample, was that there was a definite resistance on the part of shop floor workers to having anything to do with the firm after working hours. Individual exceptions to this were isolated.

If a firm had a photography club or one for breeding tropical fish then an enthusiast would probably join regardless of the fact that its membership was drawn principally from the white collar employees. This is an exception to the general rule of 'non-integration'.

Workers objections to 'social integration' were sought, and a number of comments were noted which may suggest an answer. For example, 'I like to get away from here at the end of the day and forget about the place', and significantly, 'If you hang around they may think you like the place', or 'Your mates might think you're after something'.

(4) Maslow A.H. Motivation and Personality p.29 - New York 1954

WORKERS' DEFINITION

The central question, which much of that mentioned above deals with obliquely is, 'What is the workers' definition of the situation?' This is the factor of decisive importance in determining whether or not a group of work people want to be integrated into their employing organisation. We are not asserting here, it should be pointed out, that all workers interviewed had a clear, coherent and uniform definition of their total work situation because they did not. There were however significant points of agreement.

As mentioned above very few members of either sample could be regarded as socially integrated into their respective firms. This was clearly demonstrated because they 'voted with their feet', by not becoming involved in company sponsored social activities even though they might be cheaper, better equipped or even nearer. Why this rejection?

At British Leyland there seemed to be two related reasons. Firstly, there was a wide ranging feeling, expressed in a comment recorded earlier that, 'You are just being used'. There was the distinct impression that they were the wealth producers who were really unappreciated. This is not to say that they would necessarily subscribe to the Marxist view that it is impossible to reconcile the interests of capital and labour, that employers and men are really on opposite sides, but they felt that they were 'taken for granted', treated with indifference and both socially and economically undervalued. Given that the worker feels he is treated with indifference, perhaps callous indifference, then he is likely to reflect that attitude back. This is what seemed to happen at British Leyland, the workers mirrored what they took, perhaps mistakenly, to be the management attitude towards them and reflected it back to whence it came.

The second significant and related reason why workers at British

Leyland rejected social integration with the firm seemed to concern status. In the firm's hierarchy the shop floor worker appreciated his 'place' was amongst the 'other ranks', and he had no interest in voluntarily accepting this status in the non-work part of his life. In fact he clearly rejected inferiority and he turned his back on situations where he felt inferiority was entailed. This is not to say therefore that workers would be actively engaged in campaigns for equality. To campaign for equality would imply a wish to be considered to belong, to be accepted within the structure. Although workers did not rationalise in these terms, they clearly saw that their most eloquent response to the firm was to ignore it: they did not wish to play the game with reformed rules because they refused to play it at all. Authors have written that the opposite of love is not hate but indifference, this point seemed to be well taken.

What is written here is not new and it is certainly common to other institutions. The regimental old comrades association frequently suffers from a similar experience. It soon becomes a 'rump' of ex-officers and perhaps N.C.Os for whom the regiment 'meant' something which they would almost certainly insist was comradeship, it probably was, but it also reinforces personal significance. They derive pleasure from being reminded of their former status. Those for whom the regiment does not recall former status and power are usually less inclined to support the old comrades association. Their reactions have been known to include suggestions that they have given up playing soldiers and that the association is a clique of people who want to wear their ranks in 'civvy street'. What this indicates, and it is parallel to the situation which obtains in industrial organisations, is that the rank and file, whether ex-service men or industrial workers, will reject any social situation which entails inferiority.

Esprit de corps or esprit de firm, such as Taylor⁽⁵⁾ and

Fayol⁽⁶⁾ thought important, was a concept with no attraction for the industrial worker surveyed at British Leyland. Like his opposite number in the armed services his response to appeals for team spirit, pride and loyalty was distinctly cool. And when he came to consider the motives for such appeals he attributed them to self interest, not, we would hasten to add, the worker's self interest, but the firm's. Workers seemed very aware of ulterior motives and frequently saw them where none existed, they regarded esprit de corps as an obvious means to an obvious end - to get more out of them.

The appeal to the worker's emotions, to his pride, team spirit and loyalty were, as mentioned above, coolly received: so were some appeals to his reason. This was noticeable in the case of teamwork, for while supervisors of both groups regarded teamwork as an unquestionable 'good thing', an important part of their raison d'etre, workers, particularly those at British Leyland, were distinctly ambivalent about it. They would cooperate readily in most tasks to improve output and safety but teamwork as an abstract notion was something the firm 'put about'. As such, it was to some degree to be distrusted.

There was a point at which the firm's and workers' interests diverged for although they could see the advantage of teamwork and cooperation in the short run, within a foreseeable period of time, a time could come when they could be 'teamworking' themselves out of a job. After all automation was advancing at a considerable rate and since for the foreseeable future the distribution of incomes, or high incomes, was likely to depend on employment, they would prefer to remain in work. This may be an unsophisticated analysis of the

(5) Taylor F.W. Scientific Management - (Harper New York) 1911.

(6) Fayol H. Administration industrielle et generale - Paris 1925.

situation but it is an important part of the worker's definition of the situation. It is this group rationale which needs to be studied if we wish to understand the worker's attitude to teamwork or any other feature of the work place situation.

There were of course points at which workers saw their interests and those of the firm converged. The most obvious was the common economic tie and each appreciated its dependence on the other. But points of divergence were also marked. At British Leyland particularly the work place situation was felt to be one in which, to quote Herzberg⁽⁷⁾, 'the system utilised only the lowest common denominator in the catalogue of human ability'. The situation at Longbridge was one in which cooperation was mixed with conflict.

At Jensen Motors the common economic interest was also a tie between firm and workers but the group rationale, the workers definition of the work place situation, showed some significant differences from that at British Leyland. Workers were not necessarily more socially integrated at Jensens in the sense that they chose to associate themselves with the firm's sponsored clubs and societies, fewer of these existed anyway, but they were distinctly less hostile. The general attitude there was not so much one of rejection epitomised by such comments as 'I work for the firm on day shift and at nights, so I want to get away from it when I can', but one of genuine neutrality. The firm did not seem to push social integration presumably feeling that intrusion might cause a rebuff which would have been more damaging than no approach. Jensens efforts at social integration such as they were, were relatively small scale, they did not have large scale clubs, expensive facilities, professional groundsmen and sports club organisers. These represent a declared interest in social integration; the smaller firm while it may be interested, need not make it so apparent.

(7) Herzberg F. 'Work and the Nature of Man' p.36 - New York 1964.

Comments of many of the British Leyland respondents recorded suggested that they felt that they were 'taken for granted', treated with indifference and both socially and economically undervalued. This was by no means the impression gathered from the respondents at Jensens. There the management went to great lengths, though not obviously, to establish a rapport which conveyed the management interest in, and even concern for the work people. Neither was there any very strong impression that they were economically undervalued; some did note that they would be paid more in other firms in the industry, but this did not appear to rankle. Perhaps they felt because they were socially valued this, in a way, compensated for being slightly less well paid than those at 'the Austin'. Recognition, as Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman⁽⁸⁾ point out, is one of the strong determiners of job satisfaction.

It was noted above that workers at British Leyland rejected social integration with the firm because this would seem to entail status and that the worker appreciated that his place in the hierarchy was amongst the other ranks. Jensens, partly because it was a small firm and partly because of the personalities involved on the management side seemed to have been able to minimise the us/them gap. The impersonality and 'distance' both psychologically and physically of management seem to have been overcome there; it certainly had not at British Leyland. It was also mentioned above that the worker at British Leyland turned his back on situations where he felt inferiority was implicit. At Jensens this rejection tendency was nowhere near as marked. This greater togetherness, although a complex thing, seemed mainly to be attributable to three causes. Firstly, the notion of

(8) Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 'The Motivation to Work' - New York 1960.

economic interdependence was still significant, many of the workers could remember the firm's troubles and appreciated that "they were in it together" that management and work people were on the same side in times of adversity. Secondly, in a small firm where everyone knew everyone else there was not the impression of being an insignificant cog in a vast impersonal machine controlled remotely by faceless men. Thirdly, there were still vestiges of the bond of craftsmanship. Comments made by Jensen work people seemed to suggest that there was something more to be derived from the job than a financial return, that the work done was itself a source of satisfaction. Care must be taken here not to overstate the case since it is not being contended that Jensen employees regarded their work as a way of life rather than a job. They did as a matter of degree, 'get more out of the job', derived more job satisfaction, than did their counterparts at British Leyland. These are factors of significance when considering the Jensen workers' definition of the situation.

WORKERS AND THE UNIONS

At an earlier point in this paper, respondents' replies to the question about their 'unions' interest in them as persons were recorded. These showed that unions at Jensens were felt to be more personally interested in their members than those at British Leyland and one of the reasons suggested for this was that the shop steward could be seen to be doing his job in the small scale situation. At British Leyland the workers' definition of a union's function and their expectations from it differed from those at Jensens. The latter appeared to be 'old fashioned' unionists in the sense that they regarded their branch or lodge as something to which they belonged, the branch functioned in part as a sort of craft employment agency linking the branch with the firm. Workers attended branch meetings

and met one another there. The remnants, at least, of craft solidarity were suggested.

The situation at British Leyland was very different in that the average worker's contact with his union was limited to dealings with his shop steward. He thought of attending a branch meeting as the responsibility of the shop steward, who amongst other things, was the accepted link man. The notion of a union branch being something like a craft guild, functioning as both a social and economic institution did not apply. Unionism of the type obtaining at British Leyland was largely instrumental in that it was viewed almost essentially as a means to the workers' economic ends. It was not like the 'old fashioned' unionism since it lacked great emotional appeal, moral force, and did not seem to be wanted for its ability to extend men's social and political horizons.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER VIEWS

Goldthorpe in chapter 5 of the 'Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes' (9) writes, 'The orientation of workers towards trade unionism reflects their orientation towards their employment generally: and where the latter is predominantly instrumental, it is not to be expected that unionism, any more than work itself, will be seen as a way of satisfying other than economic needs'. While it is acknowledged that their unionism was largely instrumental, workers at British Leyland did not see themselves as freely adopting or choosing attitudes as this quotation might suggest, rather they felt themselves involved in a structure within which they had little choice. After all they had to go to work and there was 'not much choice about that', many of the respondents in fact said they came to British Leyland because it was the only job available at the time, and not as a matter of choosing

(9) Goldthorpe J. & others. 'The Affluent Worker - Industrial Attitudes, p.69 - Cambridge 1968.

the job because it was the most lucrative on offer.

One theory fairly widely subscribed to suggests that the affluent worker makes a calculation weighing the various aspects of job satisfaction against one another and deciding after due deliberation that it is money he really wants and that he will forgo other satisfactions. There was little evidence of this from British Leyland workers, they took the job in their view, out of necessity. And in an important sense it does not matter whether this is true or not because it is what was believed.

British Leyland workers did not see themselves as free agents, as the satisfied parties to a bargain struck between themselves and the firm, or for that matter as individuals who were 'internally' satisfied by the ordering of their own priorities, they saw themselves as the creatures of an imposed system. This view, however irrational, was the one which obtained and must be reckoned with. It is an important factor in the worker's own definition of the situation and was reinforced by resentment of night work. This more than any other single issue unified the British Leyland respondents, it forged a bond in adversity. If anyone were to visit the night shift to advance the view that night work was a feature in a 'calculated' deal freely entered into, one would be unlikely to get a round of applause.

The point being made here is simply that our affluent worker did not function as a calculating automaton at his place of work and as a human being elsewhere. He may or may not have made an initial evaluation of a range of satisfactions and decided he would forgo job satisfactions for cash, but calculation does not isolate him from the emotional involvement of the work place situation, and the latter is very powerful. Many people have been down a coal mine and in some sense can claim to know what coal mining is like, this experience, we would suggest, is totally different in quality from that of the miner

who daily may spend a seven or eight hour shift in a narrow seam of coal, lying on his stomach hacking coal from a face a few feet from his nose. Similarly those who have sought to study the affluent worker and conclude that his attitude towards his work is fundamentally calculative or instrumental, should not assume that this calculation and its implied detachment is the essential psychological characteristic, because it is not. Rather he, the affluent worker, responds emotionally to the situation which he believes exists and as has been said before, a person's belief system is a self buttressing structure.

Night work, as was mentioned above, was the largest single reason why men felt themselves to be victims of the system. It will be remembered that night work was not the subject of a direct question but since it was clearly a matter of concern to the British Leyland sample, views were noted. These corresponded closely to those mentioned in 'Shiftwork: the Social, Psychological and Physical Consequences', by Paul E. Mott and others⁽¹⁰⁾ in that, apart from pay, the only other advantage of night work was that it made increased daytime leisure possible. But for the greater number of workers this advantage was evidently cancelled out by adverse social, psychological or physical effects that this was felt to produce.

Unionism at British Leyland represented a response to the workers' definition of the situation there in that it was largely instrumental. It also reflected emotional responses. If workers had a particular distaste for night work or suffered a further reduction in job satisfaction because of the extension of automated processes, and they were certain their objections either would not or could not

(10) Mott P.E. & Others. 'Shiftwork: the Social, Psychological and Physical Consequences' - Ann Arbor 1965.

be heeded, then their reaction would be to ask for more money. This, it might be argued, is just further evidence to support the view that workers will accept more job dissatisfaction in exchange for cash. We would disagree with this and maintain that it is not necessarily evidence of a calculative or instrumental attitude towards unionism, but rather that it represents, in the workers' view, the most effective protest against management impositions.

We are not denying here that the British Leyland workers' relationship with his union was both plant based and instrumental, but this was not the complete picture. True it may have seemed so when it was something else, but the union also reflected workers' attitudes which were emotional rather than instrumental in character. The work task and role regularly experienced at British Leyland was more depriving and less inherently rewarding than that at Jensens and this was reflected in the nature of unionism.

Miss Joan Woodward in her publication, 'Industrial Behaviour - Is there a Science?'⁽¹¹⁾ writing with motor vehicle assembly work very much in her mind writes, 'The climate of industrial relations within a firm no longer depends entirely upon management's ability to develop sound personnel policies and the kind of procedures for consulting, communicating and negotiating which encourage responsible behaviour on both sides. Employees at both supervisory and operator level are also involved in a system of work organisation and control. This involvement has a more direct and powerful effect upon the pattern of behaviour in the firm than have attitudes to the firm itself. It is his experience on the shop floor that is critical in determining how hard an operator works, the number and seriousness of the industrial disputes in which he gets involved, and whether he stays with the firm

(11) Woodward J. 'Industrial Behaviour - Is there a Science?' p.13. - New Society - October, 1964.

or leaves it'. This quotation seems substantially true for the situation at British Leyland and false for the situation at Jensens.

At Jensens we would argue that the climate of industrial relations depended to a considerable extent on the management's ability to develop sound personnel policies and the kind of procedures for consulting, communicating and negotiating which encourage responsible behaviour on both sides. At British Leyland on the other hand the system of work, organisation and control itself was what workers felt themselves to be directly confronted by. The type of technology therefore had importance in affecting the workers' response to the situation and thus had the propensity of creating conflict or harmony there.

This is not to say though that the system of work organisation and control was sufficient to explain workers' attitudes at British Leyland. It does square in that they felt themselves to be the creatures, perhaps the victims of the system, but they knew that the system was not self imposing - that it was imposed by the firm. The management might, and probably did, argue that they were as much victims of the system as the workers. But while it might be conceded that there was some truth in this, workers still felt that management were responsible for imposing the system, and they had much to do with its nature.

Our experience in studying workers' attitudes at British Leyland indicated that there was no dominant determinant of behaviour there. Miss Woodward identifies in 'Industrial Organisation: Theory and Practice'⁽¹²⁾, 'technology as one of the primary variables on which behaviour depended', it was plainly significant at British Leyland

(12) Woodward J. 'Industrial Organisation - Theory & Practice, p.209 - London 1966.

but so were payment, ~~nightwork~~, reaction to management, resentment at being treated purely as occupational functionaries and so on.

Goldthorpe places great weight on the assumption that an affluent worker's behaviour is determined by an instrumental attitude towards both his job and his union. Man does go to work in order to secure a livelihood in doing so his attitude is essentially instrumental, but when he gets there other forces come into play.

It seems to us that there is a valid distinction here between (a) the worker's attitude towards work and (b) his attitude at work. Miss Woodward's view on the other hand goes some way to explain attitudes at work since it points out that the nature of work and the way it is organised are features of an environment which affect behaviour. But clearly no man is an island since his working life does not represent the total of his experience. With an increasing amount of leisure time at his disposal he becomes more exposed to features of the none work environment, and these are significant. His experience as a householder, a hire purchaser, a foreign traveller and a car owner, to use a few examples, are not confined to his life away from work. The purpose of his going to work is to provide the sort of livelihood capable of meeting the demands his life style involves. It is unlikely therefore that these will be completely uninfluential in affecting his behaviour at work. While he is actually at work, doing jobs automatically, he may well be thinking about his social life.

ROLE PLAYING

It is perhaps most helpful to think of the worker as a role player, although not always as an intentional one. Newcomb⁽¹³⁾ defines role behaviour as 'a molar unit which can be identified by those familiar with the role system, as behaviour on the part of the person

(13) Newcomb T.M. 'Role Behaviour in the Study of Individual Personality Groups' p.273 - Durham 1950.

in his capacity as occupant of some specified position --- as husband and wife, for example, or as an employee or employer'. Our respondent generally adapted to his work place role rather than deliberately choosing to play it. The role was determined for him as it was similar to those played by the majority of the existing work force: he adapted to prevailing attitudes. He was though, more deliberate in his attitude towards work in that he chose to be calculative, he decided on a lucrative job and was prepared to forgo job satisfaction.

Thouless⁽¹⁴⁾ suggests that an essential feature of a role is that it covers only behaviour in a particular capacity, and one individual at different times may act in many roles. This adapting to a role, this fitting in with existing customs and practices is evident in many situations. An agricultural worker or a peasant from Southern Italy who goes to an industrial job in Northern Italy or West Germany can, it has been found, adapt fairly rapidly to an established situation. If however a new factory is set up in what has hitherto been a non-industrial area and local agricultural workers are recruited, it may be difficult to get them to switch the lights off.

It might be pointed out here that when examined, the role playing theory entails inconsistency of attitudes. That workers may be both calculative and irrational in their behaviour. It seems more relevant to us to consider the varied, and frequently contradictory roles the worker played. He was for example, a bread winner, one who sought to meet his family's material needs. In doing so his concern was to feed, to clothe, to pay the mortgage and to keep up the hire purchase on his car. Small wonder that he was calculative in his attitude towards work. In his social life, while much of his

(14) Thouless R.H. 'General and Social Psychology' - Cambridge 1963.

conversation would suggest that he was wide awake to his own material advantage, he would like to be thought of as 'matey', 'witty' and generous.

It may be fanciful to suggest it, but affluent workers in the West Midlands seem to have similar social attitudes to those of the 'old time' gold rush prospectors. There is of course a difference of degree, but they subscribed to the 'work hard - play hard' philosophy. Their hard playing might include a stripper at the social club in place of the Yukon Belles at the saloon, they gambled on horses, dogs and football rather than with mine deeds and cards and their drink was beer rather than rye whisky. While this analogy could be over stated it serves to demonstrate the difference in the worker's social role from the role he adopts at work. The roles he adopts are not unconnected with one another, there is some overlapping. Hence we found that the social role had some influence on attitudes at work for there he was unable to enjoy the freedom and individuality of his social role.

The role played at work would appear primarily though, to be influenced by two factors (a) the prevailing attitudes there and (b) the events and circumstances which have impact on those attitudes. As mentioned above any new worker coming into a work place situation will adapt rapidly to the job and adapt with equal rapidity to the attitudes which obtain. It does not take long for the majority of recruits to one of the armed services to acquire the outlook and attitudes which obtain in his unit. If the prevailing attitude tends to be cynical and anti authority he will adapt to it, if on the other hand the ambience is one of keenness, enthusiasm and esprit de corps he will adapt to this.

The attitudes of a unit, whether military or industrial, are not static. Events and circumstances such as war and economic

depressions have made profound impacts on them. In the West Midlands, during the period in which this study was being undertaken, a particularly strike prone car factory had a very serious fire at night. A large number of work people returned, set about fighting the fire and moving completed vehicles out of its path. Greater potential damage and danger was averted. The Managing Director in extending his congratulations and thanks to those involved said that he was not surprised at what had happened because he had worked with many of the men during the war and he could well remember the dedication and heroism displayed then. Here is an example of adopting another role. Men and management were able to sink their differences, and find common cause.

ALIENATION

"The alienated worker', according to Anderman in 'Trade Unions and Technological Change⁽¹⁵⁾', views the job as a necessary evil, providing little satisfaction apart from income; it is dull, meaningless and disagreeable. He cannot identify with the work organisation and lacks interest in the firms activity in general'. The roles played at work by the individual or the group seemed to be shaped essentially by the prevailing situation. Where the situation was, one felt, to be characterised by impersonality and conflict the roles played by individuals and groups reflected these feelings. The fact that a man's attitude towards work was instrumental or calculative was not necessarily dominant in the role he played at work. Men may, and frequently do, resent changes which would be to their material advantage to accept. For example, workers have been known to resent the re-timing or reorganisation of a job even though it could be clearly

(15) Anderman S.D. 'Trade Unions and Technological Change' - London 1967. p.31

demonstrated that such changes would improve productivity from which they could benefit. Such behaviour is frequently attributed to alienation, the reaction against jobs which are felt to be unrewarding, meaningless and imposed by a vast impersonal machine.

It would over simplify the case to hold that alienation was the cause of workers' attitudes at British Leyland but there were some indications of its presence there. It is again a matter of degree. Workers were not generally disposed to define their relationship with their firm as one characterised by coercion and exploitation. They probably didn't know the terms, and if they had they would not contend that they were continuously the victims of coercion and exploitation. The important point to establish here is that their feelings were very mixed. At times they might well define their relationship with their firm as one of reciprocity and mutual accommodation at other times they might regard themselves as the victims of the system.

We are not then arguing that work people's behaviour at British Leyland could be attributed essentially to alienation, that all the attitudes that obtained could be traced to the rejection of work which was meaningless and unrewarding in that it satisfied none of a man's creative potentialities. We are however saying that the situation contained the ingredients of alienation and that certain stimuli would enflame alienated feelings. The flash point might be a management plan to reorganise production which seemed to the workers to be job and not person oriented. They could see in this a callous disregard of them as people, they probably felt that they were already being taken for granted in that they were unappreciated as the victims of the system.

Disputes have arisen over rows between foremen and shop steward, men have stopped work because one swore at the other. On the face of it such an episode is laughable, childish, irresponsible and so on.

But the occurrence represents the 'tip of the iceberg'. What has frequently happened, although no specific case is being referred to here is that a shop steward has been accused by a foreman of being obstructive and uncooperative. The steward would feel such an accusation was unjustified because, amongst other things, the foreman was paying scant regard to the extent of existing cooperation: it showed no appreciation of the workers' alienated feelings about the existing situation which the suggested cooperation would be unlikely to reduce.

The ingredients of alienation are present in mass production work and as time passes they are unlikely to decrease. We would think however that disputes are unlikely to be directly caused by alienation, they are more likely to be 'triggered' off by other flash points, but alienation is clearly an integral factor underlying disputes.

THE DYNAMIC FACTOR

Industrial relations is the study of evolving phenomena. Writing about this from the management angle Gordon and Howell⁽¹⁶⁾ note that 'Increasing flexibility, of organisation and mind, is needed to permit rapid adjustment to continuously developing situations'. Not surprisingly we noted that work people modified the roles they played in response to changes. This is rarely done deliberately and some of the shifts were hardly noticeable.

These changes of role and shifts in attitude are better demonstrated by analogy. In any given teaching situation a rapport exists between the teacher and the class, at some point of time another student joins the class. He may be the sort of person whose presence or absence is barely noticeable, the behaviour of the class and the

(16) Gordon R.A. & Howell J.E. 'Higher Education for Business' p.13. - Columbia University Press 1959.

relationship between class and teacher will be hardly affected. On the other hand he could be the sort of individual whose personality affects those around him, his presence, will oblige others to modify their roles, and the rapport between teacher and class could change. We are thinking here of the nature of normal human relationships and point out that people adapt to a new situation unawares; they do not notice changes in their roles. This ought not to be surprising because behaviour occurs in response to continuously changing sets of circumstances. Anyone who takes the static view, that behaviour is determined by an initial instrumental or calculative decision and can be understood essentially in these terms is in our view under-rating the importance of the dynamic factor in the situation.

Certainly the behaviour of the groups at British Leyland and Jensens seemed to have more to do with the total dynamic situations, both physical and psychological, that obtained there than other causes. There were changes in role occasioned by human and environmental factors and these changes were matters of adapting to different circumstances, with very little thought on the individual's part of what was going on. This is not to say that we had any preconceived ideas about what sort of attitudes were preferable. Indeed we would expect that supervisors would prefer the work force to be more acquiescent and that shop stewards would prefer the work force to be more militant.

SHOP STEWARDS

There was nothing which could be regarded as evidence at either place to support the popular view that the shop steward sees his job as 'stirring up trouble'. Those who contend that the industrial scene would be all sweetness and light, all cooperation and harmony were it not for deliberately disruptive and bloody minded shop stewards, would have found little to reinforce this view in the situations with which

this study was concerned. Indeed shop stewards at both British Leyland and Jensen were accepted to be valuable links in the chain of vertical integration.

B.C. Roberts writing in 'Trade Union Government and Administration in Great Britain'⁽¹⁷⁾ writes, 'He', the shop steward, 'is charged with the task of ensuring the carrying out of existing arrangements, working customs and practices within the shop — he has the duty of representing the members' interests and of negotiating on their behalf in any matters of difficulty or dispute which may arise, with the foreman or management of his shop'. These were the functions of shop stewards in our study.

The job of a shop steward does however vary according to the sort of set up in which he operates and because of the sort of person he is. To take the second point, some men do become shop stewards because they have strong convictions, or to put the same thing another way, particular axes to grind. Other men find the 'limelight' attractive, personal conceit is gratified. There are some who obtain satisfaction from being in a position of power. Union officials at both places may have been motivated by one or some of these factors, but there was nothing to suggest that they were anything other than well balanced, moderate people. The shop stewards we met were neither rabble rousing political extremists nor tyrants who held workers in fear of stepping out of the approved line. As mentioned above they were well balanced moderate people and it is doubtful whether they would have remained in these positions had they been otherwise.

The shop stewards in our study functioned in a number of ways - wore a number of different hats. One of these, which we have not seen

(17) Roberts B.C. 'Trade Union Government & Administration in Great Britain, p.69 - Bell, London 1956.

referred to elsewhere, was as an interpreter. In this role he sought to explain to management or to the supervisory staff what shop floor opinion and reaction was to a particular decision or what it was likely to be if a certain course of action were followed. The shop steward was also an interpreter of management attitudes to those on the shop floor. Another role played by the shop steward was that of the intermediary. If disputes arose, as they frequently did, over say the manning of a job, then the shop steward became involved in mediation. Indeed rather than being trouble makers as some popular opinions suggest, shop stewards were much more likely to be trouble settlers. As leaders we found shop stewards very much in touch with the views of those on the shop floor, there was nothing to suggest that they were the prophets of a radical dawn. They lead from within the work place situation not from the outside and what status and following they had depended on how effectively they played their roles as interpreters, intermediaries and reflectors of the views of the shop floor.

PRIMARY & SECONDARY GROUPINGS

Since this study has concerned itself with a large organisation employing thousands and a much smaller organisation employing a few hundreds it would seem useful to consider to what extent they might be regarded as consisting of 'primary' and 'secondary' groups. The primary group is one which is small and informal and where people are in face-to-face relationships with each other. In the primary group the direct interaction of personalities occurs and people have some liberty of action in interpreting the roles required of them. The secondary group is characterised by being larger and formal and where relationships have a more contractual quality so that the roles must be played out in a more impersonal and stereotyped manner.

The definitions of primary and secondary groups included in

the preceding paragraph convey the sense of those set out in 'Industrial Psychology' by J. Munro-Fraser⁽¹⁸⁾.

At Jansens groups tended to be small because departments were relatively small. It was not easy to say however that a certain number of workers were the personnel of a group. A group could expand or contract numerically during the course of a day. Equally a group could consist of a clearly identifiable section within a department, it could be the department itself or two or three people within a larger group. So while we refer to groups they are not necessarily static numerically nor are they necessarily limited to those performing a particular operation.

While acknowledging that groupings could not necessarily be identified precisely, at Jansens, many of the characteristics of primary groups were evident. Personal relationships inclined to be informal, for instance the work's manager was often referred to by his Christian name in conversations between workers. The office staff were not looked upon as the officials in the Kremlin, no sharp distinction was felt to exist between us and them. In fact there was something of the atmosphere of the family firm without the family's paternalism. Within the group there were informal person to person relationships and people were able to varying degrees to interpret the roles required of them. The important point about Jansens was that the whole organisation displayed some characteristics of primary groups.

At British Leyland the situation was, inevitably, different. Informality there was found within the working group. It was within the gang or amongst a group of men working near one another that the characteristics of the primary group were evident. Relationships with those outside the group and certainly those with the firm's hierarchy tended to become more formal, more akin to those encountered in secondary groups. This is not to say though that all relationships

⁽¹⁸⁾ Fraser J. Munro. 'Industrial Psychology' - Oxford, 1962.

within the primary group were informal and that relationships with others outside were uniformly formal. There were graduations which seemed to be attributable to be two moderating factors, the first of these was contiguity or proximity the second kinship. A foreman or supervisor working with a group could become acceptable, to a degree, on an informal basis. While he might not be accepted as a 'mate' he would not be rejected as a tool of the management.

By kinship we mean the kinship of the work place: for although they may not have analysed the proposition they felt that they as workers had more in common, more common ground, with other shop floor workers, than they had with other groups of employees. Informal relationships seemed easier to establish horizontally rather than vertically.

At British Leyland as at Jensens the characteristics of the primary group were apparent. It was also true of both places that the lines of demarcation around primary groups could not always be precisely drawn. Some primary groups merged into others and were therefore not separate, independent entities. The marked differences were noticeable in that at Jensens the attitudes which characterised the primary group were evident throughout the firm, at British Leyland primary group relationships, where they occurred, were evident within hierarchical zones or strata. For the rest, the picture was one of relationships characterised by the attitudes of the secondary group.

During the course of this study Mr. Carl Duerr, Managing Director of Jensens, questioned the assumption that in the urban way of life, with its multiplicity of groupings, an increase in the proportion of 'secondary' relationships was inevitable in industry. His argument was that the number of 'secondary' relationships did not automatically increase in proportion to the size of the organisation since some large scale, complex organisations enjoyed relationships

which were more personal and less stereotyped than was the case with some smaller organisations. Mr. Duerr used the example of the Dupont Corporation in the United States and elsewhere, as an organisation where, 'When Madam Dupont sneezed everyone in the Corporation caught cold'. The obvious question to put was 'How is this possible?' The answer was to appoint people to key positions in the firm's structure who were able to transmit and convey the ideas, the character and the essential spirit of the patron.

This clearly has a number of difficulties not the least of which is finding a whole chain of communicators who are able to convey something like a carbon copy image of the boss. But the need for a firm's leaders to become known must increase to compensate for the increase in 'secondary' relationships which seem the likely, although perhaps not the necessary consequences of larger more thoroughly structured organisations.

There would seem to be some involved questions here. For example, How does a boss communicate an image. What image should he communicate? How can he change his image given that this is felt to be desirable? We do not propose to offer general answers to these particular questions. These are individual problems needing individual solutions, we would say though that there seems to be very little deliberate or conscious effort in communicating the bosses' image to work people. The firm may be conscious of the need for an impressive public image and the boss may figure in it but few firms seem to have given any thought to the image they would want to convey to their work people. The boss figures as a dispenser of gold watches, his signature may be on the first inside page of the employees' hand book, he may give out the prizes at the firm's sports, but these are automatic rituals which may have been going on for fifty years. Indeed fifty years ago they were probably of more value in image communicating.

Burns and Stalker in 'The Management of Innovation',⁽¹⁹⁾ concern themselves with leadership styles and relationships. Implicit in what they write is the importance of the leader's image - a problem which requires most careful study. Those who have mastered the modern media of communication, particularly television, be they actors, politicians, teachers or even business men, have acquired skills which the contemporary boss of a large organisation ignores at his peril. Since the number of 'secondary' relationships have increased and are increasing because of the growth of larger more thoroughly structured organisations, then the only medium likely to redress and balance in favour of 'primary' relationships, it seems to us, is television.

PERSONAL NEEDS AND SATISFACTIONS

Our main concern so far in the 'discussion' part of this paper has been to describe and interpret circumstances and attitudes. We turn now to consider whether, and if so to what extent, the needs and satisfactions side of the human personality are met by the work undertaken by the groups at Jensens and British Leyland. We will be concerned here with three groups of needs: (1) Material needs, or needs for food, shelter and the like. (2) Companionship needs, or the need to associate with other human beings and to interact with them. (3) Self actualising needs, or the need to feel that one has some significance as an individual, the need for social acceptance and approval.

It would appear that the material needs of both groups were reasonably well met, although times of rising expectations are times of expanding needs. It would appear also the companionship needs were reasonably well met because individuals of both groups were able

(19) Burns T. & Stalker G. 'The Management of Innovation' - Tavistock Publications. London 1961.

easily to meet and associate with others. This is not to say that companionship necessarily entailed friendship if friendship involves association away from work. We found that very few respondents from either of our samples were friends, in this sense, with their working companions. Another need which could be regarded as either a companionship need or a self actualising need is 'belongingness'. There was little to suggest that the British Leyland sample felt the need to belong to that institution, indeed there was much to suggest that they did not wish to be associated with it after working hours. This is not to say that the gang or another primary grouping did not satisfy belongingness needs. Neither does it mean to say that workers at British Leyland were not pleased to be associated with the product and to belong to a group responsible for making it. There is a subtle distinction or perhaps an ambivalence here in that they rejected the 'Austin' as an institution to which to belong, but were prepared to be associated with its product. Perhaps this was because the workers on the shop floor were more familiar with the firm's product than the firm's establishment.

There was little indication that self-actualising needs were satisfied as far as the British Leyland sample was concerned. In reply to a question discussed earlier it was reported that half the sample said that they felt the management was 'never interested in them as persons' and forty per cent said they felt the management was 'occasionally interested in them as persons'. There was little to indicate here that the management or the firm satisfied, or was interested in satisfying self actualisation needs. Personal significance, appreciation, social acceptance and approval were not gratified by the relationship between men and management. The satisfaction of self actualisation needs, where it occurred, stemmed from relationships between the men and from the satisfactions derived from doing

their job, although these were significantly fewer in the mass production situation than in the one where craftsmanship was valued.

In response to the question mentioned above twelve per cent of the Jensen sample said they felt that management was 'never interested in them as persons' and forty-two per cent said they felt that management was 'occasionally interested in them as persons'. There was every likelihood of self actualisation needs being satisfied at Jensens. Personal significance, appreciation, social acceptance and approval were always implicit and frequently made explicit there. There was a deliberate policy to this end and as a consequence of it belongingness needs were, to a degree, gratified. This was of course reinforced by the satisfaction derived from working on a product which was as much a work of art as a sophisticated piece of engineering.

STRESS AND FRUSTRATION

Most occupations have a stress potential. Dentists deal with patients who during the course of treatment are in tension, who feel apprehensive, these emotions are communicated to the dentist. Lecturers feel tensions which their situation imposes, they may for example, feel that they are unable to fulfil the high expectations of their audience. The worker on the mass production job is subjected to various stresses, such as the stress of maintaining the speed of work, the knowledge that unless he does his job properly other workers will be unable to do theirs, the knowledge that his earnings could be affected by someone else's problem.

In addition to these individual stresses there were also group tensions which were varied in character - in the way Thouless⁽²⁰⁾ points out, from those deliberately inspired to those most certainly not. If we think of the stressful nature of the work place situation and consider that within it few of the workers' higher order needs

(20) Thouless R.H. 'General & Social Psychology' - University Tutorial Press, Cambridge 1963.

are being gratified we see a set of circumstances which contributes to frustration instigated behaviour.

That there is not more disruption of work at places like British Leyland is probably due more to a high frustration tolerance than any other factor. Most people are able to withstand the normal though stressful pressures of working life without 'flying off the handle' too often. But when it happens in production line flow work, to put it euphemistically, it is much more noticeable. A similar aberration anywhere else could go almost unnoticed.

The work place tensions and stresses imposed at Jensens were not as severe as those experienced at British Leyland. Although it is not possible objectively to measure tension and stress, simple observations were sufficient to show that there was not the pressure of maintaining the speed of work and consequently workers were not so acutely sensitive about their own or others' inadequacies. At Jensens then we would suggest that the working situation imposed a lower level of stress and provided better opportunities of satisfying higher order needs. We did not notice behaviour which could be characterised as frustration tolerance because there was little evidence of frustration.

According to Maier⁽²¹⁾ frustrated behaviour has four characteristics - these are aggression, regression, fixation and resignation. The first of these, aggression, is defined as 'hostile acts associated with the emotion of anger'. Aggression does not necessarily take the form of physical assault, people's anger may be assuaged by abuse, by verbal 'punch-ups'. Frustration based aggression would seem to be more likely to find this rather than a physical form in an organisation like British Leyland although some militant trade union

(21) Maier N.R.F. 'Psychology in Industry'. 83/91. - G.C. Harrap, London 1955.

activities could verge on the physical.

Regression is defined as 'breakdown of constructive behaviour and a return to childish action'. Adults whose frustration tolerance is low show some childish symptoms, for example, they may have a high degree of suggestibility or responsiveness to rumour. There were some signs of this at British Leyland: reference to the incidence of rumour there was made earlier in this paper.

We would not argue that the next characteristic of frustrated behaviour namely fixation, was particularly evident. Maier defines this as the 'compulsion to continue a kind of activity which has no adaptive value'. It is true that there were work people at British Leyland, who resisted change and favoured methods which were ineffective and out of date, but no more so than in similar institutions or in life generally. There were of course the most obvious reasons for resistance to change: it was widely agreed that there was little job security and if change jeopardised it, then there was inevitably suspicion of change. But as we pointed out earlier, the level of frustration tolerance was high and change was commonplace. These two factors tended to neutralise frustration instigated behaviour attributable to fixation.

The fourth characteristic of frustration, resignation, is one in which the individual feels that nothing is any use, there is no use trying, one might just as well put up with things. Here again behaviour which could be attributed to an aspect of frustration, was evident. This is not to say that any particular number of men behaved consistently in a way that could be attributed essentially to resignation. There were odd times when a man felt weary or reflective when he felt resigned to the situation. He might be affected by a pessimistic or fatalistic mood into which others had fallen, but it was likely to be a transient. People may feel like giving up, resigning themselves to

defeat at a particular point of time then go away and have a cup of tea, talk to someone, come back refreshed physically and mentally and deal successfully with the problem that was previously so daunting. Resignation was not then a deep seated behaviour problem, there was evidence of the 'what does it matter - you can't do anything about it' attitude but it inclined to be a transient rather than a chronic feature of behaviour.

When evaluating conversations amongst work people who know one another well, it is perhaps a mistake to take too much notice of what is said at it's face value. It seemed to us that many utterances made were mood communications or rapport reinforcements rather than sense communications. Roethlisberger⁽²²⁾ writes, 'When two or more people are talking together, what is primarily happening is an interaction of sentiments rather than anything strictly logical'.

To take the utterance mentioned above, 'What does it matter - you can't do anything about it', this could have been said by one man fifty times in recurring dialogues with one of his mates. The point of saying it was not that it represented a strongly held conviction but that it was part of his signature tune, his recognition signal. He uses the form of words for the same sort of purpose as one shakes hands or salutes. Much conversation was of this character.

There were then, aspects of behaviour which could be attributed to frustration but these did not appear to assume serious proportions because of the generally high degree of frustration tolerance. But because the general picture is one of a high degree of frustration tolerance this is not to say that there were not times, perhaps a small proportion of the total, when frustrations were felt to be

(22) Roethlisberger F.J. 'Management & Morale' p.90 - Harvard University Press. Cambridge Mass. 1941.

intolerable.

As in the case of alienation, disputes did not occur as a direct consequence of frustration; they were usually sparked off by the traditional causes such as pay and conditions of work. Disputes, which tend to polarise allegiances and harden attitudes, are sharpened where frustration is a factor in the situation. Frustration is an undertow in the sea of industrial relations whose significance, is usually appreciated when it accentuates the consequences of surface storms, otherwise it is hardly noticed. At British Leyland we would say that both surface storms and undertows were of greater strength than they were at Jensens.

There are jobs which utilise people's potentialities to the full and give them in return a deep sense of personal achievement. The working situations studied in this project did this to some extent at Jensens but hardly at all at British Leyland. There, work for the majority was a means of acquiring a livelihood and little more. It offered achievement and identification only in a very limited sense.

Professor Agyris⁽²³⁾ suggests that this is inevitable because the industrial company is a formal organisation based on rational principles and demands from the individual task specialisation where effort is concentrated on a limited field of endeavour. Individuals, on the other hand, tend to develop from passivity in the earliest years to increasing activity as adults, from dependence to independence. Personal relationships incline to be those characterised by equality rather than subordination, and people develop from lack of self consciousness to an acute awareness of self. In these circumstances there is little doubt that they would want jobs which provide

(23) Agyris C. 'Personality & Organisation' - Harper, New York 1957.

opportunities for self actualisation, but the situation requires them to utilise only a few of their less important abilities. This thesis, it seems to us, is most relevant to the understanding of behaviour in the situations studied.

P A R T 3

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In the Introduction it was suggested that differences in such factors as size, technology, organisation, personalities and product variation might contribute to differences in industrial relations in the situation studied. We would now submit that they do and that they interact with one another. But more than this we think that they are features of two different cultural patterns which include more subtle factors such as the ethos, sociology, and the history of the situations studied. It is an appreciation of this total situation with its intrinsic complexities which is necessary for industrial relations at Jensens and British Leyland to be appreciated let alone understood.

In the final section of this paper we do not pretend to offer solutions but to refocus attention on some of the problems encountered. This is not because we are reticent about anything that has been written but because we are too well aware that the study of human behaviour does not lend itself to incontestably valid generalisations.

We felt that the relative sizes of the firms in question had an influence on the state of industrial relations there. At British Leyland, the shop floor work force felt that management was distant in both physical and psychological terms. Management was felt to exist in an aseptic environment well away from and inaccessible to the work force. The sense of physical distance reinforced the sense of psychological distance. The impersonality of management and the personal indifference this seemed to convey was reflected by the work force. The attitude was simply, 'if they're not interested in us then we're not interested in them'. It was suggested earlier in the paper that the 'us/them' gap, which would seem an almost necessary consequence of large scale, might be lessened by the judicious use of

television. But the key word here is 'judicious'. T.V. is a highly specialised form of communication at which even the experts have been known to fail.

Management at Jensens did not suffer the disadvantages of physical and psychological 'distance' experienced by their opposite numbers at British Leyland. At Jensens the management worked for integration by, amongst other things, making sure that they were known personally to work people. They took full advantage of their small scale situation to foster human relations. Formal communications benefitted from this if only because they were not thought of so much as directives from the high command.

In brief, British Leyland, perhaps because of its size, failed to communicate personal interest in its work people. Therefore formal communications were thought of as issuing from a bureaucracy which directed workers' actions, not surprisingly they were often received with scepticism and suspicion. At Jensens personal communication was good both because of small scale and the interest of management, this provided a climate of opinion in which formal communications were generally well received.

Workers from both samples took their jobs initially to secure a means of livelihood. In other words the attitude towards work was essentially instrumental. We would however draw a distinction here between attitude towards work and attitude at work. The same general point is made in the observation that men go to work for money, but when they are there other forces come into play. It seems to us that the Goldthorpe⁽¹⁾ thesis offers only a partial explanation of the behaviour of workers at British Leyland and Jensens. For while it seemed true that they went to work for money and wanted little to do

(1) Goldthorpe J.H. & others. 'The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes'. Cambridge. 1968.

with the firm in the out of work situation, their behaviour in response to many circumstances of the work place was certainly not motivated by calculation. Indeed many strikes result in losses of earnings which are never recovered.

Workers of both samples tended to reject their firms' social activities despite the high quality of amenities and facilities available and their low cost. As far as the British Leyland sample was concerned there seemed to be two chief reasons for this. Firstly they rejected social integration into a set up where they felt that as people they were not valued. Rightly or wrongly they felt that the management treated them primarily as factors of production, to this they responded by voting with their feet. The second reason, which followed directly from the first, was concerned with status. In the firm's hierarchy the shop floor worker regarded his place as with the other ranks and he was unprepared voluntarily to accept this conferred status in the away from work situation. He clearly rejected inferiority and situations in which he felt inferiority was entailed. This did not lead to demands for equality because this would have suggested that he 'cared' what the firm thought of him. He was unprepared to demonstrate dependence in this way.

In many respects the Jensen work force were better 'integrated' with the firm. True they did not seek specifically to involve themselves with the firm's social activities, but then the firm did not seem to push social integration in the away from work situation. The very scale of British Leyland's provision for social integration declared their interest, they had difficulty in not seeming like the bride left waiting at the church, whereas the smaller firm, although it may be interested, need not make it so apparent.

The Jensen work force were well integrated with the firm for a number of reasons. The management succeeded in establishing a

rapport which conveyed their interest in, and concern for their work people. Many of the Jensen work force had been through the firm's period of economic trouble when some sort of bond in adversity appeared to have been forged. There was still an appreciation of economic interdependence. They were a small firm where there seemed to be some reality in the slogan about sinking or swimming together. The absence of impersonality aided integration. People did not feel like insignificant cogs in vast impersonal machines controlled by faceless men. Most of the respondents at Jensens expressed an interest in the product and comments made suggest that some satisfaction was derived from working on it. We are not contending that the respondents regarded their work as a way of life rather than a job but we are saying that some of the Jensen employees experienced some of the satisfactions of craftsmanship whereas practically none of the British Leyland sample did.

Integration is essentially a matter of personal relationships. To be integrated into a society or a community means being accepted by and accepting it. But it is not just a matter of conforming to the rules or accepting the principles but of establishing relationships with people. At Jensens this essential point was appreciated particularly by Carl Duerr the Managing Director, who made every effort to be known and to come to know everyone in the firm. He projected his image most effectively. Industrial relations at Jensens would have been very different without him.

Workers at British Leyland felt their unions were less interested in them as people than did the respondents to the same question at Jensens. There seemed to be two main reasons for this. Firstly in the small scale situation the shop steward could be seen doing his job and secondly the Jensen workers were to a degree, 'old fashioned' unionists in the sense that they regarded their branch or

lodge as something to which they belonged: the branch functioned in part a craft employment agency linking the branch with the firm. Workers attended meetings and met one another there. The remnants at least of craft solidarity were evident.

At British Leyland the average worker's contact with his union was limited to dealings with his shop steward. Attending branch meetings was thought of as his responsibility, because he was the accepted link man. The notion of a union branch being something like a craft guild - as both a social and economic institution did not apply. The attitude towards unionism at British Leyland would appear therefore to be an instrumental one - the worker was interested in unionism only to serve his economic needs. But again a distinction needs to be drawn between the attitude towards unionism and what actually happened. This ties in with the worker's attitude towards work and his attitude at work. In both cases the attitudes towards work and unionism seemed to be essentially instrumental but when he is actually at work other forces come into play. Workers looked to the union's representatives to communicate and channel their responses to the situation. These were often emotional. In practice then shop floor unionism was much more than an economic weapon, it was an institution which functioned like an M.P.'s Saturday surgery in that it received complaints, explained or interpreted situations, gave advice and where it was felt appropriate, it took action.

We found little to support the view that shop stewards were the perpetual 'fly in the ointment' of industrial harmony. Both British Leyland and Jensens accepted that shop stewards performed valuable services in such matters as communication, interpretation and as intermediaries. Rather than being trouble makers they were trouble shooters: they were not purveyors of anti-capitalist propaganda, they lead from within the work place situation and their authority, such

as it was, depended on how effectively they interpreted their role, and represented their members.

We incline to the view that there is a chameleon like tendency in human behaviour. People adapt to roles, unawares, which suit a particular set of circumstances. So while the affluent worker sees himself, at home in the midst of his hire purchase commitments, as acquisitive, calculative man, at work his behaviour will be a response to the set of circumstances which obtain there.

Some thought was given to the worker's definition of his situation. In this respect we pointed out that workers generally did not have a clear, coherent and uniform view of the situation, but then it was hardly to be expected they would. The important point to establish is that feelings were very mixed. At times they might very well define the relationship with their firm as one of reciprocity and mutual accommodation and at other times they might regard themselves as victims of the system. As mentioned above they generally rejected social integration with the firm because they felt quite strongly that they 'were being used' and that this was no basis for social involvement.

There was some evidence, at British Leyland particularly, of these alienated feelings but it would be wrong to define the worker's relationship with the firm as one which was essentially characterised by resistance to coercion and exploitation. Neither would we argue that it stemmed from the rejection of work which was meaningless and unrewarding in that it satisfied none of a man's creative potentialities. But workers were affected by a situation in which they were ciphers functioning as an unautomated machine. They might not 'fly off the handle' because they had learned to live with alienated feelings but they were an ingredient, a sub stratum, of industrial unrest.

We found it helpful to regard the worker as a role player, although not always as an intentional one. At work he adapted to a role rather than deliberately choosing to play it. The existing environment, the established customs and practices usually determined the nature of the role. This is not to say that workers respond identically to the same stimuli, but the attitudes generally adopted matched those already established. So if the prevailing attitudes tended to be cooperative and responsible then there was a high degree of probability that the new entrant would conform to them. If, on the other hand, attitudes tended to be hostile and obstructive he would conform to those. Many attitudes were ingrained, they had existed for years, but it seemed unreasonable to contend that they were necessarily static. Events and circumstances such as wars and economic depressions have wrought great changes in them, but not necessarily for the better. Our concern here though was with the individual, who in the study undertaken might certainly be thought of as a role player even though an unwitting one.

We were concerned to discover to what extent primary and secondary groups existed in the situations studied. We found it almost impossible to draw lines of demarcation around primary groups because they formed and dispersed rapidly. It was therefore difficult to say precisely to which primary group certain persons belonged. What we do say is that the characteristics of the primary group were evident since relationships were direct and informal, allowing the interaction of personalities to occur.

Behaviour characteristic of that found in primary groups was evident at British Leyland between people or groups of people of the same status. For the rest the picture was one of relationships characterised principally by the attitudes of secondary groups. Informal personal relationships were therefore evident within the gang

and groups of men working near one another. There were a few exceptions to this, a foreman or an assistant foreman working with a group, could enjoy friendly relations with the group and while he might not acquire the status of a 'mate', he would not be rejected as a tool of management.

At Jensens marked differences were noted in that the attitudes and characteristics of the primary group were evident throughout the firm. Members of the office staff were known by their Christian names as indeed were many of the management personnel. Management at British Leyland, whether it was so or not, were regarded as remote and inaccessible. They belonged in their citadel surrounded by their acolytes in what was felt to be alien territory.

Much of what has been written has been concerned to describe and interpret circumstances and attitudes encountered at British Leyland and Jensens. We went on to consider what his work experience 'meant' to the individual in terms of human needs and satisfactions. In this we considered three needs: these were material needs, companionship needs and self actualising needs. It appeared that material needs were reasonably well met and so to a degree were companionship needs. Workers of both samples, as noted earlier, found companionship in the primary group situation. Another need related to both companionship and self-actualising, namely belongingness, was less adequately gratified. At British Leyland particularly, workers neither felt that they belonged nor had any wish to belong. Oddly enough though, workers were not unprepared to be associated with the product. This was another example of ambivalence or perhaps mixed feelings because while they rejected 'the Austin' as an institution to which to belong they were prepared to be associated with its product.

There was little indication that the self actualising needs of the British Leyland sample were gratified. They were, it is true,

prepared to be recognised as the car makers, but the actual tasks performed were in themselves little source of satisfaction. Such needs as personal significance, appreciation, social acceptance and approval were not met by the relationship between management and men. Where such needs as these were met it was generally by relationships between men and perhaps to a very limited extent, by job satisfaction.

The picture was totally different at Jensens. There it was a matter of policy to fulfil, or to attempt to fulfil self actualisation needs. Value was placed on communicating personal significance, appreciation, social acceptance and approval and we would say that attempts to diminish the 'us/them' gap enjoyed a degree of success. Efforts in this direction were reinforced by the satisfaction derived from working on a product which was as much a work of art as a sophisticated piece of engineering.

We would contend that occupational stresses were factors which affected the behaviour of workers at British Leyland. These derived, for example, from the necessity of maintaining the speed of work, the knowledge that a worker's pay could be affected, apparently arbitrarily, by someone else's decision and by underlying doubts about job security. Such factors as these in a situation where automation and reorganisation were 'on the cards', contributed to tension. If we add to this that few of the workers' higher order needs were being gratified then a set of circumstances which contributes to frustration instigated behaviour emerges. That there are not more disruptions of work at places like British Leyland is probably due to a high level of frustration tolerance. When disputes occur they frequently do so over apparently minor issues which act as flash points in circumstances which have in built stress and frustration characteristics.

Work place tensions and frustrations imposed by the situation at Jensens were incomparable to those experienced at British Leyland.

There was not the pressure of maintaining the speed of work, frustration was not so marked and the degree of job satisfaction was greater. Job insecurity was of course known to Jensen employees but they had confidence that their interests would be protected by both the management and the unions. Behaviour which could be characterised as frustrated was very little in evidence.

The obstacles along the path to improved industrial relations at that part of British Leyland we saw may not be insuperable, but in our view, without marked changes in policy and attitudes the best that can be hoped for is that the situation gets no worse. With a history of industrial unrest allegiances have become polarised, attitudes have hardened, and are reinforced by frustration. For the majority of workers their job was simply a means of securing a livelihood. It afforded little sense of achievement and provided little workers would choose to identify with. Their responses to the situation ranged from indifference to hostility.

Agyris⁽²⁾ suggests that the sort of situation recounted in the previous paragraph is indeed inevitable because a large industrial firm must be a formal organisation based on rational principals which demand from the individual, task specialisation, where effort is concentrated in a limited field of endeavour. This in no way meets the needs of the adult, independent, self aware individual who finds that the working situation utilises only a few of his less important abilities. This argument could be countered by pointing out that workers do accept these circumstances because they adapt, have a high frustration tolerance, and are prepared to forgo other satisfactions for money. Each man calculates his own particular self interest in

(2) Agyris C. 'Personality and Organisation' - Harper, New York 1957.

material terms and his behaviour is comprehensible if this basic point is understood.

But men do not behave like calculative automatons, if they did they would not become involved in strikes from which losses of earnings are not recovered, they would not object to night work because they would accept that to run a night shift entailed making efficient use of plant and equipment, from which they would benefit.

Clearly some men are more attracted by the glint of gold than others and the consensus of opinion suggests that our respondents were very interested. It is doubtful though whether many of them would have chosen to spend a season on a whaling expedition or fighting as a mercenary for a large cash return. There are limits to what men will do for money - at least in the quantities they could realistically expect.

At British Leyland the affluent worker seemed to function according to the economic theory of opportunity cost. We mean by this that when wages were low or when a new worker started he needed money badly, he tended to sublimate his needs for independence, equality and personal significance, to the need for money. As wages increase, or to put it a little more poetically, as the yoke of economic serfdom was sloughed off, he felt able to decide whether he would exchange a monetary increment for an increase in personal significance. Workers were not slow to realise they could get both by the same means. A wage claim that was successfully negotiated meant that the significance of those on whose behalf it was negotiated was acknowledged. Dubin⁽³⁾ points out that higher morale in a work group may be the consequence of successful opposition to management, thus supporting the view that

(3) Dubin R. 'The World of Work'. Prentice Hall. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1958.

disputes ostensibly about money have a wider significance.

Man it seems needs to derive satisfactions from his experiences. Some, but we would think very few, find money totally satisfying. Others find money only partially satisfying and need the gratification of doing a good job and being appreciated for doing one. If these needs are not actualised then he will seek other satisfactions. He may find them away from work, in for example making a social contribution by running a youth club. He could equally derive satisfaction from anti-social activity by being, for example, a skillful thief acclaimed by the criminal community. Such activities may compensate for the lack of personal achievement and the inability to utilise potentialities at work, but they may not. A man could enjoy a social life and also feel that his working life should be similarly meaningful. When he does not and for a slice of time that still, despite reduced working hours, represents a considerable part of his experience, he will seek other satisfactions. If he cannot secure fulfilment and recognition because of his experience in the working situation he will seek satisfactions in spite of it. He needs to be partially acknowledged, he will not be totally ignored and if he and his contribution go unappreciated then he will ensure that his rejection of the working situation, does not.

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INTERVIEW SCHEDULE I

SHOP FLOOR WORK FORCE

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE AND TIME OF INTERVIEW</u>
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Social and Educational Background

1. Birth Place.
2. Date left school and started work.
3. Impression of School education.

4. Post School Education.

5. Number of jobs since leaving school.
6. Their nature.
7. Are you a first generation industrial worker?
8. Are other members of your family industrial workers?
9. Are people in your home neighbourhood industrial workers?
10. Are your particular friends (male or female) industrial workers?
11. Do you meet your work mates socially?
 - (a) in works sponsored clubs or activities
 - (b) in an 'away from work situation'.

12. How would you describe your home neighbourhood?

Morale Factors

1. How do you like your present job?
 - (a) I don't like it
 - (b) I'd prefer something else
 - (c) I just accept it - neither liking nor disliking it
 - (d) All things considered I like it pretty well
 - (e) I like it very well.

2. Is the atmosphere of your work-place:
 - (a) Extremely hot, cold, draughty or dusty?
 - (b) Usually unpleasant
 - (c) Occasionally unpleasant
 - (d) Generally satisfactory
 - (e) Excellent most of the time.

3. For the most part fellow employees in my department are:

- (a) Unfriendly
- (b) Indifferent to me
- (c) All right
- (d) Cooperative
- (e) Very friendly.

4. In his attitude towards you personally, is your immediate supervisor:

- (a) Always unfair
- (b) Often unfair
- (c) Sometimes fair and sometimes not
- (d) Usually fair
- (e) Fair at all times.

5. In comparison with other employers in your community, how well does the company treat its employees:

- (a) Most other employers are better
- (b) A few of the other employers are better
- (c) About as well as the average employer
- (d) Our company is better than most
- (e) Our company is decidedly the best of all.

6. When desirable job vacancies arise, how are they usually filled:

- (a) By employing people outside the company
- (b) By promoting favoured employees who are not specially qualified
- (c) By giving the chance to employees of long service
- (d) By taking the most available qualified person
- (e) By choosing the most deserving based on both ability and service.

7. Would you say the job was:

- (a) Always boring
- (b) Often boring
- (c) Sometimes boring - sometimes not
- (d) Usually interesting
- (e) Interesting at all times.

8. How would you react to women being employed as operatives in large numbers in the shop:

- (a) Unsatisfactory in any circumstance
- (b) Usually unsatisfactory
- (c) Sometimes satisfactory - sometimes not
- (d) Often satisfactory
- (e) Very satisfactory.

Comment on your reasons.

7. Would you say that the management is:
- (a) Always interested in you as a person
 - (b) Occasionally interested in you as a person
 - (c) Never interested in you as a person
8. Do you think of the Union as being:
- (a) Always interested in you as a person
 - (b) Occasionally interested in you as a person
 - (c) Never interested in you as a person
9. Would you say your immediate supervisor was:
- (a) Job oriented
 - (b) Person oriented.
10. Would you say communication was:
- (a) Good
 - (b) Fair
 - (c) Poor
11. Does your immediate supervisor involve you in decision making?
12. Does your immediate supervisor consult you about any aspect of the jobs you do?
13. Does he discuss personal matters with you?
- Does the company remove workers from the shop when they have reached a certain age?
- Does this bother you?
14. Do you think the problem of redundancy is:
- (a) Very worrying
 - (b) Sometimes worrying - sometimes not
 - (c) Hardly bothers you.

Motivation

Why did you come to Jensens/British Leyland?

Is it just the money?

15. Are there security considerations?

16. Does the product interest you?

Is there any merit in working with large numbers of people?

Do you welcome overtime?

17. In your free time (away from work) do you do another job?

Does your free time principally mean the opportunity to follow your personal interests? e.g. gardening, sport?

What would you do if you had enough money not to work?

Training

How long did you train for your job?

How?

Adaptation

Did you adapt quickly and easily to your job?

Did working with experienced people help?

Were your work-mates friendly straight away?

Is the speed of work objectionable?

Is noise annoying/Is music helpful?

Would you prefer to work on your own?

Would you prefer to work with a smaller group?

18. Are there people, other than the official leaders, whom you would regard as leaders in the shop?
-

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE II

SHOP FLOOR SUPERVISORS

1. How long have you worked here?
2. How long have you been a supervisor?
3. Are you a 'local' person?
4. Are you a first generation industrial worker?
5. Do you live in an area where many industrial workers live?
6. What training, if any, is there for supervisors?
7. How are supervisors selected?
8. Are they appointed from inside?
9. Do they take up appointments in shops where they have worked?
10. What attitudes do you commonly encounter from the men. Are they, for example, willingly cooperative, neutral, indifferent, reluctant or uncooperative?
11. What do you think causes these attitudes?
12. What are the main problems in handling your men?
13. What do you think causes these? Are they (a) mainly human relations problems (b) the consequences of the work place environment (c) a complex mixture of the two?
14. Would you say that on balance you were job oriented or person oriented?
15. Do you discuss the job with your men?
16. Do you involve them in decision making?
17. Do you discuss career prospects with them?
18. Do you discuss personal matters with them?
19. Do you have any worries about job security?
20. Do you find the factory environment congenial, tolerable or objectionable?
21. What are your free time interests?
22. What would you do if you had enough money not to have to work?
23. Would you say that communication in the firm was good, fair or poor?
24. Do 'unofficial' leaders emerge?
25. What are the main qualities a supervisor needs in your situation?
26. How would you rate your interest in the product you make?