

The State, Planning and Labour:

Towards transforming the colonial

Labour process.

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THE STATE, PLANNING AND LABOUR: TOWARDS TRANSFORMING THE COLONIAL  
LABOUR PROCESS.

By

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INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe inherited an economy characterised by uneven development, possessing on the one hand a modern industrial and commercial sector which was primarily designed to serve the interests of the minority white settler community, yet one which was notably dependent on foreign monopoly capital and technology, and, on the other hand, a low productivity and generally underdeveloped peasant sector. These colonial features of the economy were summarised most vividly in the first government economic policy statement, Growth with Equity, (1981) in the following terms;

"economic exploitation of the majority by the few, the grossly uneven infrastructural and productive development of the rural and urban economy, the lopsided control of the major means of production and distribution, the unbalanced levels of development within and among sectors and the consequent grossly inequitable pattern of income distribution and of benefits to the overwhelming majority of the people of this country, stand as a serious indictment of our society. So does the imbalance between predominant foreign ownership and control of assets on the one hand and, on the other, limited local participation as also and more especially the past colonial dispossession of land and other economic assets and the consequential impoverishment of the masses of the people ..." (p. 1)

Emphasising the point of linkage between the two sectors, the Three-Year Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP) 1982/83-1984/85 said, "the two sectors, however, are not functionally separate and of particular importance in this regard is that the one, the modern sector, has historically fed on the

other". The above two statements together capture, on the one hand, the essence of the problems and contradictions of capitalist development under colonialism and, on the other, the urgency of tackling those problems. The policy document went on to state the government's determination to undertake "a vigorous programme for the development of the country" with the ultimate objective of establishing "a democratic, egalitarian and socialist society".

But the achievement of the goal of growth with equity, let alone that of a truly socialist society, is not an unproblematic process as the experience of other third world countries which have embarked on this path has shown. For this will involve a number of interrelated and sometimes contradictory processes involving, on the one hand, the need to transform the colonial economic structures while, on the other hand, and because of the necessity to avoid economic collapse or chaos, preserving productive forces. The preservation of the productive forces has crucial significance in Zimbabwe not only because their development had reached an advanced stage under colonial rule but also because of the instructive experiences of Zimbabwe's closest neighbour and ally, Mozambique.

The need to preserve productive forces was stressed in the introductory chapter of the INDP which said,

*While the inherited economy, with its institutions and infrastructure, has in the past served a minority, it would be simplistic and, indeed, naive to suggest that it should, therefore, be destroyed in order to make a fresh start. The challenge lies in building upon and developing on what was inherited, ..." p. 1.*

These concerns are real and every socialist experience must confront them in one way or another(1).

But a word of warning is perhaps appropriate here. What we are saying is that even if a party and the state are committed to constructing socialism, the issue of preserving and developing productive forces, and of simultaneously transforming existing production relations is one riddled with tensions. Moreover, as Lenin knew well, and as the Chinese also stressed through their experience, these tensions also reflect class struggle(2). This is very much the case in Zimbabwe as we shall show later. Thus while transformation is a protracted process, there are definite forces within society who have no interest to do so, and these will often hide as well behind the emphasis on preserving productive forces.

We must elaborate a little further on this point. Productive forces do not exist in a vacuum, but bear the stamp of the social relations of production. What is inherited from the past is not just technologies and people with varying skill levels, but capitalist labour processes set within capitalist relations of production which themselves are situated in varying concrete contexts - colonial settler-based capitalism in Zimbabwe with however strong dominance of foreign capital.

The task is to transform the colonial capitalist labour process. It is important, in this respect, to understand the labour power/labour dichotomy, the crucial concept in Marxist economic theory that delineates the essential non-exchange relations of the capitalist economy. Labour power, the commodity which is exchanged in the labour market, is the human capacity to work. Labour, on the other hand, "is the active, concrete, living process carried on by the workers; its expression is determined not only by labour power but also by the ability of the

capitalist to exploit it" (Gintis, 1976, p. 37). The aim of the capitalist is to extract as much surplus value as possible from the labourer. Three factors determine the extraction of surplus value: first is the length of the working day, i.e. the number of hours that the labourer has to work each day; second is the intensity of labour related to how hard the labourer works or is driven or motivated by the capitalist employer; third is the productiveness of labour which results in more goods being produced in the same amount of time and with the same intensity of labour. The bringing together of large numbers of workers under one roof requires control and co-ordination. Under capitalist relations of production such control tends to be authoritarian and coercive (3).

Although some recognition is given to it, transforming the labour process is generally seen as being outside the domain of planning.

In summary, planning must address the issue of the transformation of the labour processes if at all it is concerned with advancing socialism. The issue is not merely one of seizing the commanding heights of the economy through nationalisations, but also of reorganising production and labour processes. Admittedly, this cannot be done overnight, but a clear strategy is needed so as to be able to identify tactical interventions. In this respect, the concrete conditions need to inform strategy. In the case of Zimbabwe we need a clear understanding of colonial history in general and of the UDI period in particular, for, during the UDI regime the state was not just a laissez faire state but a strongly interventionist one. The state itself invested significantly in public enterprise within key sectors of the

economy and aided private as well as public capital to subordinate black labour under their command.

Hence, the inherited economic structure was comprised of a mixture of public and private enterprises (the latter mainly under control of foreign capital) and both relying heavily on the state to structure their profitability through keeping black labour cheap and compliant. This is reflected in the organisation of the labour process and of the employment relationship. Hence, issues which will be of major concern in the transition period include:

- the question of confidence: not merely the fear of nationalisation, but also the question of labour and its control;
- the incorporation of Zimbabweans into management and ownership within a basically unchanged structure of control;
- the state and the working class: will the state propel workers' power within public enterprises and the private sector or will it ally itself with capital against labour?

These are fundamental issues of planning which have become fudged. My paper attempts to highlight their importance and to put them back on the agenda.

## THE COLONIAL INHERITANCE

An important feature of the colonial economy is that far from being laissez faire, it was actually subject to close state regulation or 'planning', especially with respect to the creation of and continued reproduction of labour power. For example, pre-World War II colonial development which centred around the white agrarian bourgeoisie who were aided to capture large portions of the most fertile and well-watered land from the African peasantry was not just a question of creating more land for settler agriculture, but a way to restrict the scope of peasant agriculture and of drawing labour from the peasantry. Herein lies the origins of the 'success' story of white commercial agriculture. Arrighi (1967) wrote about the two main consequences of land apportionment: first, it ensured an expanding supply of labour to white farms, mines and industry as the productivity of peasant agriculture progressively became undermined and peasants were thrown on to the job market(4) and, second, it divided the economy into non-competing racial groups by restricting competition on produce and labour markets as well as other individual spheres(5).

Many studies that describe the impressive growth and technological development of the manufacturing sector up to the collapse of UDI tend to ignore the repressive labour regime that accompanied it. The colonial form of production organisation was based on very tight control over black unskilled and semi-skilled labour by white managements. White workers, on the other hand, formed a labour 'aristocracy', which possessed the skills and jealously guarded their 'skilled' jobs. The state not only

propelled the industrialisation process but also shaped the conditions for cheap black labour while acting as a bulwark for the white skilled workers(6). But the expansion of capitalist industry involved the need for the flexible use of labour and came into conflict with the racial character of the division of labour.

At first capitalist employers relied on unskilled labour recruited on a migrant basis. With the rapid growth of industry and the shortage of skilled labour, many employers began to make efforts to stabilise the African labour force for use in industry. Many 'welfare' schemes designed to stabilise labour, such as hostel or compound accommodation, rations, etc., were installed. But broadening the base for black labour while keeping it cheap propelled changes in the organisation of the labour process, in the employment relation and the structure of the labour market.

Major battles were fought between white skilled workers and capitalist employers who pushed ahead with job fragmentation to bring in semi-skilled African workers(7). The main objective of the capitalist employers was not just to 'deskill' the white workers but to use the less expensive semi-skilled labour more flexibly and thus increase profits.

The potential of semi-skilled African workers since the beginning of the Second World War was recognised by the Todd Select Committee when it said, "Since the beginning of the Second World War.... there has been the beginning of what can fairly be described as an industrial revolution. In the older industries Africans have learned to do jobs of a higher grade than labourers' work and, in a number of cases, to do fully skilled



work. At the same time new industries have been established on mass production lines where, except for a small number of European supervisors and European engineers to maintain and repair the machinery, practically the whole labour force consists of Africans; and it has come to be realised that the aptitude of Africans for this type of operative work, and the availability of large numbers of them, is one of the most important factors favourable to the development of modern secondary industry in this country." (p. 5)

While under the 1959 Industrial Conciliation Act (Chapter 267) the definition of 'employee' included all races, the Act was not designed to facilitate the growth of African trade unions. Its basic feature was control of unregistered trade unions, all of which were African. While unregistered trade unions were given no status under the law they were nevertheless closely watched - they were required to notify the Registrar of their existence, supply copies of their constitution, keep books of account, etc. In presenting the Bill to Parliament the Minister responsible<sup>(8)</sup> admitted and confirmed that "to provide for these associations is nothing more than a control measure" (Col. 1547). Moreover, the road to registration was meant to be as hard as possible. According to the Minister, the Bill was not meant to "open the door wide to full trade union rights for all overnight." (Col. 1547)

The change in the labour law was not a benevolent act. It was a result of, on the one hand, the struggles and growing militancy of the black labour movement and, on the other hand, a response to changes at the level of production which brought blacks into semi-skilled work. The 1959 legislation did not however apply to

agricultural and domestic workers whose conditions of service continued to be governed by the Masters and Servants Act.

Another important feature of the Act was the protection afforded to 'minority interests' or skilled members of a trade union.

While no person could be excluded from a trade union on the grounds of race, colour or religion, the constitution of a trade union could provide "for its membership to be divided into branches on the basis of class of work or enterprise or the place of work or business or the sex or the race or colour of the members, or otherwise." (Section 50(3)(b) p. 64).

During UDI, the Rhodesia Front government took more steps to protect and enhance the interests of the white artisan class.

They tightened surveillance over National Industrial Council Agreements and the organisation of apprenticeship training. A

classic example of the government's protection of white journeymen was revealed in a confrontation between the Ministry

of Labour and the Transport Operators' Association in 1976

following the recommendations of the sub-committee of the National Industrial Board of the Transport Operating Industry set

up to, inter alia, "investigate the work performed by unskilled and semi-skilled employees in the workshops of establishments in the industry". The sub-committee's report, which recommended a major

fragmentation of skilled jobs, was rejected by the Ministry on the grounds that there were many operations which either

infringed on journeymen's work or could not be satisfactorily identified with the 'Agreements' jobs (a reference to the Motor Industry Agreement which the Ministry claimed was the 'parent body'). The Transport Operators' Association objected strongly

to the Ministry's position and to the fact that certain sections

of their recommendations had been referred to the Industrial Council of the Motor Trade. Why should recommendations of a sub-committee of the Industrial Board for one industry be referred to another, they charged? They rejected the suggestion that the Motor Trade was the 'parent body' (9).

The Rhodesian Front government also passed many amendments to the Industrial Conciliation Act designed either to protect white journeymen or to keep a tight lid over black trade unions (10). It is clear from the foregoing that colonial capitalism was not based on laissez faire, but was characterised by a strong interventionist state. Private capital had come to rely on the state to support it, particularly with respect to labour. It will want to perpetuate the pre-independence form of production organisation.

#### PLANNING AND LABOUR IN POST-INDEPENDENCE ZIMBABWE

In this section we focus on the implications of planning for transforming labour. In this respect, the land question and the emancipation of the peasantry have been in the forefront of post-independence policy debates. As we have seen, peasant agriculture progressively became marginalised under colonial rule through the expropriation of fertile and rain-fed land and discriminatory pricing and marketing policies. The communal lands were thus reduced to 'labour reserves', with able-bodied men leaving to seek wage employment. These effects were felt more strongly in the areas with lower agroecological potential (11). Remittances of migrant labour became and continued to be a major source of peasant incomes and, in some cases, a condition of agricultural development (12).

The coming of independence opened up possibilities for restructuring the relationship between the state and the peasantry. Real transformation would require amongst other measures a significant redistribution of good land to the peasantry(13). This will create more employment and incomes for the rural population. It must be recalled that driving African peasants on to dry and infertile land was the major cause of labour migrancy. Provision of more land must be accompanied by changes in the forms of production organisation and in the social relations of production in farming. The resettlement programme has progressed slowly with some 36 000 households resettled by 1986(14). Among the obstacles to a more thorough going, land redistribution programme is the Lancaster House Constitution whose "Bill of Rights" provisions restrict the government's ability to acquire land except on a "willing seller willing buyer" basis of land that is 'underutilised'. The result is that only abandoned farms in the drier and poorer areas have been available to the government(15).

Moreover, most of the resettlement schemes have been of the Model A type of individual plots rather than the Model B involving co-operatives. The latter held the promise of a real transformation of social relations of production in farming - but has so far faced immense problems due to lack of capital, technical support and management(16).

The attempts by government to enforce changes in the status of farm workers, have met with resistance from the large scale commercial farmers who have responded by rapidly displacing labour for capital(17).

Thus attempts at radical land reform have encountered severe

limitations not only from the Lancaster House Constitution but also from the perceived need to preserve the existing productive forces while simultaneously opening up further opportunities for individual accumulation which entrench interests against fundamental change.

Faced by all these problems actual government policy has shifted towards channelling more resources to the communal areas, with lesser emphasis on resettlement(18). Recent research shows that this will fuel further differentiation in the countryside(19). It has been shown; moreover, that the post-independence increase in marketed output by the peasantry has not meant lesser vulnerability of its poorer strata who continue to suffer from hunger and malnutrition(20). This will accelerate the movement of the rural poor and unemployed in search of wage employment at a time when formal employment is contracting.

## PLANNING AND THE COMMODITY LABOUR POWER

The preceding discussion has indicated that in the colonial period labour power was a commodity but not set within the framework of a free market. The context was, rather, of heavy state intervention and political subjugation of the black working class and the peasantry.

Post colonial development cannot therefore merely consist of liberalising or freeing the labour market from its racially segregated fragmentation, but must involve conscious steps to allocate labour with the aim of reducing unemployment and providing stable livelihoods to the producing classes. This is a critical issue of planning. But what really has happened? At independence, capitalists had two main concerns: firstly, they were fearful about the prospect of expropriation or nationalisation of their assets and, secondly, they were worried about the loss of control over labour as this was bound to undercut their chances for further accumulation. These conditions were guaranteed under the colonial state which was not sensitive to the needs of the black workers and the peasantry. The fear was that the black government would give too much power to the black workers and that this could disrupt the balance of power in industry with serious consequences for capitalist accumulation. 1980 and 1981 indeed saw wild-cat strikes and challenges of managerial power by industrial workers. Among the main demands of the strikers were: higher wages, dismissal of hated white managers/supervisors, reinstatement of dismissed workers, etc. However, the government used its weight and moral authority to stem the labour unrest and inserted itself between

the capitalist employer and the workers as the guardian of labour discipline. More emphasis came to be placed on increased productivity and the development of "good communications" between workers and employers. The call for discipline and stability was to underscore the need to preserve productive forces. But it was clear also that the struggle was over the content of independence.

Sachikonye (1986) has provided a useful account of the strike wave of 1980-81(21). He, however, seems to subscribe to the view that the strikes were "disorganised" and that they were a result of "a poor state of communication between management and workers in most firms". "The strikes", he said, "had thrown into broad relief the yawning gap in communication flows while management was particularly worried by the militancy displayed by workers in conflicts on the shopfloor" (p. 257)(22). Sachikonye also, in my view, puts undue emphasis on the "weakness" or "ineffectiveness" of trade unions which he says "could not be counted upon to articulate workers' demands or restrain their members from spontaneous industrial action" (p. 255). It is widely known that crippling and weakening the trade union movement was a priority agenda of the colonial state. That did not, however, kill the rank and file movement.

The significance of the 1980-81 strikes is that the workers themselves rose spontaneously countrywide to demonstrate their hatred of the exploitative and repressive system of colonial capitalism which was characterised by low wages and surplus control of labour. The strikers demanded not only higher wages but also changes in the authoritarian system of management. What needs to be highlighted, in my view, is the way the state

responded by moving quickly to contain the strike movement and thus aligning itself firmly with capital but all in the name of the "national interest". The retreat of the state was further demonstrated in the case of the agro-industry strikes in 1985 involving plantation and factory workers in private (mainly INCs but also large scale commercial farmers) and parastatal enterprises based mainly in Manicaland (for coffee and tea) and Chiredzi (for sugar). In July 1985, the government had announced a new minimum wage of \$143,75 for agro-industrial workers. But the entire industry - apparently with the support of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement - applied for exemption from the new minimum wage arguing that they were unable to pay due to very low world prices and input costs. At first the Ministry of Labour refused to consider blanket exemptions pointing out that the law allowed employers facing economic hardships to apply for exemption on an individual basis. As the employers dug in and threatened retrenchment of thousands of workers, the state was forced to give in. The strategy of the employers was to force a distinction between plantation workers and those who worked in the factories. In the final settlement plantation workers were awarded a new minimum wage of \$85 per month while factory workers received \$110 per month(23).

Two significant pro-labour measures taken by government through emergency powers were the introduction of the legal minimum wage from July 1980(24) and regulations barring employers from dismissing workers except with the approval of the Minister of Labour. This represented a significant departure from colonial labour policy. The regulations are a continuing bone of contention between the employers and the government. Government



sees the measure as a means of maintaining employment whereas the employers see it as an infringement on their right to hire and fire. The difficult years of drought and recession and the problems of foreign exchange shortages opened the way for employers to rationalise labour processes. First, many employers resorted to short-time working on the basis of three or four days in a working week, but, secondly, many found ways to retrench workers although government's regulations served as a mitigating factor (25).

Recently, there has been renewed pressure on the government to revise the 'no firing and no hiring' regulations which, employers claim, oblige them to keep "lazy" and "unproductive" workers. Employers are particularly unhappy about what they call the "red tape bureaucracy and time-wasting delays that clog up the justification process" (26). The Chief Justice of Zimbabwe, who also sits on the Labour Relations Tribunal, recently put himself firmly on the side of the employers when he said of the Labour Relations Act, "The Act forces employers to keep unproductive workers and to shut their doors to would-be future employees who may prove to be better workers. There must be competition on the labour market. The general impression is that the Labour Relations Act says: 'thou shalt not dismiss a lazy worker. If you do, the heavy hammer of the Ministry of Labour will descend on your skull'". The Chief Justice added, "this policy cannot be right in a country in which unemployment is high. I have good reason to believe that the attitude of lazy workers would change tomorrow were employers to have a free hand in the control and management of labour. They would dismiss unproductive workers and employ hard-working ones" (27).

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It is clear from the above what the real pre-occupation of the employers is about: it is to discipline the workforce - by using the stick of unemployment. The response of the government to pressure by the employers will be important in defining or redefining future state-labour and state-capital relations, that is, for the future of industrial relations in Zimbabwe.

One of the early measures taken by the majority government in 1980 was the establishment of Workers' Committees in all industrial establishments. Workers Committees were reconfirmed under the Labour Relations Act 1985 which repealed the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1959. Does the Labour Relations Act actually give more power to the workers and their organisations? Will it facilitate the transformation of the capitalist labour process? Nzombe has commented that while it recognises the right of workers to organise Workers' Committees and trade unions, it contains very severe restrictions designed essentially to control the workers' organisations and to prevent them from using the strike weapon to achieve higher wages and better conditions(28). The right to strike is so severely limited under the law that it becomes virtually impossible to conceive of a legal strike. An extensive role is given to state officials to ensure industrial peace.

While the economic stabilisation programme initiated in 1982 did help to achieve external balance, it had the effect of placing a heavier burden on wage earners through reduced formal sector employment and substantial increases in the prices of basic foodstuffs(29). Government freezes on wages from 1982 also had the effect of reducing real wages. More recently, government has committed itself to take further adjustment measures aimed, inter

alia, at reducing the budget deficit. Government has also agreed, in principle, to institute a process of trade liberalisation. It remains to be seen what the effect of these will be on employment and labour.

#### RESTRUCTURING THE LABOUR PROCESS

Government policies and plans must be seen against the backdrop of a deteriorating domestic and international economic climate. While between 1980 and 1981, following independence and liberalised foreign exchange allocations, the economy grew very rapidly achieving GDP growth rates of 11 percent and 13 percent respectively in real terms, the economic climate changed markedly in the period 1982-84 due to a combination of the worst drought and international recession which plunged the country into severe balance of payments problems. The end of 1984 saw the beginnings of recovery with a good agricultural season while 1985 was a very good year with a GDP growth rate of about 10 percent. But this was short-lived as the economy dived into recession again in 1986 with little prospect of real growth in 1987. Since 1982, government economic policy came to focus more on achieving external balance - with negative consequences on growth, employment and income distribution(30). Planning in the context of a declining economic climate will clearly have to be much more than merely directing investment and stating priorities in the use of resources (important though these dimensions of planning are) but also has to address the organisation of production and the transformation of labour itself.

My research on this theme is in progress. My main focus is on

labour processes in the manufacturing sector. So far, I have done research in two engineering companies as well as a comprehensive study of the Clothing Industry National Employment Council. Work on the Motor Industry National Employment Council is continuing. All this material still has to be processed and analysed fully. What follows are therefore my preliminary thoughts which are necessarily tentative and incomplete. The restructuring of labour processes necessarily involves political struggles, and needs organising on the basis of worker education and increased participation in decision-making by the workers in ways which limit certain avenues of capitalist accumulation. This is an issue of politics as well as economics, and it involves struggles since verbal commitment to socialism is not always backed by real commitment.

In their book on African industrialisation, Barker, et al (1986), show how an increasing division between mental and manual work had developed in Tanzanian enterprises as a consequence of the growth in the size and influence of management and engineer personnel in relation to production workers. This typical colonial division of labour tends to exclude most of the workers from planning, designing and control tasks which become exclusively the jobs of managers and engineers. The skilled tasks performed by production workers included quality control and repair and maintenance work(31).

The point was made earlier that the colonial form of production organisation was based on a very tight control of black labour by white managements. Under this division of labour, management and supervisory staff do not do manual work. They merely exercise control over production processes and over workers. The top

managers and engineers are still overwhelmingly white seven years after independence. The capitalist owners seem to want to keep things that way. The Deputy Prime Minister, Simon Muzenda, made a scathing attack on the mining industry in 1987. He said the government was concerned that in the middle to senior management in both technical and administrative areas there seemed to be "a preserve for whites while black Zimbabweans remained confined to senior positions in personnel or industrial relations. "A number of black Zimbabwean engineers with relevant qualifications", he said, "have had to leave some private companies out of frustration. It is inconceivable that seven years after independence, the corporate policies of our mining companies still reflect the old attitudes of basing advancement in a job on racial lines". "While it is not the government's intention to promote incompetent people to higher positions, it is still not right that advancement be based on race, and so it is hoped that this phenomenon will be redressed in the very near future"(32). An important question that arises is: what has been the result of government intervention to promote a black managerial class and the acquisition of shares by the state in private enterprises? One result has simply been incorporation into existing, essentially capitalist, structures and institutions. Such an outcome amounts to co-optation not transformation. The main issue shifts towards control over surplus value, that is, a division of surplus value between national and foreign control. It becomes very much planning without transformation and hence the demand for capitalist efficiency grows stronger. The substitution of black for white managers and the process of co-optation are reflective of the tension between preserving

productive forces within a process of transition and building up forces which counter such transition itself. Training of both managers and workers is clearly very important. The training of a management cadre has tended to reproduce technocrats with little or no political commitment. Besides rudimentary on-the-job training by firms to meet their immediate needs, the training of shopfloor workers has been neglected. The result is that a hierarchical division of labour still persists and can only lead to the alienation of shopfloor workers. The older workers with a lot of experience but still on the minimum wage have no hope because they realise that they have little formal education. While some are keen to improve themselves through further education, the environment at work is not conducive to study. By the end of the day they are so tired they cannot do anything.

Interviews with workers in the engineering firms so far covered in our study show no increase in confidence that things have changed in the direction of giving more power to the workers to influence decision-making at the enterprise.

While Workers' Committees have been established and continue to confront management with workers' demands, their powers are very limited. And it is almost impossible to use the strike as a weapon of struggle. All decisions about investment, production levels, employment, and so on, are preserves of the board of directors and top management.

Works Councils - a joint Committee of workers representatives and management - have also been established. In theory, Works Councils are meant to promote workers' participation in decision-making in the enterprise, but in reality they are used

as a means of communicating management decisions downward. They also discuss issues of discipline, the need to increase productivity, and welfare matters.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preceding discussion suggests that however you look at planning you cannot do that successfully without looking at the dynamics of production and work processes. The argument of 'preserving the productive forces', a strong issue in post-independence Zimbabwe, is an argument for preserving those labour processes that fueled colonial industrialisation. The government of independent Zimbabwe is now faced with the problem that both public and private enterprise had come to rely on this system to maintain their momentum of growth - not growth with equity but growth at the expense of labour. The "loss of confidence" after independence is a reflection of workers' opposition to this system of exploitation and private capital's unease at the government's socialist philosophy. To restore productivity, one either has to re-instate the conditions of colonial exploitation, or seek new and better ways of organising production. This is an issue of planning, but not merely a technocratic one. Less authoritarian, higher-productivity and participatory methods of organising work in industry should be possible. However, the issue of preserving productive forces, although a real issue, is often a convenient excuse for inaction. There seems to be a reluctance at present to proceed too rapidly with widespread nationalisation of industry. But a number of nationalised industries are in existence already. Perhaps a start could be made in the numerous parastatals or even in those



enterprises where the government has a sizeable equity, e.g. the many companies wholly or partially owned by the Industrial Development Corporation. In other words, there is a lot that can be done now to try to unlock the potential productivity of workers by making it possible for them to govern their own work activities.

At present, the employment relation in public enterprises is structured along similar lines to that of the private sector. The appointment and training of managers for public enterprise have not been within a perspective of "red and expert". A lot more emphasis could be given to worker education and workers and their organisations could be given more space to influence managerial decisions.

## NOTES

1. In his criticism of the ultra-left, Lenin (1982), stressed the need to keep a balance between the simple task of "expropriating the expropriators" and the more difficult one of introducing and consolidating "country-wide accounting and control" of production and distribution in the expropriated or nationalised enterprises.
2. For a discussion of the Chinese experience in industrial organisation see C. Bettelheim (1974) and M. Lockett (1980).
3. Gartman (1978) distinguishes two types of capitalist control: basic control, a type of authority which is necessary in any large-scale production of use values regardless of the relations of production under which production takes place; surplus control, which is necessitated by the antagonistic nature of production relations under capitalism.
4. By putting a definite limit to the land available for African permanent occupation, the Land Apportionment Act ensured that the African system of shifting cultivation had to be transformed to one of continuous cultivation, which, given the type of soils allocated to the Africans, led to severe soil erosion and consequent decrease in the productivity of the land. See also Palmer (1977), Munslow (1985), Ranger (1985).
5. In 1969, during UDI, the segregation of land on a racial basis was re-affirmed and intensified under the 1969 Land Tenure Act. The fundamental principle of the Act was to ensure that the interests of each race were paramount in their respective areas. The Act made the ownership, leasing and occupation of land by one race in another's area more difficult. The restrictions were

more stringent for urban (especially residential) land than for rural land. The measures ensured that Africans could not acquire business stands in city or town areas outside designated African township areas (Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 75, 15 October, 1969). At the same time, about half a million acres of land was taken away from the Purchase Areas scheme and "unreserved land" which had been available for purchase and occupation on a non-racial basis was ended and most of the area (about 5,5 million acres out of a total of 6 million acres) was re-classified as European. The removal of Africans 'illegally' occupying European land was intensified. (See H. Dunlop, "Land and Economic Opportunity in Rhodesia", The Rhodesian Journal of Economics, Vol. 6, No. 1, March, 1972).

6. The pattern of "white" and "black" jobs in industry came to be established under the 1934 Industrial Conciliation Act which left out the Africans from the definition of "employee" and denied them the right to organise in trade unions.

7. Among the major battles were those waged in the Motor Industry in the early 1960s. The employers were pushing for the fragmentation of journeymen's jobs so that black semi-skilled and unskilled could do those jobs. The white trade union representatives, on the other hand, were opposed to any dilution of journeymen's work.

8. See Legislative Assembly Debates, 12th February, 1959 (Cols. 1536-1558).

9. See "Papers re objection to amended amendment (No. 10), June 1976 and also 13th, 14th and 15th Reports of the Industrial Board of the Transport Operating Industry.

10. See Harris, P.S. (1973), "The 1973 Amendment to the

Industrial Conciliation Act", The Rhodesian Journal of Economics,

7, 3. Reports of the Secretary for Labour show that less strikes were recorded in the period after UDI than a few years before UDI.

11. D. Weiner (1988) discusses recent trends in land use and agricultural production in LSCF and CAs and evaluates land use forms under the resettlement programme. See also D. Weiner, et al (1985).

12. A number of studies have shown that the more well-to-do communal households are those with access to non-farm sources of income such as wage income which they use to buy tools and inputs. See among others, D. Weiner (1988), J. Jackson (on-going research).

13. See H. Coudere and S. Marijse (1987), D. Weiner (1988).

14. The INDP had envisaged that some 162 000 households would be resettled by mid-1985. There are two main models of resettlement schemes: Model A for individual households and Model B for producer co-operatives. Many observers feel that the resettlement scheme is perhaps too land extensive (as compared, for example, to Kenya's) and that more people could be resettled if the scheme was made more intensive. See the Cliffe Report (1986), D. Weiner (1988), Bill Kinsey, (1983).

15. Land has to be paid for immediately and in full - in some instances in foreign currency. Almost 50% of the cost of resettlement (estimated at \$50m at end 1985) had gone to land purchase alone. (See Cliffe Report).

16. See the Cliffe Report (1986).

17. Some writers, notably K. Muir, et al (1982), argue that the rapid drop in employment in the LSCF sector was due to the rise

in the minimum wage. See also the ODI paper.

18. Communal farmers have benefited from the substantial increases in the prices of controlled commodities as well as from increased credit and extension services. Ironically, they also benefited from the drastic cuts in resources going to the resettlement programme starting in 1983 (ODI Paper, p. 136), H. Coudere and S. Marijse (1987, p. 4), Cliffe Report (1984, p. 8).

19. In their study of six villages in Mutoko, Coudere and Marijse (1987) found that income inequality was to be found not between the villages or between agro-ecological zones but within villages (p. 15). Secondly, that "those societies (villages) with the lesser interference of market and state, thus less inserted in a money economy and more dependent on subsistence, experience a lower mean income but also less inequality" (p. 16).

20. See N.P. Moyo, et al (1985).

21. L.M. Sachikonye (1986), "State, Capital and Trade Unions".

22. The lack of "communication" between workers and managements was a major concern of the Ministry of Labour under Minister Kumbirai Kangai who took a personal interest in diffusing strikes by going round the country urging the strikers to return to work.

23. The Herald, November 27, 1985.

24. A number of studies have shown that the minimum wage legislation increased real wages until about 1982 but that thereafter, with the introduction of the government's stabilisation programme, wages have fallen in real terms. See the ODI Paper.

25. Mkandawire, T. (1985), "The impact of the recent world

- recession on the Zimbabwean economy", Lusaka, ILO, December.
26. See speech by Mr H.E. Behr, Chairman of the Institute of Directors of Zimbabwe, The Financial Gazette, November 20, 1987.
27. The Financial Gazette, November 6, 1987. The Chief Justice was speaking at a luncheon held by the Zimbabwe Chamber of Commerce.
28. S. Nzombe's, research on some aspects of the Labour Relations Act of 1985 is in progress.
29. ODI Paper.
30. ODI Paper, op. cit.
31. C.E. Barker, et al (1986).
32. The Herald, May 16, 1987.

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