Structures of Control: The Changing Role of Shop Floor Supervision in the U.S. Automobile Industry 1900-1950.

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## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACWP</td>
<td>Automotive Council For War Production</td>
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<td>FAA</td>
<td>Foremen's Association of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAF</td>
<td>National Association of Foremen</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAM</td>
<td>National Association of Manufacturers</td>
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<td>NICB</td>
<td>National Industrial Conference Board</td>
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<td>NLRB</td>
<td>National Labour Relations Board</td>
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<td>NWLB</td>
<td>National War Labour Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCTSE</td>
<td>United Clerical, Technical and Supervisory Employees of District 50, Union of Mine Workers</td>
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Summary

The thesis is based on a longitudinal study of the automobile industry in the U.S.A. from its inception around the turn of the century, to the 1950s. Charting the changes in methods of production, organisational structure, demography and skill configurations among the workforce, and institutional and political formations at the workplace, the study focuses upon the meaning of these developments in terms of the control of work and the personnel directly involved in that control - the changing role of foremen in 20th century industry.

Using a range of sources including contemporary governmental and industrial surveys, company and trade union records and oral histories, a picture is built up of the way in which methods of production, and the control of that production, are mediated through a series of social, demographic, spatial and ideological factors, in all of which the foreman is a central character.

In examining the role of shop floor supervision in shaping workers experience and actual structures of control at the workplace, and showing how the experience of foremen, individually and as a group, in turn are affected by changing patterns of work, the thesis constructs a historical modification to accounts of the labour process which stress a progressive, teleological exodus of control from the shop floor. The study points out for example, that the role of shop-floor supervisor during the inter-war period, largely supposed to have been proscribed and marginalised by technological and bureaucratic developments, remained in fact the focal point of control over hiring, firing, wage levels, production levels and methods of work, in short almost all aspects of the industrial workers' experience of factory life.

Having established the boundaries of power and control surrounding the foreman in pre-war mass production, and discussed the meaning of these boundaries in terms of class, ideology and divisions among the workforce, the thesis then examines the origins and effects of unionisation on the role of supervision. Following an account of the restructuring of power and control which comes with the establishment of production workers unions in the industry, the advent of the unionisation of foremen themselves is examined. The Foremen's Association of America (FAA), which saw its genesis and principal area of recruitment in the automobile industry, represented the most serious attempt to organise supervisory workers in the USA this century, and marks a pivotal point in the spread of unionisation, managerial response and state intervention in industrial relations. Building on earlier sections outlining the position of foremen in terms of power and ideology, the thesis proposes a complex, multi-level dynamic behind the formation, growth and decline of the FAA as a corrective to previous accounts which stress the primacy of legislative and institutional explanatory frameworks.

Finally the thesis charts the post-war response of management in the industry to the threat of foremen's unionisation, locating ensuing attempts to restructure the role, status and prestige of foremen in terms of the historical impact and progress of competing managerial theory, in particular that of the human relations school.
Chapter One: Introduction: The Foreman and Structures of Supervision.

This thesis concerns itself primarily with the changing historical experience, and role in industrial development, of a group of workers - first-line supervisors or foremen - in American industry in the first half of the Twentieth century. It will take for its primary focus developments in the automobile manufacturing and related industries, from the period around the turn of the century which marks the birth of the industry, through the period of expansion into mass markets and intensive rationalisation of methods of production into the inter-war years, the depression and emergence of industrial unionisation, and on through the experience of World War Two and reconversion.

The study of this particular group of workers necessitates confrontation with a number of debates current in labour history, which can themselves only be fully understood by inclusion of an understanding of the position of foremen. Indeed the centrality of the foreman to many of these debates presents unique complexities in considering the historical development of this sector of the workforce. The foreman's role lies at the heart of the labour process debate for example and issues concerning the control of work, the structures of bureaucracy, the functioning of labour markets etc. cannot be adequately explained without reference to the effects upon, and influence of, the personnel of supervision on the shop floor. Similarly discussions concerning the generation and replication of ideology or class at work must take account of the foreman's shifting historical position and influence. In the development of unionisation
the role of first line supervision needs to be understood in terms of its part in promotion or retardation of collective bargaining in addition to understanding the dynamics of its own supervisory and white collar union development. Simple numerical terms justify increased attention to this sector of labour. Estimates put the number of foremen and supervisors in American industry at 1,500,000 in 1941 for example, General Motors alone employing around 20,000 foremen by 1945. (1)

The automobile industry represents an important sector in which to locate a longitudinal study of this nature. Symbolic of the rise of mass production in the twentieth century, the industry grew from a total output of around 20,000 cars in 1904 to over 4½ million by 1925. By 1929 the 'big three' producers of Ford, GM and Chrysler dominated what was now the largest industry in the US in terms of the value of its manufactured output. Some idea of the developing scale of production can be gleaned from Ford statistics for the River Rouge plant in 1936 when inputs included 54,000 tons of steel, 47,000 tons of iron ore, 3,960,000 lbs. of rubber and 1,244,000 square feet of glass. (2) This rapid expansion and consolidation saw the industry building upon a number of manufacturing techniques developed in predecessor and related industries but also rapidly assuming the leadership in innovations in production methods and organisation applied to the manufacture of a complex product. In assuming a role at the forefront of rationalisation and mass production ("Fordism" becoming a term widely used to denote highly rationalised automated processes) the industry drew together a workforce and constructed a labour market whose composition in terms of heterogeneity of
backgrounds exemplifies the volatile nature of industrial change in the years before World War Two. The industry was also one of the major arenas in which the struggle over industrial unionisation took place in the 1930s, the sitdown strikes at GM for example remain a potent symbol of a pivotal point in the success of the CIO. On the specific issue of supervisory unionism the automobile industry was the centre of attempts to instigate a general movement of unionised foremen, and played the central role in determining the fate of this movement.

The periodisation chosen, 1900 - 1950, reflects these major developments in the industry. The establishment of methods and scales of production and related labour market restructuring underwent an initial period of growth and change which was at its most pronounced between 1900 and the late 1920s, perhaps not be emulated until the impact of developments in information technology, computer controls and restructured world markets of the 1970s. Unionisation in the industry was a phenomenon of the 1930s which saw the heightened role of the state during the interventions of the New Deal, the splits in the labour movement which led to the formation of the CIO and the growth of industrial unionisation, and arguably laid the foundations for the pattern of industrial relations which was to emerge in the post-war period. The Second World War saw changes in production with the switch to armaments manufacture leading the industry through another phase of expansion and rationalisation, increased labour market turbulence, new levels of state intervention, and importantly, saw the genesis and rapid growth of the movement to unionise foremen. Reconversion into the early 1950s saw a restoration of automobile production into what were to be long term post-war rhythms, the
resolution of formal industrial relations typified by pattern bargaining and "business unionism", and the implementation of the modifying legislation of the Taft-Hartley Act, coincidental with the decline of the foremen's union movement.

Within this period we see the role of foreman in industry going through a series of fundamental changes in terms of power and control in the labour process; control of the labour market; levels of skill; ideology, status and prestige - as perceived by themselves and others; attitudes towards and involvement in the labour movement; and their place in management strategy. It is clear that the role of the foreman in the 1950s, working in an environment of mass production with its attendant extensive division of both supervisory and direct labour, complex organisational and bureaucratic structures, and formalised collective bargaining and industrial relations systems, is markedly different to that of what might be termed his 19th century predecessor. The latter was perhaps to be found working in an environment typified by high levels of individual skill and discretion, assuming wide powers of control over planning and production, controlling working conditions, selection of workers, intensity of work, wage levels, discipline and so on. A figure to be held in some degree of awe on the shop floor (although clearly a wide variety of labour processes and work situations existed in both periods). The contrasts are numerous, and at first sight it would seem that the roles and attitudes of the supervisory worker at each end of this continuum have little, if anything in common. Take for example Edwards' description of the power of the foreman in the initial period of the emergence of the hierarchically controlled factory; "The work
tasks were ordered and controlled by the continuous, direct, ad hoc and arbitrary instructions of the foreman. They were enforced by positive rewards, by physical force, and/or by dismissal of workers...Power was unmistakably vested in the person of the supervisor." Both Melling and Nelson refer to the "empire" over which this "traditional" foreman ruled, Melling elaborating ways in which the British engineering foreman's power and influence extended beyond the confines of the factory. As rationalisation progressed, Weber's observation that "foremen increasingly became the administrators of impersonal rules rather than dispensers of personal fiats" becomes the basis of many accounts. As authority became vested in the "legal", rational structures advancing bureaucracy, foremen are seen as correspondingly governed by, and limited to the administration of, rules and procedures of a fixed and determinate nature, a process compounded by the advent of formalised industrial relations with the advent of unionisation. Epithets referring to the subjection of the foreman to these processes are numerous; "men in the middle", "marginal men", "forgotten men of management", "cinderella of industry", "inhabiting a twilight zone" etc. By the early 1950s C. Wright Mills felt able to assert that, "Of all occupational strata, in fact, none has been so grievously affected by the rationalisation of equipment and organisation as the industrial foreman." Yet as we trace the contours of change it becomes clear that, historically, certain aspects of supervisory power and control decline at uneven rates, may involve a shift rather than erosion, and in some cases may involve the substitution or enhancement rather than decline in the status and power of the personnel of supervision.
Similarly attitudes and ideologies among those engaged in supervision evolve at an uneven rate, to rhythms which are in part dictated by the contours industrial change, but which are also subject to the inertia and influence of wider social pressures and which at times reveal a pronounced dissynchronicity with the imperatives of mass production. For example it will be shown that the foreman's power over the experience of factory life for workers in the technologically and bureaucratically rationalised factory of the early 1930s in many ways exceeded the influence available to the "traditional" foreman of the 19th century workshop.

The theoretical position of human supervision, the optimal role of the foreman in managerial structures, has been the subject of many elaborations, changing with the emergence of the increasingly complex systems of the 20th century, and also reflecting the cleavage between rationalist and humanist approaches.

The scientific management schema outlined by Frederick Taylor can in many ways be seen as a wellspring from which a number of variants were later to emerge. Taylor's work, while not totally original in its approach, was nevertheless perhaps the first formally systematised scheme presented as the key to managing modern production. Taylorism sought to implant the principles of engineering rationality to all aspects of work extending the constant improvement of tools and machinery to the selection of the best method of undertaking residual human labour. To this was coupled rigorous selection and training procedures to ensure that work was carried out by the "first class man". At the heart of Taylorism, and subsequently one its most criticised aspects, lay the insistence that factors involving...
decisions over the way in which work should be carried out must be made unilaterally i.e. by the employer or, more precisely, specialist departments. Workers would be the recipients of codified and rigidly defined instructions - the "one best way" to undertake the task in hand. In this way the conception and execution of tasks could be separated out in what Gramsci later termed the breaking up of the "psycho-physical nexus" of work. Supervision of work was to be undertaken by a series of "functional foremen" - the route clerk, instruction card man and cost and time clerk were to be based in the office or planning room while the shop-floor would be supervised by a gang boss, speed boss, repair boss, inspector and disciplinarian.

While the Taylor system was rarely formally installed in its entirety, least of all the roles of functional foreman, it nevertheless represents an important articulation of structural developments in the control of work and a useful benchmark by which to assess its subsequent derivatives.

The rational technical aspects of Taylorism can be seen to form the basis of two subsequent strands of managerial strategy; time and motion study, initially outlined most comprehensively by Gilbreth, and what has come to be known as Fordism, a system never fully articulated in the forms used by Taylor or Gilbreth but arguably the most portentous system actually implemented. Gilbreth's work built on that aspect of Taylorism based in ergonomics and sought, by means of expert observation and measurement, to harmonise human and machine movement to produce optimal output levels. Time and motion echoed Taylorism in its appropriation of the knowledge of work; "All the traditional knowledge is literally collected, measured, sorted, tagged and
(10) Fordism on the other hand was a system which laid stress on the machine solution to problems of control. Whereas Gilbreth's work still relied on the compliant participation of the worker and called for traditional methods of supervision, the Fordist alternative, by substituting machinery for both the manufacture and transfer of production, attempted to incorporate supervision within the pace and direction of work as determined by those involved in the setting up of the machinery of production.

While Fordism strove to tie workers to machines and motion study sought to turn workers into machines yet another strand of managerial thought continued to stress incentive based schemes as a solution to the problem of control, especially that aspect of control concerned with the levels of discretionary effort available to workers. Payment systems linked to productivity levels - simple piecework - had a long history. Indeed it was inherent conflict around worker regulation and employer rate-cutting which which Taylor's system was designed to eradicate. The essential feature of payment systems as a means to intensify labour was that it sought to tap into worker's compliance. If simple piecework led to general social manipulation of rates of output then the solution was simply to devise a system of individual or group bonuses linked to productivity which would offer progressively greater reward over certain basic levels of production, ideally on a basis which seemed to offer equitable gain for both employer and worker. Such systems could be used as an alternative or an adjunct to machine pacing or time and motion and were seen as especially useful in jobs where automation was not a viable alternative. Again this movement echoed an element of Taylorism in
that Taylor had proposed offering a differential wage system whereby 'first class' men would earn high bonus rates.

A great many bonus systems rapidly came to be on offer by the early years of the car industry, varying from bespoke systems offered by specialist companies to various in-house derivatives. Such systems usually enabled a certain level of devolution of responsibility over the pace of work rather than the content or overall design and direction of production, nevertheless in certain circumstances, there did develop a potential to restructure shop-floor supervision. Self regulating gang systems for example could develop their own control of hiring, job allocation, methods and pace of working and so on. In short, they could eliminate the need for the presence of immediate shop-floor supervision altogether.

Some systems available in package form from specialist firms attempted a fusion of elements from both rationalisation and incentive based strategies. Systems such as that designed by Charles Bedaux and popular in Britain and the USA in the 1920s and 30s sought to combine absolute job measurement of machine and human action by trained experts within a general framework of bonus units linked to "laws" governing human effort and strain and the fixed capacity of machinery. Such systems offered recourse to the "neutrality" of outside experts in determining the pace and direction of work and again incorporated a major shift in responsibility for many aspects of shop-floor control away from foremen towards outside experts.

In addition to the above rational-technical and incentive based methods to control work a third strand of managerial thought began to develop during the early 20th century which focussed primarily on the
consent aspect recognised by incentive schemes. The 'human relations' school, instead of obtaining cooperation in production through financial incentives, sought to use the tools of behavioural psychology to understand and modify industrial activity. Modern production and the division of labour had created barriers to willing cooperation on the part of workers which could only be surmounted by the careful selection and training of workers and reorienting their goals on a path convergent with those of the firm. Human relations built on another aspect of Taylorism, that of rigorous selection procedures to ensure a precise fit between worker and job, but went on to stress the need to tap into rather than suppress workers' social requirements. For human relations advocates, enlightened supervision was the key to harmonious industrial production. The personnel department became the centre for general administration of this schema while the foreman, himself carefully selected and trained in relevant aspects of psychology, was to become team-leader and father figure, coaxing optimum effort from newly compliant workers. (14) This strand of thought also had roots in the movement for welfare and social provisions at work as a means of fostering worker company-loyalty, but forms a constantly regenerating theme to be found in the work of Mayo, Myers, Walker, Guest, Roethlisberger and Likert and so on. McGregor's Theory X - Theory Y for example still rests on the basic dichotomy between distrust and compulsion on one hand and fostered consensus on the other. (15)

Each of the above methods of control of production had the potential to radically restructure the role of the shop floor supervisor. Taylorism split his job into component specialities, each
in receipt of instructions determined from other specialists in turn.
Fordism and time and motion each had the potential to eliminate direct
supervision altogether beyond the residual need for disciplinary
functions. Incentive based schemes substituted self regulation and
autonomy and reduced the need for and overseer, even in an individual
disciplinary role. Human relations, while not diminishing the need for
a direct supervisory presence, sought to impart an entirely new range
of personnel skills into the role of foreman to take precedence over
previously dominant technical skills.

The debate surrounding the levels of application and actual
impact of the various managerial schemas outlined above is of course
unresolved. Braverman's restressing of Marx's analysis of the labour
process and the insistence that Taylorist derivatives form the
dominant mode and rationale behind the control of work has more
recently drawn down a reinvigorated discourse around the precise forms
in which such control was and is actually practised. Alternatives to
unilinear deskilling, division of labour and alienation include
Burawoy's recognition of compliance through structures of consent and
Friedman's elaboration of the multiplicity of strategies as actually
implemented by managements aware of spatial limits to their potential
to control work. (16) The debates have also been reinvigorated by the
imperatives of managing more recent developments in industry including
the restructuring of world markets, political and institutional
reorientations of industrial relations and the development of a new
range of technological processes. New interest in humanist methods of
control - quality of working life schemes, employee involvement and
similar participative systems has arisen in tandem with these

Chapter One

- 11 -
developments giving rise to the reexamination of the balance between rationalist and humanist applications.\(^{(17)}\)

In reality, components from each of the above strands of management theory were incorporated to some degree in a variety of work methods in the car industry. Each was initially defined, mediated and shaped by a range of pressures and inert areas within both social and technological configurations at the workplace. In the following chapters we will attempt to elaborate the ways in which the personnel and roles of shop floor supervision influenced, and were affected by, the implementation of managerial strategies, and the foreman's position in the constant renegotiation of forms of work. In doing so it is necessary to elaborate the types of technology and organisational systems governing the labour processes of automobile manufacture; the forms of labour market accompanying these systems; and the ethnic, racial and gender configurations and influences in the general workforce and among supervision itself. Chapters two, three and four will explore these themes to show that in spite of a phase of intensive rationalisation throughout the industry up to the early 1930s, and extensive deskilling and division of labour which, when applied to the role of foreman saw an increasing horizontally and vertically divided supervisory role, foremen on the shop floor retained areas of power and control far in excess of those usually attributed to this strata. In showing the ways in which foremen continued to exert a dominance over the everyday life of all workers engaged in production, in terms of powers to hire, fire, control production and work rates, and determine wages and conditions it will be shown that accounts such as Jacoby's for example which stress the
increased bureaucratisation of work, and resultant proscription of the foreman's levels of discretion by the 1930s, need serious qualification when specifically applied to the automobile industry. (18) In addition chapter five will explore notions of class and ideology among the supervisory workforce and delineate the nature of division and separation in this respect between those engaged in production and those engaged in supervision on the shop floor.

Having established the structures of power and control, both formal and informal, which typify the industry by the early 1930s the study will go on to consider the changes wrought upon these structures with the advent of unionisation. Firstly chapter five will examine the ways in which the union movement of the production workers was affected by, and in turn, restricted, compromised or reshaped the roles and attitudes of shop floor supervision. The impact of the proceduralisation of industrial relations on the formal role of foremen and the influence on actual practice of those involved in supervision will be assessed. Chapters six and seven will then go on to consider the dynamics and nature of one of the most portentous developments in the automobile industry in respect of its impact on the shaping of industrial relations in the USA - the advent of the Foremen's Association of America (FAA). This union for supervisory workers was to become the most highly visible attempt in America this century to recruit the ranks of supervision into the labour movement. The FAA went on to generate a level of controversy and a scale of response from employers and government far in excess of its numerical importance. The dynamic behind the FAA will be assessed in terms of both long term developments in the labour process and labour markets.
and also in terms of more immediate shifts in workforce demography and methods associated with the advent of war production. Membership profiles, aims (of both leadership and rank and file) and activities of the FAA will be examined as will the union's relationship to the labour movement in general, in an attempt to outline why an ostensibly reactionary, conservative or at least moderate sector of the workforce came to engage in some of the most radical forms of industrial activity of the period.

Chapter eight, in tracing the decline of the FAA will examine the role played by the state and employers in either stimulating or retarding the growth and influence of the union. By highlighting the way in which the institutions of the state both provide an arena in which employers can pursue industrial relations goals, but also the ways in which state agencies can act in conflict to the imperatives of employers, the history of state activity concerning supervisory unionism represents an interesting empirical test of recent theories of the role of the state in capitalist societies. Employer attitudes to the FAA will also be used to reveal the ways in which the lower sectors of supervision conformed to general managerial strategies in the industry and certain key variables in strategy - notably between Ford and GM - will be highlighted, revealing the non-monolithic nature of employers reactions to both the role of first line supervision and ideas of unionisation.

Finally chapter nine, in considering managerial responses to the "problems" of supervision revealed by the FAA, will show how divergences in employer attitudes and strategies with regard to shop floor supervision were realigned into a more homogeneous pattern. The
chapter will also show the ways in which a search for a resolution to what had become the "foreman problem" was to revivify attempts to implement the tenets of the now submerged humanist managerial strategy. In taking a long term historical appraisal of the impact of human relations related schema on the industry, from the First World War onwards, the chapter will map out the content and aims of such systems, and pinpoint the agencies involved in their promotion. By revealing what was seen to be a general failure in modern methods of production and industrial relations to engender a managerial ethos in lower levels of supervision, the FAA was one of the major stimulants to the new wave of interest in human relations which accompanied the period of reconversion following World War Two. In assessing the impact of such schemes we will return to the general theme of the primacy of conflictual versus consensual structures of control and power in industry, and the way in which the role of the personnel of shop floor supervision in emergent post war period shape or react to such systems.

A longitudinal historical study of this nature clearly has advantages and disadvantages over other methods. In choosing to study one specific group of workers in one industry the advantages of a comparative perspective are compromised to a degree. Differing labour processes which, if we follow the typologies initially advanced by Blauner and Woodward for example(19), themselves determine the style of formal and informal supervisory structures, could be useful in highlighting determining factors in the development of foremanship. By way of compensation in this respect a historical study of this length...
carries its own comparative mechanisms - comparing the developing phases of automobile production, and also to some extent the differing labour processes within the industry.

The precise delineation of a group of workers as "foremen" also creates problems. In gender terms alone the word is misleading since there were some women employed in shop floor supervisory roles. In the period under study however the overwhelming majority of supervisory posts were held by men and therefore, with some apologies, the text generally sticks to the term "foreman" unless specifically referring to forewomen. A greater problem is encountered in attempting to define the limits of the group in question. With the developing division of labour which accompanies mass production supervision itself becomes broken down into a number of agencies, some remote and some local to the shop floor. Those remaining on the shop floor are themselves the subject of a number of further divisions of a functional and hierarchical nature. Quality control or time study staff for example begin to perform functions on the shop floor of an implicitly supervisory nature, once the preserve of foremen proper, each can also be said to comprise a distinct sub-group with its own hierarchical structures. Similarly assistant foremen or superintendents flank the foreman as links in an expanding supervisory chain, performing markedly different jobs yet arguably (certainly from the point of view of some statistical data) classifiable as shop floor supervision. More will be said about these definitional problems in chapter two and throughout later chapters considering the legal and jurisdictional arguments surrounding unionisation. For now it will be enough to note that the definitional compromise settled upon for the "foreman" under
study is that of a supervisory worker who works exclusively in a shop floor location and directs, but under normal circumstances takes no part in production - he does no work "at the tools".

Particular methodological difficulties present themselves with a study of this nature. Recent movements in history aimed at the recovery of hitherto "hidden" groups, in particular women's history, black history and the strand of labour history which has moved beyond institutional study, face common problems, most notably in terms of sources. Oral history can fill some gaps, dependent on periodisation, but contains notorious difficulties in terms of accuracy, selectivity and objectivity.\(^{(21)}\) Source problems of this nature are compounded in a study of the type undertaken here in that some of the issues being addressed - attitudes, ideologies etc. - present difficulties for analysis in the present, let alone historically. Sociologists working on similar issues from a current perspective have available techniques of questionnaire, interview and observation which are simply not available to historical study, and yet even these methods continue to pose problems of objectivity and interpretation.\(^{(22)}\) Bearing such problems in mind the thesis will refer to a number of different types of sources including reports of government hearings, company and union minutes and general records, contemporary surveys, oral history collections, and press and journal articles.

In some ways the foremen of modern industry do not constitute a "hidden" group. Indeed there are periods in the 20th century when the amount of literature referring to this group is extensive. Most of this literature is however of little use to the social historian comprising as it does partial descriptions of idealised supervisory
attributes designed for consumption by "personnel" practitioners and having little empirical grounding.* There are other, less numerous, but compensatory sources however. Apart from the expected secondary text, journal and press sources which are available to some degree throughout, the earlier part of the period under study presents perhaps the greatest difficulties and it is here that oral histories, particularly those compiled by the Ford Museum and Wayne State University archives, provide a valuable service. In addition there are company records and reports and contemporary surveys. Ford statistical material is especially good in this respect and other types of testimony, such as the "operator 15" secret reports at Ford, provide useful insights into shop floor life. (Attempts to gain admission to the historical records of General Motors drew a blank in the face of company reticence - an experience common to many other researchers in this field.) The 1930s is perhaps better served given the increasing attention of the state into industrial practices. In particular there are reports of the investigations by the Works Progress Administration on issues such as hiring, labour markets, productivity etc.. Unions such as the United Automobile Workers (UAW) generated sources throughout the 1930s many of which predate the formal records generated following agreements when minutes, grievance records etc. provide information on actual shop floor practice. Towards the end of the period the problem of scarcity of sources is somewhat reversed as wartime brings a greater role again for the state and the issue of foremen's unionisation generates numerous inquiries as to the role of foremen in American industry. The NWLB for example set up a special

* See for example Dun's Review, April, 1966, p. 45.
panel in 1944 precisely to determine the position of foremen in automobile manufacturing. The collected testimony eventually ran to 22 volumes.

In using what tends to be a diverse range of evidence the possibilities of constructing an elaborate quantitative model are clearly restricted. Analysis of the type favoured in many recent accounts by theorists and historians of industrial relations for example cannot be easily attempted using the types of evidence available. Statistical analysis such as that used by Norsworthy and Zabala to determine worker attitudes and behaviour in relation to productivity levels in the automobile industry for example, which relies heavily on complex algebraic models of the production process, are inappropriate given the form of evidence and the lines of enquiry pursued here. (23)

Zeitlin has recently called for a reemphasis of institutional factors in labour history, in reaction to the preponderant concentration on history from below. (24) In taking a broad focus, incorporating both developments in the labour process and experiences of shop floor workers in addition to studying institutional developments surrounding the American foremen - the structures and strategies of the foremen's union and the role of employers and the state - it will be shown that developments in these spheres are inextricably linked. To study one aspect, be it the institutional aspect or changing structures of control in the labour process, to the exclusion of another is to provide only a partial and incomplete account. The dynamics behind the FAA for example can only be understood in terms of a balanced assessment of both institutional
and shop floor developments, and it is balance which this thesis sets out to achieve.
Chapter One Footnotes


   Nelson, op. cit., p. 57;

9. The commission led by R.F. Hoxie in 1915, set up to study the impact of Taylor's system confirmed the lack of formal implementation. Nadworny, op. cit., p. 91;
   Nelson, op. cit., p. 69.


    Chalmers, op. cit., pp. 124-6;
    L. F. Budenz, 'The Gang System Comes to Nash', Labor Age, April 1929, p. 6;

12. S. Melman, Decision Making and Productivity, Blackwell 1948, for example maintains that gang systems at Standard Motors in Britain devolved many aspects of regulation and supervision, to the exclusion of foremen.
    Andrew L. Friedman, Industry and Labour, Macmillan 1977, p. 213;
For the difficulties posed by including foremen in gang systems see Gantt H.L., *Work Wages and Profits*, Engineering Magazine, NY 1910, passim;


J. E. Prosser, *Piece Rate, Premium and Bonus*, Williams and Norgate, London 1919, Ch.9;


13. A Bedaux Company promotional leaflet issued in 1933 for example stated that "all human effort is measurable in terms of a common unit made up of effort and relaxation in proportions governed by the laws controlling strain."


NICB, *Payment Systems*, passim.

14. Rose, op. cit., pp. 103-180;

Pugh, op. cit., pp. 279-291;

Stephen Hill, *Competition and Control at Work*, Heinnemann 1984, pp. 86-90;


Pugh et al., op. cit., pp. 164-9;

Rose, op. cit., pp. 103-172;


Feb. 14 1941, pp. 3-4;

Ibid., 'The Foreman's Status Under the Fair Labour Standards Act', pp. 3-4;


Chapter Two; Technological Change and Redivision of Labour; New Forms of Coordination and Control.

This chapter will map out the transition to mass production in car manufacture which took place between the turn of the century and the 1930s. This transition meant the implementation of factory systems incorporating methods of production and organisational structures which were radically different from those employed in 19th century manufacturing industry and consequently these new systems engendered major change in the form and personnel of shop floor supervision. An outline of these developments necessitates engagement with a number of related debates including meanings and variations of skill among the workforce, the dynamics of technological and organisational change in terms of control or coordination, and changing levels of discretion in work activity for both worker and supervisor. Following an outline of the major changes in products and methods of manufacture the impact of the subsequent extension of the division of labour, both of production work and the supervisory function, will be undertaken. The outline will also form the basis of the subsequent chapters which will go on to evaluate the impact of the above changes on the supervisory workforce in terms of ideology, attitudes, status, class location and power, in terms of both the workplace and society.
Methods of Production

The car industry, although almost totally a 20th century phenomenon, was the inheritor of many major advances in production technology from the 19th century and earlier. The essential advances picked up very rapidly by the nascent car industry were those which tended towards standardisation of parts for interchangeability and speed of production and assembly, while maintaining or improving acceptable levels of quality. Quality in this sense is defined as a balance between function, design and production standards. A common pool of technology can be found throughout the industry developing among the major users at roughly the same pace although the arrangement and methods of employment of various machine tools can be seen to vary from setting to setting.

Many traditional historical accounts tended to trace the evolution of production technology via a series of epoch making personalities - Eli Whitney, Cyrus McCormick, Samuel Colt and so on to Henry Ford - whereas most change is in fact better understood in organic rather than teleological terms. The industry inherited significant advances in production engineering from related predecessor industries. Lathes, milling machines, planers etc. - machines designed to reduce rough metal via a series of stages to its final desired dimensions - had gone through several stages of refinement, including the incorporation of various jigs and fixtures designed to guide such machines through the production cycle with minimal operator intervention. Manufacturers involved in complex production, notably those in the cycle, carriage, steam and gas

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engine, armaments and farm equipment industries had provided the foundations for the car industry to advance production engineering techniques in this respect, but it was the latter which was soon to assume the mantle of pacesetter and the major generator of change. (1)

The most radical change in production methods attributable to the automobile industry is that of the introduction of extensive mechanical pacing. Ford's motorised assembly line was initiated in 1913. This did not represent a sudden fracture between either old and new methods or between Ford and his contemporary car making rivals however. Rather it was a combination of existing practices in other industries - moving hoppers in brewing, the "disassembly lines" of the Cincinnatti and Chicago meatpackers, and an extension of practices already in use in the car industry - gravity-fed production lines, moving overhead trolleys, sequential arrangement of production and so on. (2) The Ford method of paced assembly lines spread very rapidly throughout the American car industry - in less than three years Paige, Maxwell, Hudson, Dodge, Packard and Saxon were all employing this technique. This rapid diffusion of manufacturing techniques may be in part a reflection of the unusual degree of willingness by car companies at the time to exchange information on both products and methods, at least following the resolution of the Selden patent case. (3) While this innovation, in the form and extent employed by the industry, is an important landmark, it must be remembered that automobile manufacture continued to involve a complex product using disparate materials and labour processes. Consequently major changes in manufacturing methods encompass a wide range of machinery and production engineering developments.
The changes which characterise the shift to mass production fall into two general categories. Firstly those concerned with machine or material developments, i.e. developing tools to effect faster or more efficient work, or utilise better materials, and secondly, those changes concerned with the interconnection of those machines or materials. Also it must be noted that from the earliest phases of the industry the major factories were characterised by the growing vertical integration of production processes. As part of the overall shift from concentration on assembly of bought in components to the extended and direct control over processes ranging from production of raw materials to ownership or control of sales outlets, the typical factory complex saw the consolidation of an extended series of production stages from basic parts manufacture to final assembly. Developments in these processes are more easily understood when examined in progressive fashion.

Beginning with the foundry, where basic stock is converted to rough castings prior to machining, moulding machinery was introduced in this department around 1912. Processes involving the use of damp sand to make moulds were also mechanised around this time and core making subjected to endless chain production line methods. (4) Drop forging and die casting machinery replaced moulders and core makers completely in some areas. In addition many parts began to be made from alternative materials, e.g. alloys and steels, with the resulting elimination of a major series of processes including forging, annealing, straightening, rough turning and rough grinding. (5) It must be noted that larger castings such as engine blocks could not be made using these latter materials and processes
and in certain areas jobs involving sand mixing, coremaking and moulding retained significant levels of skill well into the 1930s.\(^{(6)}\) In general however the period from around 1910 to the 1920s was typified by a developing scale of production which often meant millions of identical castings produced by means which rendered the skilled foundry worker such as pattern makers, moulders etc., able to produce accurate castings from complex blueprints, virtually obsolete.\(^{(7)}\) Some measure of the scale of the increase in mechanisation can be gleaned from the statistics of the Ford factories where rationalisation of foundry techniques included successful attempts to cast engine blocks directly from the molten metal producing furnaces. Between 1916 and 1930 output per man almost quadrupled from 150 pounds to 585 pounds per day.\(^{(8)}\)

The next stage in the manufacturing process, the accurate machining of rough castings to their final dimensions, also underwent significant rationalisation as machine design was progressively modified to achieve increased output of standardised components while incorporating simplicity of operation. These developments did not necessarily mean increased accuracy, since many skilled workers had previously been capable of working to extremely fine tolerances. What these new machines, jigs and fixtures did ensure was that fine tolerances could be rapidly reproduced, each piece to exactly the same dimension as the rest of the batch and matching the dimensions of any compatible components. Interchangeability, thus guaranteed, eliminated the need for individual fitting and the resultant saving of labour time was often spectacular. The universal grinder is a good example of this new generation of machine tools. Introduced around 1900 by
Charles Norton and extensively used from the early years of car manufacture, this machine utilised developments in artificial abrasives and the rigidity of massive machine tool construction. Using such a machine the time required to surface grind a crankshaft for example was reduced from five hours to fifteen minutes. (9) The manufacture of cars requires the production of many such hardened steel parts, which, in the process of hardening, become distorted and require correction by grinding. Machines such as Norton's meant that the file, previously perhaps the most common tool in the shop, and the skilled fitter wielding that file, practically disappeared. His replacement - the machine operator - had an entirely different job, summed up in a 1930s trade advertisement for the Norton D-85 crankpin grinder; "...operated as easily as the modern day automobile...The interlocking control feature requires the operator always to do the correct thing at the right time - he cannot do otherwise" (10)

Similar principles underpinned the new phase of designs in a range of machine tools. Lathes, planers, millers, broaching machines, drilling machines and presses were all modified to incorporate increasingly automatic, controlled operation, minimising intervention and often simultaneously enabling one operator to attend a number of machines. (11) Multiple operations were also incorporated into a single machine wherever possible resulting in the widespread use of multiple spindle automatic lathes, combination turret lathes, multi-station drilling machines and other similar tools. An example of the latter would be a drilling machine designed to sink holes in four faces of a cylinder block simultaneously. One such machine performed 132 operations on each engine block. (12) The 1930s also saw the beginnings
of tracer technology - hydraulic and electronic sensing and devices using patterns and templates.

Supplementing the above redesign of machine tools were a number of developments in materials. In addition to the increasing use of hard alloys and finishing materials such as chromium plate in finished parts, new tool materials with superior cutting qualities came into widespread use. High speed steel, pioneered by Taylor himself at the end of the 19th century, was superseded by compound tungsten carbides in the 1920s producing further dramatic reductions in output times.(13)

Car body construction also underwent radical change during the early years of the industry. Initially car bodies were mainly built in a unit construction method using wooden frames and metal panels. Highly skilled cabinet makers, carriage builders and sheet metal workers were among those involved in the long and complex process of manufacturing and assembly which incorporated significant degrees of worker self regulation. As car worker Joe Brown recalled, "The bodyworkers set their own pace. Each paneller had his own bench near a wall. He took a body from the aisle, clamped it to the wall in front of his bench and worked on it until finished."(14) Processes were rapidly developed however to reduce and finally eliminate this method of production. The mid 1920s saw the widespread introduction of the all metal body produced by presses which made integrated stampings from single sheets of steel which in turn were joined together using a series of developments in welding techniques.(15) Underbodies involving the assembly of over 30 separate parts - sills, floorboards, seat risers etc. - were being produced in a single section by 1935.
Similarly the one piece top superseded numerous roof rails, windshield headers, roof bowers etc. The joining together of larger integrated panels saw the supersession of riveting by spot, butt and flash welding using gas, and later on, electric techniques incorporated wherever possible into fixed welding machines. By 1935 the Ford Fordor for example utilised a total of 3415 electric welds, almost all automatic. (16)

While the introduction into the 1930s of more streamlined body designs called for a reintroduction of soldering and sanding processes this was rapidly overcome by the advent of one piece body stamping or more sophisticated welding processes and the dissipation of skill levels continued. The multi-hydromatic electric welders at Dodge for example producing "Airflow" bodies in 1934 were said to "standardise the floor to floor time by eliminating the human element that is usually present in welding work" (17) By the mid 1930s the Works Progress Administration (WPA) car industry researchers estimated that around 90% of the hand labour used in the various stages of body manufacture prior to painting had been eliminated. (18)

Finally, the painting and finishing processes involved in body manufacture also went through a series of rationalisations by the 1920s. Originally, successive coats of filler, lamp black, paint and varnish - often as many as 21 coats in all - were carefully applied by hand brushing with intermediate rubbing down using materials such as pumice stone, cuttlefish bone or horsehair. The whole process usually took several weeks of highly skilled work. With the introduction of fast drying nitro-cellulose paints such as Dupont's "Duco", first marketed in 1919 and used by General Motors, new methods of
application became possible. Flowing, spraying and dipping and baking of whole body sections replaced the hand painter, striper and touch-up man throughout the 1920s. A job which had previously taken three to four weeks could now be completed, ready for shipping, in less than one day by workers needing very limited skills compared to their predecessors.\(^{(19)}\) In addition, the plating of many parts with materials such as chromium led to the automation of polishing and buffing processes, again reducing throughput times.\(^{(20)}\)

This brief excursion through the mechanical and material changes in production must be placed within the overall context of the separation of the above processes into their respective departments and the development of purpose built factories designed to facilitate production flows within and between manufacturing stages. Overall factory design became specialised early on. Ford's Highland Park plant of 1908 is frequently used as an exemplar of this change although all major manufacturers were building plants with layouts to facilitate sequential production lines around this time.\(^{(21)}\) One important agent of change in this respect was the introduction of electric motors compact enough to give each machine an individual power source. This allowed greater flexibility in machine placement and the removal of the many overhead belts, used to drive machinery from a common power source, which had previously been a feature of factory shop floors. The net effect was that machinery was now grouped in order of operation on any particular component - lathe, miller, grinder and so on - instead of being grouped generically. The removal of belt drives also created space for overhead conveyor systems, thus bringing machine shops into line with developments already taking place in
other departments. With machinery now placed sequentially in close proximity and conveyors moving material at a constant pace from the foundry to heat treatment, on through the machine shops and press shops to the painting and finishing processes and ultimately on to final assembly, amounts of stock standing idle awaiting operations could be greatly reduced. This increasingly rapid turnover and reduction in stock inventory levels was a crucial aspect of the fully automated factory since it released capital for further investment and generated profits at a faster rate.

The culmination of this stream of integrated, flowing production was the assembly process. The application of the principles of mechanically driven pacing to the final assembly process is of course the most controversial, and most widely commented upon 20th century labour process. The car assembly line is everyone's popular image of Chaplinesque alienation, indeed for many the final assembly is the labour process in cars. Although only the last in the series of processes outlined above, each of which, as we have seen, had been rationalised and arranged to incorporate some form of pacing mechanism, and although assembly never employed more than a large fraction of the total workforce, it is nevertheless an important sector. The links between the pace of final assembly and overall factory production, because of the increasing integration of the systems noted above have led commentators to talk of it as symbolic of a "kinetic spirit" pulsing through the car factory. Both Fine and Norwood for example refer to the "rhythm of production" determined by final assembly.

The earliest conveyorised application in the car industry was
probably Ford's magneto flywheel assembly line. Production was pushed between "man high" work stations along rollers. Gravity slides performed similar functions. (24) Pacing of such a line was regulated by the speed of the fastest worker, bottlenecks in production highlighting slower workers. In this sense such a work arrangement functions in the same way as a mechanically paced line in that the whole group is compelled to work at a uniform speed. The essential difference between this and motorised lines is that the former relied on speed regulation through the agency of the fastest worker whereas the latter incorporated a nominally remote method of speed control.

The widespread use of motorised pacing followed rapidly from Ford's initial installation in 1913 and by the 1920s had become the standard mode of operation in the industry. (25) Lines were extended as far as possible. By 1927 for example the Buick engine assembly line was one and a half miles long. (26) Completed cars now began to emerge at increasingly faster rates. At Hudson in 1926 for example a completed car came off the assembly line every 30 seconds. Mirroring the reduction in output times achieved in the foregoing manufacturing departments, assembly times under mechanical pacing were substantially reduced. Ford front axle assembly was reduced from two hours and thirty minutes in 1913 to just 26 minutes in 1915. Engine assembly at Ford in 1913 was reduced from nine hours and 54 minutes to five hours and 56 minutes in just six months. By 1931 the more complex Model 'A' engine took only two hours to assemble. (27)

Taking an aggregate of productivity gains through improved machinery, work flow changes and increased intensity of work - about which more will be said below - the sum total was an increase on a
massive scale. Chalmers' calculations show that, using 1924 as an index of 100, output per man rose from a level of 12.8 in 1909 to 126.8 in 1929.(28)

From the preceding survey it seems clear that the "Fordist" derivative of scientific management became the predominant form of control exercised over the many labour processes involved in car production. Mechanisation was a feature of each step in the train of operation from the foundry to final assembly. Design of work, direction of flow of materials and pace of work were all controlled, via machinery, by remote personnel. Operator and assembler, by the 1920s, became the dominant work category on the shop floor as jobs characterised by low levels of intrinsic skill and discretionary activity were generated by this new phase in the redivision of labour.

These technological and organisational changes represented a major phase of restructuring the manufacturing process and signal a marked fracture with general 19th century practice. Developments in machine tools and shop floor organisation were not to go through a comparatively rapid phase of development again until the introduction of new levels of automation based on computer controls in the 1970s.(29) Even so, many sequential workflows and assembly configurations remain in the forms set up by the 1920s. Before turning to an examination of the ramifications of this change in terms of shop-floor supervision however, a number of qualifying factors need to be taken into account.

In a factory system producing a complex product, in this case a motor car, such a unilinear outline of a general deskilling process must be modified to recognise the uneven nature of historical change.

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Different processes change at different rates. New products may generate new processes which engender new skill requirements among the workforce. Also, an adequate definition of the term 'skill' is extremely difficult to pin down, more so given the history of social constructions placed upon the word by employers, governments unions and commentators. (30) It is often argued that changes in work design always involve a shift rather than a wholesale reduction in skill, that new areas of skill appear to compensate for those lost. Bearing these comments in mind there are several caveats which must be taken into account before positing a universal "degradation of skill" accompanying the "Fordist" rationalisation of the labour process in cars during the period up to the 1930s.

The first major problem to confront the trend towards total automation of the labour process is that of inflexibility. Constant modifications to the manufacturing process were possible while the Model 'T' production line, for example, turned out a uniform product with minimal design variation. As one sector of production was rationalised and speeded up bottlenecks in other sectors would appear and be modified in turn. There were inherent weaknesses in this process however which were partly generated in the market and partly by Ford's competition. Due to a combination of market saturation and the introduction of competition around stylistic diversity - the advent of the annual model change - a totally standardised product like the Model 'T' became increasingly unmarketable. There developed what Marsden has since termed a "dynamic link between innovations and the production process", a developing trade off between standardisation and high productivity on one hand, and the ability to
respond to market and product variations on the other. 

Model variation, sometimes referred to as "Sloanism" after the strategy initiated by General Motors while headed by Alfred Sloan, impacted on the labour process by forcing the breaking down of the rigidity inherent in Fordist work design. Examples of this process include the Model 'A' retooling at Ford's River Rouge plant in 1927 when workers needed significant levels of retraining to enable the construction of the more complex successor to the Model 'T'. The Chrysler Plymouth introduction in 1932 had similar effects, causing the reintroduction of more flexible machine tooling. Assembly times could also be affected - the synchro-mesh gearbox almost tripled labour times when it was introduced in the early 1930s and the assembly of a fender on one car took three times as long in 1930 than it did in 1922.

Two factors arising from the impact of Sloanism need to be clarified, however. Firstly the apparent reincorporation of skill into areas of the labour process should not be overemphasised. This trend did not represent a reversal of the Fordist developments noted above. In many cases machine tools were further redesigned to incorporate more versatile, complex mechanisms which required no extra skill in operation. Assembly jobs in general simply called for more work of the same nature in assembling more complex parts. Secondly, the major part of annual design changes were of a cosmetic nature only - body styles, fittings etc.. Major mechanical features underwent a longer development cycle. Engines, for example, typically changed over a five year period, often longer.

Sloanism was a more complex phenomenon than the simple transition to annual product changes. GM's strategy, as Kuhn has outlined, was
based on a rationalised control structure incorporating decentralised production units but with a centralised or "cybernetic" control of overall corporate strategy. This was allied to sophisticated market feedback monitoring market tastes and demands. GM's apparent emphasis on planning and design in managerial systems, in Kuhn's analysis, forms the basis for their successfully eclipsing Ford as the major producer by the later 1920s. (36) Kuhn goes on to assert that, in contrast to the revisions undertaken by Sloan and Donaldson Brown at GM, Ford management displayed an "anti-design" attitude.

Grounded as it is in an examination of higher managerial structures and using evidence based on returns on invested capital as indicators of GM's and Ford's differing trajectories, Kuhn's account fails to take account of a continuing similarity in production techniques. Certainly Ford's overreliance for an extended period on the Model 'T' led to an unacceptable rigidity in production/market interaction, but, given that the car was a proven and popular model and that when Ford did switch to production of the Model 'A' in 1927 the latter was to prove a market leader in its own right, then accusations of an anti design culture at Ford are difficult to sustain. (37) More importantly, while managerial and financial structures certainly varied between the two corporations, innovations in production techniques at a broad level remained essentially parallel throughout the inter-war period, in line with the general contours of deskilling common to both these and the other major car producers.

Another factor to be highlighted in qualifying the assertion of general trend of deskilling in the industry is the that of certain
resistant or inert areas within the labour process - jobs which prove difficult to rationalise. Assembly jobs are one category which remain difficult to automate beyond redesigning components and the ergonomics of work stations. The putting together of a complex product or component defies to this day the substitution of machinery for human hands.\(^{(38)}\) The division of this process into small steps and consequent low exploitation of human potential marks this job off as one which may be subject to low levels of machine substitution, but not an area of retained skill however. Another, more persuasive argument can be made for the survival of skill in other, albeit increasingly marginal, sectors of the workplace.

As control over the design of work shifted to remote planning areas or became consolidated within machinery some areas of skill remained on the factory floor. Examples include tool and die workers, electricians and maintenance workers. Tool and die work for example involves the construction and maintenance of the components of machine tools which cut or shape the materials fed in - cutters on lathes and millers, dies on presses etc.. Working with difficult basic materials to extremely precise tolerances workers in these jobs retained significant levels of skill, indispensable in that tools and dies remained variable as design changed or parts wore out. Some advances were made in automating aspects of tool and die work - welded construction of dies for example. Also changes prolonging the life of tools were made as new materials were introduced. Carboloy cutters and chrome plated forming dies are examples.\(^{(39)}\) In spite of these developments the toolroom did retain its position as a major residual area of skill on the shop floor, an area employing at times up to 15%
of the overall workforce. (40) Important as the above pockets of skill remain, they nevertheless represent only a minority of jobs on the shop-floor following the major phase of deskilling up to the 1920s. New skilled jobs created by the above changes were also only a marginal feature. (41)

The term "skill" is of course highly contentious, categorisations ranging from the crude skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled, through Reitel's six stage car industry typology, to the general 17 level typology of Bright. (42) The general term "semi-skilled" is a good example of the way in which social and political constructions shape categorisations. First used by the Bureau of Census in the 1930s as an arbitrary half way measure, the term led to the artificial upgrading of millions of jobs irrespective of their actual intrinsic difficulty or level of specialisation. (43) No rigorous categorisation is proposed here beyond the assertion that the above noted trends in mechanisation and rationalisation produced a majority of jobs typified by a low requirement of mental and motor skills. These characteristics can be revealed in short job learning cycles and interchangeability.

Various contemporary job classifications lists seem to refute this last assertion. The US Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) surveys for example seem to point to an increasing diversity of occupations. In 1922 they list 254 job titles under 38 general headings. The classification "body builders" for example incorporates 25 jobs including band saw operators, cabinet makers, dovetail operators, squeakmen, steering wheel groovers and frame dressers. By 1925 the BLS report lists 556 jobs in 22 departments, "body builders" now having increased to 50 jobs with dingmen, top assembler and top slatter among
the new additions. The 1928 report continues with 1925's definitions. Similarly a list compiled by personnel at Ford's River Rouge plant in 1935 contains 596 separate job categories. Two points must be made concerning these lists however. Firstly the numbers employed in each occupation vary greatly. In the Ford list for example there are 3,330 assemblers, 5,646 labourers, 954 machine setters, 3,676 punch press operators and 1052 stock men, while babbit men number 31, belt men 31, cable splicers 5, flue men 13 and so on, the greater number of occupations employing few workers. Secondly, what level of real skill differential is embodied in each title? WPA researchers in 1937 were content to point to the majority of workers being in the ubiquitous "semi-skilled" bracket. A later union agreement drafted by the United Automobile Workers at the Ford Edgewater Road plant in 1944 is illuminating in this respect. It lists 219 jobs within 3 categories of interchangeability for seniority provisions. In other words, in the view of both management and union jobs such as assembly, welding, machine operation or painting could all be performed by the same worker with little extra training, thus revealing a low level of intrinsic skill requirement for each job.

A more straightforward method of establishing skill levels is to examine the length of training necessary to competently perform various jobs. Dunn estimated that 44% of all jobs in one Cleveland car plant in 1915 required less than one month's training, while only 1% required four years. By 1923 Ford's own figures listed 43% of jobs requiring only one day's training, 36% two days, and 6% two weeks. Only 4% of jobs required training of over one year. The comments of a Yale student who went to work at Fisher Body in 1928 illustrate
the training experience of a growing majority of car workers throughout the period; "This was a fast line and every operation was very simple. I was 100% efficient one minute after I started."(50)

Thus we can see that the period between the inception of the car industry and the 1930s was one typified by intense rationalisation of machinery and methods of production with the result that an increasing number of jobs became, when using short training cycles and limitations on worker discretion as indicators, deskilled. Technological and organisational change as delineated above was not solely about the control of workers. Coordination and the rapidity and precision of machine production and pacing are also major elements in the incentive to install new work methods. Machine production could and did produce the measurability, standardisation, interchangeability and volume of production necessary to create and sustain growing mass markets. Nevertheless the result of these changes was a major restructuring of control of workers and, whether or not this was the primary causation, this restructuring bought with it a total reorientation of methods of supervision.

The change in structures of supervision needs to be viewed at several levels. Firstly, the switch to a complex, totally coordinated mass production system ushered in the need for a formalised bureaucracy to deal with labour and materials. Thus the role of supervision became divided in line with the general division and deskilling taking place on the shop floor and also in line with the separation of certain functions between the shop-floor and remote departments and offices. The second major impact on the role of supervision, at least for that element of supervision remaining in
direct contact with the shop-floor, was that the above changes bought new imperatives to the way in which the foreman's job could be undertaken. A new kind of worker emerged, constrained to work to new methods and generating new forms of shop-floor activity relating to the way in which work was carried out.

The formal role of the foreman changed substantially from that of his 19th century counterpart as a degree of functional division was implemented in line with the new rationalised work structures. The actual role, in terms of the configurations of power which remained in the spaces in control generated by the new work methods, was in many ways enhanced rather than diminished during this period. Before turning to an examination of these newly emergent shop-floor power configurations however it is necessary to map out the formal structures of supervision which accompanied the rationalised car factory.

**Supervising Fordism: Bureaucracy and the division of supervisory labour**

The car industry foreman's 19th century predecessor had a wide range of discretionary power over most aspects of the labour process. Situations varied between industries and systems in use, but in general the foreman of the pre-mass production era exercised wide controls over labour, materials and work flows and most aspects of production. The transition from handicraft production to factory production had generated the role of overseer or foreman to replace the autonomous regulation typical of domestic or small scale
production, and in this sense marks the beginning of the division of supervisory labour - between the self-supervision of handicraft production in a non-factory setting and the advent of a specialised supervisory function marked off by non-participation in actual work. The advent of a specialised foreman's role was thus linked to the switch in control systems which observers such as Marglin and Clawson have identified as the central dynamic in the implementation of the factory system.\(^{(51)}\) This non-participation in actual work did not mean that foremen were incapable of performing to the same standard as workers, often quite the contrary. In a system such as Offe has categorised as 'task continuous production' the foreman would follow a route to supervision based upon technical competence. As one late 19th century commentator insisted, "It is difficult to place too much stress upon the point of superior manipulative skill on the part of the foreman engineer".\(^{(52)}\) W. H. M. Jackson outlined the skill of the 'traditional' engineering foreman who could, "charge his memory with everything related to the work, and he could make an extremely close guess at times, weights, speeds and feeds...if such a man were challenged upon a single variable, the guess might come within ten percentum."\(^{(53)}\) Foremen also had direct control over material and tool purchase and production flows and schedules. The incorporation of variables within the set-up of machinery and the integration of production flows to preset schedules were, as we shall see however, to obviate this skill and reduce the foreman's level of technical requirement to that of workers in general.

In terms of overall control over the workforce - hire and fire, job allocation, wages distribution etc. the 19th century foreman again
wielded a wide range of power. As noted above systems varied. The internal contract system for example was popular in New England Factories and elsewhere up until the turn of the century. Under this system materials, production and workers were controlled through the parcelling out of authority to semi-autonomous sub-contractors. Such sub-contractors relied heavily on the role of foreman and his knowledge of local labour markets and work practices in assessing prices for jobs.\(^{(54)}\) In general supervision was of a personal, sectional nature during this period often determined by craft imperatives. As Nelson notes, "the factory of 1880 remained a congeries of craftsmen's shops rather than an integrated plant".\(^{(55)}\) Shops under this system often were referred to by the name of a particular foreman in charge. Hiring and firing of workers and setting of pay rates was largely at the discretion of individual foremen restrained only by labour market conditions and individual skill factors. Workers often followed particular foremen from one job to another.

It must be noted that where work was of a skilled nature this often worked to contradict unilateral foreman power. Workers were often resentful of intrusion upon work patterns by anyone, the foreman included. Mining was one example. Goodrich quoted a Lanarkshire miner's testimony indicating why an overman never saw a certain miner working; "They always stop work when they see an overman coming, and sit down and wait till he's gone - even take out their pipes if it's a mine free from gas. They won't let anybody watch them."\(^{(56)}\)

Coal mining, before the long wall method came to be employed, was essentially a group regulated activity by virtue of the remote
location of the coalface, but even in other industries where fairly advanced factory systems were established skilled workers often showed similar antipathy to over-zealous foremanship. As one British foundry worker at the turn of the century asserted, "...if a foreman stood over me...he could finish the job. I would not tolerate it." (57) This antipathy was a manifestation not only of the skilled worker's insistence on self regulation of the way in which work was to be carried out but also the speed at which tasks were to be undertaken. These attitudes persisted into the early phases of car production while significant skill levels were still required. Bodyworkers were one such example; "If two stopped working and talked together they paid no attention to foremen or straw bosses...if they chose they went early to lunch and returned late. Foremen were accustomed to this way of doing things. As long as the daily production was turned out what the body makers did was their own business." (58) Such a situation was often reinforced where a unionised environment existed, especially one in which the foreman was also required to take up union membership. (59)

For workers without the protection that accompanied skill, or even for skilled workers during periods of a downturn in economic activity, the foreman's range of powers were largely unconstrained. Outside the compromises imposed by some sectors of the workforce, the car industry foreman's predecessor commanded what Melling has outlined for British shipyard workers as "a formidable realm" extending beyond the factory environment into society in general. (60) He hired workers and fired them with no recourse to any higher authority, he supervised training, set out production schedules and work intensity and
determined wage and bonus levels. To obtain a job, to keep it and to make it worth having it was as well to stay on the right side of the foreman, in the factory or outside.

The process of Fordist rationalisation outlined in the previous section was to have profound ramifications for this style of foremanship. It was to bring with it a phase of restructuring of the overall bureaucracy of control of work and a nominal segmentation of the role of supervision - a functionalisation which in many ways echoed the tenets of Taylor's ideal structure. (61) This restructuring was not to eclipse the power of the foreman over many aspects of factory life, but did change the nature and range of job skills required of the foreman. Before turning to an examination of the ways in which the foreman continued to exert great influence over the daily experience of factory life it is necessary to outline the change in the nominal job content of supervision.

Supervisory and control tasks became divided both within the confines of the shop-floor and beyond, and were subject to both a horizontal and an extended hierarchical division. Horizontal division saw the establishment of separate departments to deal with technical, production related aspects of work - purchasing, costing, production planning and control, quality control, maintenance etc. - and also personnel related aspects - timekeeping, personnel, welfare etc.. While some of these departments kept a direct presence on the shop-floor e.g. inspectors and progress clerks, most became removed to remote office based locations.

Of the supervisory tasks remaining on the shop-floor a hierarchical division and further degree of specialisation rapidly
built up. Below the role of foreman a range of intermediate control jobs developed. Leaders, relief men, utility men, foremen's clerks, straw bosses and assistant foremen were to be found in varying ratios in all car factories from the 1920s onwards. Above the foreman general foremen, assistant superintendents and superintendents, each with varying departmental or plant wide responsibility, formed the links between shop floor life and formal management positions.

We shall examine each of these lines of division in turn, beginning with the horizontal divisions - the departmentalisation of the supervisory function. Clearly with the extended redivision of labour engendered in the fully integrated and synchronised production typified by the car factory of the 1920s, the old style foreman with knowledge and control of all aspects of the labour process could not endure. The scale of production and diversity of component parts meant the rapid establishment of specialist departments to control the purchase of materials and machinery, the design and scheduling of production, the control of stock and inventory levels, maintenance of machinery and storage and dispatch of production. Information gathered from these separate functions began to feed developing cost accounting functions to support the predictability underlying investment decisions now far removed from the shop-floor. (62) As early as 1909 the Cadillac company for example had established separate purchase, cost accounting, production control, research and development, timekeeping departments in addition to 44 separate manufacturing departments. (63) Each of these now separated departments was subject to its own further internal subdivision of tasks and extending supervisory structures.
Research and development, in which the 19th century engineering foreman would have contributed in at least an advisory capacity, was one of the first functions to become specialised. Foremen might be called in to aid in the design of the shop-floor layout when new production configurations were being installed, as was foreman Roscoe Smith during Ford's move from Highland Park to the River Rouge in 1925.\(^{64}\) As far as product design went however foremen had by the 1920s little if any input. Indeed, by the 1930s production foremen at Fisher Bodies were not allowed to enter the engineering and experimental department where new designs were being developed.\(^{65}\)

While purchase, costing, stock control and sales procedures became completely removed from the shop-floor\(^{66}\) there still remained a necessary feedback element to these activities. Foremen's roles soon became limited to one concerned with the supply of basic information often through the mediating role of specialist clerks. The foreman's exclusion from this aspect of the overall control of production is illustrated by the experience at Ford during the 1920s when production foremen were forbidden even to keep production records. In fact Ford foremen resorted to keeping clandestine accounts of output and manning levels, computing costs in hidden notebooks.\(^{67}\) This restriction was in line with the general Ford policy of the time that no-one be allowed to sit down at work. Desks therefore occupied minimal shop-floor space and if installed at all were of a tall, stand-up design. As foreman Smith recalled, "You never got off your feet...You weren't supposed to keep records on cost but I always had one. Of course you had to carry them in your pocket...I got away with the extra record keeping by the grace of god."\(^{68}\) This system was relaxed in the mid
1920s in an attempt to break up the growing preponderance of bureaucracy and reestablish foremen's control over shop-floor cost accounting but this revision was short lived and after two to three years the function was relocated away from the shop-floor once more. (69) Ford may be an extreme example in this respect, nevertheless the switch to specialist departments controlling medium and long term inputs and outputs was well established throughout the industry by the early 1920s.

The transmission of immediate information on the flow of production was a crucial aspect of the move to totally integrated production and represents an area where the foreman's role was further segmented. Shortages, bottlenecks or unscheduled changes of priority required rapid rectification or implementation. Ford's system for example was designed to convert raw material into finished cars in around 52 hours, and, (in a system which anticipated one of the current tenets of Japanese style 'just in time' production methods), depended on minimal inventory levels to reduce costs. (70) Interruptions to the flow of production represented a potential escalation of these costs. To facilitate the flow of information on the on-going state of production a coordinatory function was set up. The 'shortage chaser' or 'expediter' liaising between shop-floor, planning and stock departments, compiled and administered various written and blackboard lists highlighting and controlling immediate production problems and recording actual production and target levels. (71) Shortage chasers tended to have an ad hoc field of responsibility, often moving urgent materials themselves, driving 'jitneys' or fork lift trucks and frequently assuming the authority of
supervisor in his absence.

The corollary to the production-related progress chaser linking planning and stock departments to the shop floor was the quality control function set up to monitor the standard as opposed to volume of output. This represents one of the most interesting fractures within the structure of supervision originating around this period. Inspectors began to appear in large numbers from the early phases of rationalisation of car production. The Arnold and Faurote survey at Ford in 1915 reveals 50 inspectors in the foundry and over 200 in the machine shop. Ford factory counts reveal 1092 inspectors by 1917. Inspectors might sample a required percentage of component production or test every piece made. They might work with simple "go" or "no go" gauges designed to rapidly determine the suitability of a component simply by its fit within a pre-set limits or alternatively they might work with micrometers, 'clocks' and similar gauges needing more discretionary operation. Inspectors might work on a time basis making regular rounds or patrols, sampling each output station at periodic intervals or alternatively operate from fixed positions. The later method was usually adopted when total output inspection was carried out and was open to the same trend of work measurement as production proper. The 1915 piston inspection at Ford for example was restricted to an eight second cycle per piece.
There is an apparent contradiction in this increase in the level of inspection in the rationalised factory. Given the increased repeatability and standardisation inherent in the new machinery and controls outlined earlier it might reasonably be expected that there would be a resultant decrease in the need for monitoring variances in production. Also a progressive built-in monitoring of production in machine operations might be expected to run counter to the need to increase human inspection. Taking the latter point first, certain developments were made in the 1920s and 30s such as the automatic monitoring of furnaces in the foundry, and automatic photo-electric and mechanical gauges in machine shops.\(^{(75)}\) In addition complex measuring equipment was devised, such as that introduced in 1934 to measure eight cylinder wall thicknesses simultaneously.\(^{(76)}\) Despite these moves towards automatic monitoring the growing presence of a separate quality control staff on the shop floor is a feature of this period. There are a number of reasons for this.

Firstly in a fully integrated production line operating at increasing speeds undiscovered errors in production create rapidly accumulating losses and it must be noted that even the most rationalised of technology is subject to periodic failure or human error in operation. The pace and design of jobs often left little room for individual operators to progressively check their work. Secondly with the fixed nature of standardised output designed for compatibility with related components, production which is out of tolerance cannot be adapted to fit. Also a faulty component in a complex product such as a car engine can have expensive repercussions, especially if undiscovered at the point of production. Under the
individual machinist system a mistake was likely to have been a one off and could possibly be filed or remachined to fit. The Fordist system allowed neither the time nor facility for this mode of correction therefore errors needed to be located as early as possible.

The third reason for the expansion of a specialised quality function lies in the nature of the work itself and its effect on the workforce. Even where work was highly automated there still often remained significant areas of operator discretion and where work continued to be manually controlled, certain assembly operations for example, workers also retained significant control. More will be said about this below. Here it is enough to note that a certain level of quality discretion remained in the hands of the workforce, hence the need for continued inspection. Where piecework systems were in operation inspection was called for to monitor output and discourage scrap production, especially so since speed of output and quality often vary in inverse proportions. The central point here is that, under the prevailing extensively divided work that typified car mass production, responsibility or interest in production became shifted away from the individual worker. It has become axiomatic over recent years that repetitive detail labour carries with it low levels of commitment to either the quality of production or, ultimately, to the goals of the firm. Tasks structured for intrinsic job interest and variety on the other hand are held to generate a high levels of commitment to product quality and thus contribute significantly to the success of the firm. Projecting this notion backwards to pre mass production manufacture we can see that, for those involved in the overall craft based method of work a commitment to quality lay within
the worker himself. The ploughmen recalled by John Grout in Blythe's 'Akenfield' might well stand for the ethos of most craft workers; "free rent for good work". That could mean an extra £5 a year. The men worked perfectly to get this, but they also worked perfectly because it was their work. It belonged to them. It was theirs."(78) Since, following the rapid phase of rationalisation in the car industry the dominant mode of work was that of extensive deskilling and division allied to increasing reliance on a high wage/high effort bargain or compulsion generated in local labour markets, a separate, external, form of regulation had to be imposed to assure the quality of production. Someone else beside the worker had to take an interest in the standard of production, hence the genesis of functional, autonomous quality control departments.

This particular division of supervisory labour affected foremen in a number of ways. The traditional foreman would, on a personal basis, oversee or reinforce quality decisions made by individual workers. Indeed during the early years of the car industry this method of working continued to be a feature. Roscoe Smith, a foreman in the generator and starter department at Ford in the 1920s, carried on the assumption of responsibility by setting up his own unofficial quality control department in line with the clandestine record keeping noted above.(79) Smith is probably the exception however. While foremen on the shop floor became deskilled in line with general operatives they still retained, through their continuing responsibility for levels of output, a reasonably effective veto over decisions made by quality control staff. Nevertheless the criteria used in acceptance of production - standards and tolerance limits - were now set by staff
involved in the set up and design of work. Foremen's discretion was thus increasingly confined within limits defined by remote personnel. The conflict between production levels and quality undoubtedly generated a certain amount of hostility between the nascent quality control personnel and the foreman who was coming under ever increasing pressure to push production out.

There was without doubt a rational element in the decision to set up separate departmental responsibility to oversee the quality of production, i.e. the impracticality of foremen controlling the quality of mass production, yet the shift of responsibility also represents a tacit acceptance that not only the workforce, but also its own immediate supervision could no longer be trusted to produce to set quality standards without the presence of an autonomous regulatory body. As such this development represents an important element in the split between shop floor staff and those with an indirect location, ultimately office based.

So far we have covered some of the production oriented divisions within supervision. In addition certain personnel related functions became nominally separated out from shop floor control during the early phase of rationalisation in the industry. There was a general increase in interest in specialist personnel departments around the time of the first world war, stemming from a number of sources. Firstly, the increased size of many workforces generated the need for an administrative machinery able to cope with the employment details of a workforce often numbering many thousands. Secondly, methods of recruitment and selection pioneered in the armed forces and based on applied behavioural psychology began to be promoted by managers and
consultants in some sectors of industry. The latter trend coincided with efforts promoted by a loose federation of 'personnel' advocates among middle class reformers, academics and professional administrators.

The number of 250-plus employee firms with specialised personnel departments rose from around 5% in 1914 to around 25% by the end of the war, 32% in metal working factories.\(^{(80)}\) The car industry was fairly well represented among these. By 1916 Ford, Packard and Dodge had centralised employment offices charged with overseeing and recording recruitment and dismissals. Briggs and Fisher soon followed.\(^{(81)}\) The spread of welfare departments mirrored this growth of personnel departments up to the 1920s.\(^{(82)}\)

The general movement behind the rising number of specialised personnel departments during this period was, as noted, comprised of disparate elements. Though no doubt part of the general trend of rationalised bureaucracy which accompanied changes in technology, the movement also had a certain political constituency. The work on I.Q. tests, job psychographs, aptitude tests and related measurement techniques promoted by Walter Dill Scott, Ordway Tead and others around the time of world war one were aimed at 'scientific' selection of workers (or soldiers as in the case of armed forces recruitment).\(^{(83)}\) Rational selection procedures such as these fitted in with the ideas of progressive elements seeking to promote the replacement of ad hoc selection methods as one way of eliminating industrial strife. Sumner Slichter and others saw rational personnel management as a potential 'third force', a neutral agency between manager and worker, echoing the detachment promoted by scientific
management advocates from Taylor onwards, although in practice such systems were always underpinned by economic criteria. For Tead, selection procedures, professionally administered, could be aimed to promote dignity, workmanship and 'constructive feeling' among workers. Professional control of hiring, firing and discipline should thus 'supersede' the arbitrary controls administered by the foreman. (84)

The movement formed around a nexus of progressive elements forging corporate-academic links such as those headed by Meyer Bloomfield, and often under government sponsorship. Packard for example sent staff on government training courses implemented during the war. It was around this time that most major universities began to take an interest in vocational guidance courses. (85) The growth of organisations such as the National Employment Managers Association and the burgeoning literature of the field - Jorgensen-Essmaili calculates that 2,750 books and magazine articles on personnel administration and human relations in industry appeared between 1917 and 1922 - reflect the increasing interest in the field, if not the level of application. (86) The expansion of interest in professional personnel staff during wartime also clearly reflects a heightening of intervention in industry by the state and consequent increased levels of bureaucracy. By way of a comparison this expansion is a feature of world war two in Britain. (87)

In the U.S., interest persisted following 1918, at least partly in response to union activity. Professionalised personnel practices were held to be instrumental in retarding trade union development. The increasingly costly problem of labour turnover was also a major factor, and this was seen by many as a direct consequence of the
continued power of foremen over personnel practices. More will be said about the foreman and labour turnover below, here it is enough to note that the movement to install professional personnel management levelled off into the 1920s. By 1928 there were still only around 34% of 250-plus factories with personnel departments. Nevertheless personnel departments did establish a permanent and widespread presence in the car industry throughout the inter-war period, and it is thus necessary to establish the precise nature of their power and examine the relationship of their function to that of shop-floor supervision during this period.

The roles which personnel departments were supposed to cover extended to hiring, firing and ongoing disciplinary, wage and training related issues. In reality these departments, where in operation, usually fell well short of achieving control over those functions. One good example of this process, particularly in view of its high visibility in many historical accounts, is that of the series of Ford personnel initiatives between 1914 and the 1920s. Ford's 'Sociological Department' was set up in 1914 under the rubric of a recognition of a growing "human problem" at work (manifested in Ford's extremely high turnover problems) and as part of a general paternalism, in vogue with Henry Ford at this time. The department was set up to oversee the implementation of set of initiatives designed to monitor and adjust workers behaviour inside and outside the factory.

As far as the extra-factory domestic intrusions were concerned the department sought to promote or gain information about employees on such issues as drinking, gambling, marital stability, propensity to save money etc.. In short, to measure conformity to a strict moral
code devised largely from Ford's personal foibles. The threat of withdrawal of the accompanying high wage - the notorious "$5 dollar day" - was supposed to ensure worker adherence to this code. The rationale behind these enquiries was outlined by J. R. Lee the system's original administrator when referring to the Ford belief that domestic "worries" could "put a satisfactory human unit entirely out of harmony with the things that were necessary for production." (91) The Sociological Department and attendant behavioural coercion represented perhaps the most vigorous of Ford's sporadic forays into the world of paternal or welfare employment policies extending beyond the factory - sponsored gardening, house building and maintenance projects and church sponsorship were among the programmes underwritten by the company at various times throughout the period. (92) As far as the enforced moral codes were concerned, in spite of much contemporary positive (and subsequent negative) rhetoric the scheme probably had a minor impact. If workers did tolerate the intrusions of the Sociological Department it is unlikely that many changed their habits on a permanent basis, besides, staff for domestic monitoring were somewhat limited. Changes wrought to the structure of supervision inside the factory are, however, of more direct concern here.

The existing regime of supervision at Ford was, as far as Lee was concerned, responsible for many of the problems which the Sociological Department attempted to eradicate; "...the most important cause of dissatisfaction (among the workforce) is the unintelligent handling of the men on the part of the foremen and superintendents." (93) Most important of the new department's powers in this respect was that of
control of hiring and firing. Hiring was now to be in the hands of heads of departments only and no longer concern lower foremen.\(^{(94)}\)

More importantly the power to sack workers was now to be subject to an official process of mediation and reappraisal. In Henry Ford's words, "no foreman in the company has the power to discharge a man. He may send them out of his department if they do not make good, but the man is then sent to a clearing house, covering all departments, and again repeatedly tried in other work until we find a job he is suited for..."\(^{(95)}\)

This version of the changes at Ford from 1914 onward has been accepted, largely uncritically, by a number of accounts both contemporary and current.\(^{(96)}\) Evidence suggests that on the factory floor things continued much as before however, with only an irritating increase in official interference. As foreman Smith asserted, "We could fire them...They went to the employment office...We usually sent a man and he stuck."\(^{(97)}\) William Klann, also a foreman at this time, concurs, "It wasn't true that the foreman couldn't fire a man before it went through the sociological department...they would fire them for us. We would just send them over with a report."\(^{(98)}\)

Whether or not workers were given a retrial in another department was often of little consequence to foremen who continued to rule over territorially defined areas. Klann recalled the tenor of instructions to the sociological department, "We don't care where the fellow goes to. Just get him out of our way. Get him out of our hair...we would get somebody else in there that we could drive."\(^{(99)}\) In reality the move to another department, if carried out, usually meant pressurising the worker into quitting altogether since it was unlikely to involve
an easier but rather a 'punishment' job, often used as an example to other workers.

Pretexts for referral of workers to the sociological department were still the unquestioned preserve of the foreman and often disguised the real reason for dismissal. "Poor attendance" for example might in reality mean refusal on behalf of the worker to participate in one of the 'kick back' or bribery schemes involving many foremen.(100) In any case reasons for rejection did not need to be very elaborate. Even Arnold and Faurote who accepted the notion of the "impartial tribunal" of Ford's new system admitted that, "wilful insubordination is, of course, absolutely intolerable and Ford workers must be, first of all, docile."(101)

From the workers perspective complaints about work, if anyone was bold enough to venture them, still had to be directed, in the first instance, to the foreman and if the only prospect was a transfer to an unknown and probably more hostile work environment, it seems unlikely that many would have taken up the option.

Even if the Sociological Department did represent an erosion of the personnel based functions remaining on the shop-floor it was a short-lived phenomenon. By 1917, only three years after its inception, each of its investigators had responsibility for over 700 workers - far too many to be effective - and by 1918 only a handful of staff remained.(102) The department was largely abandoned in 1921 due to a mixture of costs and a general shift away from welfare oriented solutions to labour problems. The corollary to this latter shift at Ford was the implementation of a 'service' department, based upon a regime of intimidation by a quasi autonomous group of 'servicemen' - a
form of industrial police force answerable in its methods to a separate managerial hierarchy. More will be said about the functions and extent of influence of the servicemen's department in the following chapter.

Another reflection of the demise of the Sociological Department was the eclipse of Ford's 'five dollar day' high wage strategy, negated by the pressure of wartime inflation and imitative pay rises by competitors. Even this measure had, in reality, taken little away from the foreman in terms of wage determination.\(^{(103)}\) Foremen were still able to determine which pay band workers went into. More important perhaps was the unofficial instruction to foremen which went with the five dollar day, "...drive, drive, drive. After 1914 when we gave the $5 day it was the same way. They called (the foremen) in and said since they were getting twice the wages they wanted twice as much work."\(^{(104)}\)

Personnel related divisions of supervisory labour, as indicated by the Ford example above, had not had the same impact on the role of the foreman as had the functional, production related divisions ushered in by mass production. Whereas the movement towards enlightened personnel management received, and continues to receive, a high profile, in application such initiatives had little lasting impact on shop floor life. Specialist employment departments had a say in the selection process, and served in a necessary administrative capacity given the increase in size and complexity of the workforce, but their function as such was limited to a remote supportive function in terms of ongoing shop floor control. Every-day personnel functions were to remain a preserve of the foremen at least for the time being.
In addition to the horizontal divisions of supervisory labour into separate shop floor functions and remote departmental functions, mass production also generated an extended vertical division of labour as complex hierarchies of managerial control were set up. Each of the above departmentalised functions - quality control, production control, personnel etc. - incorporated its own internal extended chain of command within a developing staff and line management framework. In terms of shop floor supervision the line of authority which travelled through the role of foreman began with the various subservient shop floor jobs such as utility and relief men, group leaders and assistant foremen, and carried on upwards through the role of general foreman, superintendent, plant manager and so on. It is also at this point which we confronted with the need to define the precise meaning of the title of "foreman" within the shifting and multivariate definitions of shop floor supervision.

A general criteria for the definition of a foreman might be that of a worker who takes no direct manual involvement in regular production duties, but who nevertheless works almost exclusively on the shop floor or its immediate environs. It is this group of workers with which we are primarily concerned. Nevertheless even this narrow definition of a foreman can be seen to fit several categories of worker. Individual plants, even within large corporations, usually had their own bespoke hierarchy of shop floor supervisors. The following are examples of typical variations in place by the 1920s and 1930s. Ford hierarchies included section foremen, assistant foremen, foremen, division foremen and division shift foremen. At Packard there were general foremen, foremen, assistant foremen and "special assignment
men" on the shop floor. At GM Chevrolet there were no assistant foremen but a category of "tool and relief men" who fulfilled the same functions. At the Dodge Main and Plymouth plants a category of assistant general foremen was interposed between foremen and general foremen, whereas the Dodge Forge plant had no such intermediate job.

In terms of numbers the job of foreman was by far the dominant category. At Chrysler's Highland Park plant in the 1930s for example there were eight foremen for each general foreman. One general foreman at Ford in the 1920s was in charge of 29 foremen. Similarly with assistant foremen, although these were generally more numerous than any other category surrounding the role of foremen the latter still outnumbered them in ratios typically in excess of three to one. At Hudson in 1930s for example there were 316 foremen and 100 assistant foremen. At Packard 597 foremen controlled and 84 assistant foremen and 59 special assignment men in the early 1940s. Ratios fluctuated depending on levels of productivity and individual departments. In times of expanding output more assistant foremen would be promoted to meet increased demand for example. Each individual department or sector of production also had its own supervision profile. Nevertheless the majority of supervisory workers on the shop floor were categorised as what might be termed ordinary foremen.

General foremen and superintendents form the link between shop floor supervision and the formal, remotely based management positions. Being office based themselves, albeit in proximity to the shop floor, usually with the attendant clerical facilities of office based work, this strata had less direct contact with actual production in terms of
the overall content of their day's work. More often they liaised with foremen on matters concerning output, manning levels etc. On the lower side of the shop floor hierarchy, the various roles of assistant foreman, relief man etc. were more numerous and involved a complex and indeterminate position in regard to those engaged full time in production work.

Many factories employed the category of "leader" or "group leader" to supplement the activity of foremen. Leaders would often be involved in the direction of labour but not be formally involved in disciplinary functions. They usually received increased wages, but only marginally above those of ordinary production workers. Chrysler for example paid leaders an extra 10c. per hour in the 1930s. They were still expected to work at production and often took over while workers were away from the line or to speed output through developing bottlenecks. Some measure of the amount of time which leaders actually spent engaged in production is indicated by the readiness of the UAW to admit this class of worker to membership following 1937. Indeed, Walter Reuther himself had been a leader at Ford in the early 1930s. Another similar group of workers included "relief men", "trouble men" and "utility men" each of which was called in to assist the foreman or fill in gaps in the production process on an ad hoc basis. Usually paid more than leaders they had a slightly enlarged role usually encompassing a degree of progress chasing and more responsible tasks. Packard's "exceptional employee" category performed a similar role. This particular class of working supervisor was generally referred to by ordinary production workers as the "straw boss" and was frequently the subject of general resentment,
being not foreman proper but nevertheless adopting a disciplinary role.\(^{(110)}\) In addition many foremen could call on the services of stock chasers, who though not officially under the direct control of shop floor foremen, were usually instructed by them. Stock chasers or shortage chasers (or expediters as they were known at Hudson) did no actual production work but were principally involved in eradicating bottlenecks in production or speeding through various "hot parts". In emergencies foremen would often draft in the services of any available worker to fulfil this function, frequently using tool setters.\(^{(111)}\)

By contrast assistant foremen did no work at production under normal circumstances. Like foremen they were frequently to be found taking over jobs either for ratesetting purposes or in troubleshooting problem areas, but their formal function closely mirrored that of foremen proper i.e. organising labour, disciplinary functions and so on. In addition some plants employed another separate category of supervisors not permanently fixed to any particular department. Packard for example employed a large group of "special assignment men" to fill in for regular foremen in cases of absence or for troubleshooting. These operated in the same way as assistant foremen however in that they were not ordinarily expected to undertake any production work.\(^{(112)}\)

Clearly there are definitional problems in referring to "foremen" as a group on the shop floor. Undoubtedly many accounts, in particular oral history accounts, will involve some confusion in this respect, conflating straw boss or superintendents for example under the general heading of "foreman". This problem reflects the larger definitional inaccuracy of general data involving categories such as

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"supervision". Indeed this definitional problem, the argument over what precisely constitutes a "foreman", was later to form one of the core debates when the unionisation of supervisory workers occurred. With this caveat in mind i.e. that a certain amount over overlap in reference to groups of workers immediately surrounding the shop floor foreman is unavoidable, the dominance of assistant foremen and foremen in numerical terms, and the general criteria that these are workers whose day is spent predominantly on the shop floor directing the work of others, adequately delineates a specific class or sector of the workforce.

In summary, this chapter has outlined the changes in technological and bureaucratic structures involved in the shift to mass production. The automobile industry established itself early on as one of the leading sectors in the rationalisation of manufacturing methods, both in terms of hard technology and in organisation. Market imperatives and an uneven pattern of susceptibility to rationalisation meant that this was not a universal and uncompromised process; nevertheless for an increasing majority of automobile workers, jobs involving relatively low levels of training and skill became the norm. This process was in its advanced stages by the 1920s.

These changes in the scale and style of production affected the role of supervision in profound ways. The foreman in a typical 19th century engineering enterprise would possess a wide range of skills and power, including intricate technical knowledge and control over both the production process in all its aspects and a complete range of personnel related tasks. The subdivision of the supervisory role with mass production, in common with the extended division of labour
generally, produced a new set of imperatives for the role of foreman. Although it must be noted that the "traditional" foreman's power was likely to be proscribed by custom and regulation among craft workers, the structural changes in the parameters of supervisory power which came with mass production contained the potential at least to restrict the shop floor foreman's discretionary power to a minimum. Horizontal divisions saw such aspects as product development, costing, purchase and stock and production controls leave the shop floor to become the preserve of specialised departments, the foreman retaining only the role of a link in the chain of information supporting these aspects. Quality control was a particularly pertinent fracture within the job of supervision as a shop floor presence was maintained to fulfil this function, but through the offices of specialised personnel rather than the foreman himself. Personnel related functions became likewise subdivided with the burgeoning amount of specialist employment and welfare departments intervening in labour allocation, discipline and morale. Vertical divisions of supervisory labour also transmuted the role of shop floor supervision into a series of steps on an extended hierarchical ladder stretching from leading hands to superintendents.

Some of these changes in the role and power of shop floor foremen need to be placed in perspective however. While many of the major decisions affecting the overall design and style of production were undoubtedly removed from the shop floor, other subdivisions had only a nominal impact. In particular the personnel related division - the establishment of specialist departments to deal with hiring, firing and discipline of workers - needs to be understood in the light of the continuing ability of foreman to exert control. The example of Ford's
Sociological Department underlines the way in which foremen were able to retain power in spite of the implementation of a formal, bureaucratized system. In the following chapters we shall extend this theme to highlight the precise configuration of power remaining with the shop floor foreman, beneath the formal structure of control, and the ways in which, as a group, foremen were to continue to exert a crucial level of influence over the control of, and experience of, work on the factory floor.
Chapter Two Footnotes


3. Ibid., p391; Selden attempted to claim a patent on the automobile from a design registered prior to the beginning of production of most other makers. Most manufacturers were at one point paying royalties, but ceased following Henry Ford's celebrated court dispute and refusal to recognise the patent. General patent sharing agreements were then put into operation, at least until 1925. W.E.Chalmers, Labour in the Automobile Industry, Unpub. PhD thesis, Wisconsin 1932.


6. J.R. Neeley, Wayne State University Oral History, p. 11; UAW Radio Broadcast transcript (radio WJBK Aug. 15, 1940), copy in Ed Levinson, Acc. 85, box 1, WRALUA.


8. WPA, Non-Mechanical Aids, p. 25. Some caution must be exercised in the interpretation of these figures since a portion of the increased output levels is almost certainly due to speeding up of production from existing work methods - see chapter four, below.


11. WPA, Labour Market, pp. 24-70; Arnold and Faurote, op. cit., passim.

12. WPA, op. cit., p. 39; 'Accuracy and Speed Maintained in Machining Buick Crankcases', Iron Age, April 7, 1932.


As late as 1920 metal finishers, moulders and panellers were earning $15-20 per day at the Fisher Body Co. in Detroit. In 1921 General Motors took over the company and jobs were subdivided and new machinery installed. WPA, op. cit., p. 25.

15. Ibid., p. 66.
17. WPA, Labour Market, p. 59;
   W.W. Macon, 'Welding is a Major Manufacturing Process in Building the Ford Motor Car', Iron Age, June 16, 1932, pp. 306-7;
   R. Harris, WSU Oral History, pp. 5-7.
   Gartman, op. cit., p 172;
   Arnold and Faurote, op. cit., passim.
22. WPA, Non-Mechanical Aids, p. 20;
   __, Labour Market, pp. 25,61;
23. Nevins and Hill, op. cit., p. 506;
   E.P. Norwood, Ford Men and Methods, Doubleday 1931, p. 2;
   Sidney Fine, Sit Down: The General Motors Strike of 1936-37, Univ. of Michigan, 1969, p. 54.
   WPA, Non-Mechanical Aids, p. 23;

25. Nevins and Hill, op. cit., pp. 325, 369-70;
   'Motor Car Assembly at the Hudson Plant', Iron Age, Vol. 105, no. 18, April 29, 1930;
   Nelson, op. cit., pp. 16-19;
   Beynon, op. cit., pp. 17-40;


27. WPA, op. cit., pp. 23-24
   Norwood, op. cit., p. 7;

   see also United Auto Worker, Feb 28, 1940, for a similar analysis.


   P. Thompson, The Nature of Work, pp. 89-121;

31. Marsden et al., op. cit., pp. 45-46.

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34. WPA, *Labour Market*, pp. 49-50, contains reference to numerous further examples.


38. For example it took until the 1980s for windscreen installation to be automated at General Motors' Buick plant. 'Robots and Workers Mesh in an Old Plant Gone Modern', *Detroit Free Press*, May 5, 1986, pp. 1D-7D.


42. Reitell's list segregates machinists, machine tenders, inspectors and testers, assemblers, machinists helpers and labourers, WPA *Labour Market*:

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For Bright's typology see Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, pp. 215-218.

43. Ibid., pp. 428-429.


*Wages and Hours of Labour in the Automobile Industry 1925*, Bulletin no.438, May 1927, pp. 94-117;


46. WPA, *Labour Markets*, pp33-6;

Nevins and Hill, *Ford: The Times*, p565 notes the abandonment of "skilled" trades by many workers in order to secure the relatively high wages available in unskilled automobile work.

47. Ford Motor Company - Local 906 UAW-CIO, draft agreement, June 23, 1944. Copy in Ford Dept. UAW, box 18, WRALUA.

48. Dunn R. collection, Acc.96, box 1.


J.S. Peterson, *A Social History of Automobile Workers Before Unionisation 1900-1933*, unpubl PhD, Wisconsin 1976, pp. 80-82;


50. Notes in Dunn, box 1, WRALUA.

   'What a Foreman Should Be', *Foreman Engineer and Draughtsman*, June 1876.

   Nelson, *Managers and Workers*, p. 42;
   Klann, *Reminiscences*, pp. 115-7, for an account of the foreman's technical expertise in the early days at Ford.

   Clawson, op. cit., pp. 71-125;
   Nelson, op. cit., pp. 36-40;


   Clawson, op. cit., p. 146.


65. J. Panzner, WSU Oral History, pp. 43-44;

66. For an account of these developments at Ford see Nevins and Hill, *Ford: Expansion and Challenge*, pp. 8-159.

67. Smith, op. cit., passim; 


69. Klann, *Reminiscences*, pp. 149-51; 
   Nelson, *Managers and Workers*, pp. 49-50; 
   For apocryphal accounts of Henry Ford dumping trays of cost cards

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on the office floor, burning delivery forms and putting office workers to work on the factory floor, see Nevins and Hill, Ford: The Times, p. 362.


71. Nevins and Hill, Ford: The Times, p. 507; National War Labour Board, Hearings in Certain Disputes Involving Supervisors (Slichter Panel Testimony), Washington 1944, pp. 454,1554; UAW-Chrysler Local 7 Grievance Report no.1564, copy in Digaetano, Acc.23, box2, WRALUA.


74. Ibid., p. 109.

75. WPA, Labour Market, pp. 28-9.

76. Ibid., p. 38.


80. Jacoby, Employing Bureaucracy, pp. 138-9; L.B.C. to Ira Cross, letter, June 5, 1940, in Brown, box 10, WRALUA.

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83. Ibid., pp. 39-45; Nelson, Managers and Workers, pp. 150-156.


88. Jacoby, op. cit., p. 125; see below, chapter four.


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Nevins and Hill, Expansion and Challenge, p. 332.

91. Lee, op. cit., p. 299.

92. Nevins and Hill, Ford: The Times, pp. 510-514;
Norwood, Ford Men and Methods, pp. 49-77;
Peterson, A Social History of Auto Workers, pp. 126-141;


94. Arnold and Faurote, op. cit., p. 46.

95. WPA, Hiring Policies, p. 20;
Lee, op. cit., p. 300.

96. Arnold and Faurote, op. cit., p. 147;
Jacoby, op. cit., p. 118;
Nelson, op. cit., pp. 149-151.

97. Smith, Reminiscences, p. 15.


99. Ibid., p. 89;
Meyer, op. cit., p. 103.

100. Klann, op. cit., p. 142.


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103. The foreman's continued power over the determination of pay 
levels in other automobile plants is dealt with below in chapter 
three.

104. Klann, op. cit., p. 84; 
'Five Dollar Day', The Survey, Feb. 7, 1914, pp. 545-550; 

105. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 111,119-123,3083,2108; 
UAW Chevrolet local 235, Shop Committee minutes, Feb.15, 1938, p5 
copy in Oneka, box 1, WRALUA; 
Ford, Small Acc., box 3:147; 
US Senate, Hearings Before the Committee on Labour and Public 
Welfare, 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1947, Labour Relations Programme, 
pp. 1871-2.

106. NWLB, op. cit., p. 2108; 
_____, Report on Findings of a Panel of the National War Labour 
Board in Certain Disputes Involving Supervisors, (Slichter Panel 
Report), Washington Jan. 1945, pp. 81-2; 

107. UAW Chrysler local 7, Grievance No.1616, May 13, 1944; No.1622, 
May 18, 1944; 
UAW-GM, Grievance No.137E, Nov 1947 
NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1432,3487; 
Klann, op. cit., pp153-5; 
Anderson, WSU Oral History, pp. 34,194.

108. NWLB, op. cit., p. 348; 
UAW-Chevrolet Local 235, minutes, Oct.20,27,1937; Feb.1,1938; 
Sept.1 1938.

109. UAW-Chrysler Local 7, Grievance no.1672, Dec.1944; 
NWLB, op. cit., p. 1424.

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110. Meyer, *Five Dollar Day*, p. 55;
Arnold and Faurote, op. cit., p. 47;
Mimms notes in Dunn, Acc.96, box 1, WRALUA.

111. Headrick notes in Dunn, Acc.96, box1, WRALUA;
NWLB, op. cit., pp. 86,454,1554;
UAW-Chrysler Local 7, Grievance no.1564.

112. Packard Motor Co., Brief of the Packard Motor Car Company Before the National Labour Relations Board, Case no.7-R-1884, 1944, pp. 6-8;
Chapter Three: The Foreman's Power in Mass Production: Labour Markets, Ethnicity, Race and Gender

This and the following chapter will outline the ways in which the power of the shop floor foreman persisted through phases of rationalisation of production and organisation. In this chapter an examination of the labour market surrounding the rapidly growing automobile industry, the backgrounds of workers, skill levels, methods of recruitment, daily, weekly and seasonal cycles in production all provide the framework within which foremen were to continue to exert influence over work and the workforce. Foremen were to continue by various means to control hiring, firing and allocation of tasks, pay levels, and disciplinary functions. To some extent they were also to continue to control output levels and quality, and play an important role in either suppressing or promoting informal work regulation on the shop floor. Through their position of power into the 1920s and 1930s the automobile industry foremen were able to continue a regime manifested by favour and privilege, often forced from a reluctant workforce, and were to become the conduit through which patterns of race, gender and ethnicity were reproduced in the factory.

"There are no more complex machines to be found in the world than at the Ford plant, but a schoolboy with average intelligence can operate many of them."(1) The implication in this statement is that someone from a non-industrial background - a schoolboy - could readily fit into the form of production which typified the industry by the 1920s. In reality the new factories were to be staffed not with schoolboys but with successive waves of unskilled migrant workers,
often from a rural background. Production methods, as we have seen, had become designed to operate with minimal worker discretion and traditional skill levels, by the 1920s, had been rendered obsolete in many stages of the labour process. The new industrial worker to compliment these changes, needed none of the baggage of craft based work methods, and the immigrant was often regarded as ideal in this respect. As early as 1915, Arnold and Faurote, in their study of Ford recorded that, "The foundry superintendent asserts that if an immigrant who has never seen the inside of a foundry before cannot be made into a first class moulder in only three days, he can never be of any use on the floor...As to machinists, old time, all round men, perish the thought. The Ford Company has no use for experience, in the working ranks anyway. It desires and prefers machine tool operators who have nothing to unlearn..."(2)

The first decade of the industry had drawn wagon builders, lumberjacks, gas engine workers and other groups from within the immediate radius around Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota into the Detroit region. By 1910 there was still a substantial demand for skilled workers who were drafted in from all parts of the USA.(3) After 1910 however there was a large influx of rural American and European workers whose low levels of industrial skill and common agricultural background led Ford's Max Wollering to christen his machinery "farmer tools".

Ethnic diversity was soon established as one of the characteristic features of the labour market in the Detroit region. By 1917 Ford listed 58 nationalities in their plants. Besides the amorphous 'American' category containing 16,457 workers there were
listed 7,525 Poles, 1,954 Italians, 1,819 Canadians, 1,750 Rumanians, 1,360 Germans, 1,160 Russians, and around 2,000 other workers from a cluster of southern European countries. By 1920 the 'American' category had doubled in relation to other classifications, partly due to the vagueness of the term 'American' and partly due to the large influx during World War One of southern farm workers - both black and white. (4)

By the 1930s the neighbourhoods of Detroit had themselves taken on pronounced ethnic and racial characteristics. Rankin's survey found 27,000 Hungarians, 67,000 Italians, 20,000 Yugoslavs, and 50,000 Russians among other distinct groupings. The Polish community, centred around Hamtramck, a separate town within Detroit, numbered 300,000. (5) The depression drew in yet another wave of migrants from southern rural areas, driven by the collapse of agriculture and envisaged opportunities in the automobile industry. There was also a continuing ebb and flow of "hillbillies" into the area throughout the 1930s. (6) The whole inter-war period was also characterised by extremely volatile labour market in the region of Detroit. Tent villages sprang up periodically in the 1920s and during the depression. The "suitcase brigade" became a notable feature of Detroit life as the percentage of young, single, male workers there became the highest of any North American city.

One of the earliest consequences of the concentration in the Detroit area of a pool of low skilled labour and a relatively mobile workforce was that of labour turnover and absenteeism. A large body of workers was assembled whose ability to move from job to job was greatly enhanced by the proximity of competing firms and the short
training periods involved in most jobs. Allied to this was the fact that many workers from rural backgrounds were unwilling or unable to conform to 'normal' industrial behaviour patterns, often displaying a stubborn resistance to cash incentives for extra work. Some rural workers re-migrated seasonally to farms around the mid-west. There was also a significant level of re-migration to Europe. The conditions of work, mostly harsh, repetitious, unhealthy and often unsafe, also provided a major disincentive for any permanent company loyalty.

In what Slichter was to term "a continuous, unorganised strike" workers began to sign on and off the payroll in vast numbers. In 1914 for example, while general unemployment remained at around 6%, Detroit factories were turning over labour at between 100% and 300% per annum. In 1913 Ford had hired 52,442 men to maintain a workforce of between 13,000 and 14,000. Employer responses to this phenomenon are important in that they were to create the conditions which were to foster the increased power of shop floor foremen in the labour market.

Many accounts of this period concentrate on Ford and the seemingly immediate success of the 1913 introduction of the '$5 day' in eradicating turnover problems. The $5 day briefly comprised a near doubling of wages contingent upon a minimum of six months continual service. This was paralleled by the introduction of an extensive personnel department - the Sociological Department - one of whose most important functions was to cut down the power of shop floor foremen to arbitrarily fire workers. The Sociological Department also conducted intensive surveys into employees private lives to ensure their domestic moral and behavioural suitability to be Ford workers. Reports claim success for Ford's strategy in reducing labour turnover to less
than 12% by 1915. (10)

The perceived need to strip foremen of their power to fire workers, as a corollary to the $5 day, reflected contemporary theories that the foremen were responsible for high turnover levels. Boyd Fisher, for example, echoing the views of Slichter, stated in 1916 that, "The first cause of the too hasty discharge of workmen is ignorance on the part of the foreman... In the first instance, blame the shop foreman." (11) Arnold and Faurote, noting the improvements in turnover following the initiatives of 1913, had no doubt that the curbing of the power of the foreman was a major factor. "(S)ure of the finality of his discharge (the foreman) became a malevolent despot, but at once came to his senses when he was forced to show good grounds for discharge." (12) Although in reality the majority of workers left voluntarily rather than being sacked by the foreman (13), he remained the culprit in many accounts.

Although turnover clearly dropped during this initial period, doubt must be cast on the notion that, as part of the process, the power of foremen was seriously curtailed, in the long term at least. Ford's own records do indicate that certain foremen were themselves fired for "laying off too much" (14), and the statutory powers of the Sociological Department seemed to seriously compromise the Ford foreman's discretion, nevertheless, as noted in the previous chapter, foremen very soon found ways to circumvent the efforts of the new department. Foremen at Ford continued to have the final say in hiring and, though for a brief period they had to submit discharges for the approval of the Sociological Department, these were seldom rejected. Other long term strategies were to have a greater impact on the
control of labour flows in the industry in general.

Turnover persisted beyond the initiatives linked to the $5 day, into the early 1920s. The cash incentive of the $5 day proved short lived as other major manufacturers increased their wage levels to match and wartime inflation began to erode the value of the wage rise in real terms. By the end of the war turnover was again increasing to unacceptable levels. In 1918 and 1919, 24,349 and 30,125 left Ford. Prevalent reasons were given as "claiming a better position elsewhere" and "dissatisfaction with job". (15) Chalmers indicates a continuance of high turnover into the 1920s among many Detroit factories with some experiencing rates in excess of 200%. A parts factory studied by Chalmers between 1924 and 1930 hired over 65,000 workers over the six year period to maintain a workforce averaging between 3,800 and 4,300. (16)

The employer strategy most widely applied in attempts to combat high turnover rates during this period was not to build a professional personnel system, as had briefly been attempted at Ford, but rather to manipulate the labour market on a broad front. In addition to offering relatively high wages the strategy adopted also involved flooding the Detroit area with labour and thus increasing the competition for jobs. Automobile companies had traditionally relied on widespread advertising to attract workers. Advertisements for jobs in the industry had appeared in over 190 newspapers across the country in 1911 for example. (17) In 1915 advertisements appealing for workers in the industry appeared in the New York World, the Chicago Tribune and the Cincinnatti Enquirer. (18) Advertisements in the small town papers of Missouri, Mississippi, Georgia and Alabama were also numerous,
of ten supplemented by spurious stories about plentiful and lucrative employment opportunities. Attempts to flood the labour market continued throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was later to admonish GM and Ford in the early 1930s for placing advertisements for a total of 60,000 vacancies, none of which were found to exist. In support of these advertising campaigns companies employed numerous labour agents to canvass prospective employees, particularly in the rural southern areas. (19)

In tandem with these attempts to attract a growing number of workers to the Detroit region and create a large pool of unemployment, the automobile industry employers engaged in concerted efforts to regularise wages and competition for labour. The Detroit Employers Association (DEA) placed a ban on competitive advertising in the Detroit immediate area in 1912, in an attempt to eliminate the poaching of workers between companies. Associations like the Pontiac Manufacturers Association (PMA) were candid in their admission that their primary intention was, "eliminating shop raiding and equalising the scale of wages". While Ford, whose $5 day had effectively upset local prevailing wage rates in 1913, continued to stand aloof from formal involvement in such associations, Chalmers found widespread evidence of collaboration among the majority of other employers in this respect. (20)

In the increasing pool of labour several methods of securing employment began to emerge. Labour agencies proliferated, Detroit having over 30 by 1920. These agencies charged a fee, usually around $5, for placing the applicant with one of the local factories. Jobs obtained in this way proved difficult to keep however and the Michigan
Department of Labour and Industry estimated that over 80% lasted less than two weeks. Agencies such as these had it in their interest to keep the turnover of jobs high as the agency, their local agent and a contact inside the plant - often the foreman - shared in what was estimated to be an annual profit of over $900,000.\(^{21}\)

An alternative route to employment in the industry, which continued to attract prospective workers with high prevailing wage rates, was through an extensive black market based on influence, kinship or hard cash - significantly more than the $5 charged by the agencies. The going rate for a job throughout the 1920s and 1930s varied between $35 and $100.\(^ {22}\) A market in employment cards, issued by employment departments to successful applicants, developed with workers applying under bogus names, then selling the job obtained. Jobs could be exchanged for straightforward gifts or bribes, usually to the foreman.\(^ {23}\) A more indirect method was to undertake the purchase of goods once wages were paid. Car purchase was notorious in this respect. Car dealers would supply a job, and thus the means of payment, to prospective car purchasers. Many of these dealers had agents inside the factory who often worked in collusion with the foreman. Many workers were not unreasonably convinced that failure to keep up payments would result in dismissal. Real estate deals were also undertaken in similar fashion with brokers selling houses or land with the provision of a job to ensure payment.\(^ {24}\) In all of these cases involving cash incentives the foreman or inside agent stood to gain from every new employee engaged using these methods. It was thus in their interest to ensure that sufficient vacancies were created on a regular basis.

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Patronage was another route to employment in the industry. Black workers represent an interesting case in this respect. Ford was the major employer of black workers throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, and an informal network of contacts and influence was established between the Ford factories and the black community. The church was to become the prominent institution in this process representing the agency for Ford's continued patronage of this sector. D.L. Lewis maintained that after 1918 it was virtually impossible to get a job at Ford without a letter of recommendation from an official of the black church. Reverend R.L. Bradby, Father Everard W. Daniel and Donald Marshall feature in many accounts, the latter being officially in charge of hiring black workers at Ford. As with the jobs market in general it was widely stated that corruption was endemic in this process. Hints of "kickbacks through the collection plate" and assertions of the open sale of letters of recommendation are common. When Canon Malcolm Dade took over the St. Cyprian parish in Detroit he found many black hiring officials involved in the "cars for jobs" racket. He also recalled, "I had a man offer me $50 for a letter and all I had to say was "I recommend the bearer of this letter for employment at the Ford Motor Company" - and I had never seen this man before!"(25)

Jobs could also be obtained through wider 'political' associations. Links between certain fraternal orders and employment were often alleged. More will be said on this topic in a later section, here it is enough to note that for many observers local lodge membership was an important currency in the trade for employment passes.

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In this complex network of job acquisition and conversely the constant threat of unemployment dependent on bribery and influence the ordinary worker stood virtually without protection. Legal protection governing security of employment throughout the pre-New Deal period was ineffective or non-existent. Union organisation was correspondingly weak. The early automobile industry presented insurmountable obstacles for unions attempting recruitment. Technological change meant that traditional machinists unions for example, unions for "all round men" had proportionally fewer and fewer of the workforce to attract. The AFL local organisation, the Detroit Federation of Labour, never recruited more than a minority of workers. By 1935 only 5.4% of the 421,000 workers in the industry had signed up. (26) In part the problem lay in organising what rapidly developed into an extremely heterogeneous workforce divided on religion, ethnicity, gender, skill levels, degrees of "Americanisation" etc., but also the AFL lacked the will to organise on an industrial basis, ignoring non craft based workers at least until the CIO split of the 1930s. (27)

Employers were also quick to nip any incipient union organisation in the bud, and the Detroit "open shop" drive of the 1920s and early 1930s was one of the most highly coordinated in an American city of the period. Following the general lead of the American Association of Manufacturers, organisations such as the Detroit Employers Association (DEA), the Detroit Manufacturers Association and the Detroit Citizens Committee coordinated efforts to resist union influence. In addition General Motors representatives were prominent in the Special Conference Committee between 1919 and 1933, formed by the largest 11
US manufacturers to coordinate anti-union strategy.\(^{(28)}\) Extensive lists of workers denoting union sympathies were compiled by the DEA and other associations and circulated among member firms, many of whom had specialist personnel staff to combat unionisation.\(^{(29)}\) The DEA also organised strike breaking activities, recruited blackleg labour and administered a network of information gathering from inside factories. Individual employers engaged their own anti-union agencies including Pinkerton at GM, the Corporations Auxiliary at Chrysler and Ford's home grown servicemen, in line with the widespread anti-union activity later exposed in the Lafollette Committee hearings.\(^{(30)}\) In the resultant atmosphere of suspicion workers could seldom be sure of who was a "stooge" and who was not. At GM for example the elevator operator was regularly supplying reports of the conversations of "radical" passengers.\(^{(31)}\)

The insecurity of employment which was generated around the above factors - threats of dismissal to make way for new workers or because of suspected union involvement etc. - was intensified into the 1930s and the onset of depression. The automobile industry had already become typified by an annual unemployment threat however in terms of the seasonal lay-off. The annual model change, pioneered by GM in the 1920s, had exaggerated existing purchasing patterns which saw certain months generating most of the industry's annual sales. As cars became stockpiled during periods of low sales large sections of the workforce would be temporarily laid off. Peaks of employment would be between March and August, with September to December being the months of least work. Some workers might only get between three and four months steady work each year. Even in 1929, a peak year for production, Chalmers
found that over 40% of workers in the industry experienced some period of lay off. (32) Retooling for the model change also usually signalled periodic lay offs. Occasionally, major model changes such as that from the Ford Model T to the Model A in 1927 could result in virtually the whole production staff being laid off, in this case involving between 40,000 and 60,000 workers. Again the depression compounded the problem. By 1933-34 40% of workers at GM were employed for only 29 weeks, only 15% of the workforce working the full year. (33) Skilled workers seasonal employment tended to work to reverse patterns. Tool and die men for example might work 15 hours a day including weekends throughout the period during which the model change was being set up, then be laid off as production settled down. Reports estimate that over 50% of tool and die workers in the 1930s averaged less than six months work annually. (34) In a non-union environment these seasonal and depression lay offs were not governed by any formal rules. Workers would be informed of lay offs at the last minute, often at the end of their final shift or upon their arrival at the factory gates. (35)

Seniority provisions were non-existent. The majority of unskilled workers were deemed to have no specific right to retain a job purely on the basis of longevity of service and the criteria for deciding the order of dismissal devolved entirely on the personal preference of the shop floor foreman.

Seniority or longevity of service was in many respects a liability rather than an asset for many workers in the industry during this period, since age was another factor which generated insecurity. The pace and pressure of many jobs meant that the industry was widely characterised as young man's work calling for stamina, speed and

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agility. It was held to be common knowledge around Detroit that workers over 40 years old had diminishing chances of being recalled after the lay off.(36) A GM vice-president was summed up the attitude of his company to the fate of 40-plus unemployed automobile workers when he told the National Labour Relations Board in 1936, "I don't give a goddamn what becomes of them. We are not running an old men's home - we are making automobiles."(37) Some accounts refute this notion of age prejudice. Fine for example asserts that older workers tended on the whole to be more secure.(38) Ford's own figures for the River Rouge plant in the 1930s show 20% of workers over 45 and 10% over 50, while GM claimed 24% over 40, seemingly high proportions. Nevertheless the NRA's Henderson Committee report of 1935 found extensive prejudice against the continued employment of workers over 40. The UAW's study of the relief rolls in Hamtramck show 45% of applicants to be in the 41-50 age group, compared to only 11% in the 30-40 age group.(39) More important perhaps is the fact that the sacking of older workers was widely believed to be a fact by those employed in the industry at the time and therefore acted as a further element in the aura of insecurity which surrounded them.

Obtaining a job and keeping it for any length of time were not the only uncertain elements in the factory life of the period. There were a series of indeterminacies surrounding the contents of the working day which affected most workers. Which job a worker would be assigned to was dependent on the whim of the foreman. With the degrees of interchangeability of jobs and general deskilling there remained 'good' jobs and 'bad' jobs involving greater or lesser degrees of hazardousness, boredom or fatigue. A worker had no official claim to
any particular job and might find himself transferred to a harsh work environment without consultation, often as a method of punishment by supervision. (40)

Yet another uncertainty lay in the number of hours to worked in the day. During peaks of production the worker might be expected to put in up to 15 hours a day, often with no notice of impending overtime. It was widely held to be unwise to refuse the offer of overtime. (41) Alternately "dead time" was a feature of slack periods or hold ups in production. Workers would report for work only to be kept waiting, without pay, for many hours, all the while expected to stay within the factory premises. (42) These gaps in production could occur at any point during the day and were often due to banking up of production by supervision. (43) Workers might also arrive in the morning, often after travelling considerable distances, only to be told to report back in afternoon. Others might be laid off without warning at lunchtime or in the middle of a nightshift, when no transport was available. (44) There was no compensation on these occasions. If production stopped, wages stopped. One GM worker recalled working between 7 a.m. and 1 a.m. the following morning on and off and still not receiving 8 hours pay. (45) Morris Marcus, employed at Chrysler in 1928 reported a typical week; "The "50" line worked about 1½ hours Monday, 3 hours Tuesday, 2 hours Wednesday, 4 hours Thursday and we were laid off until Monday...they say that the "50" line will be running overtime as soon as the cars hit the market." (46) As with longer term lay offs the decisions as to who would be laid off for short periods during the course of the day were entirely arbitrary, and lay with shop floor supervision.
In the volatile labour market surrounding the automobile industry typified by a highly fluid workforce, increasing competition for jobs, and the uncertainties of long or short term employment, mediated through a series of formal and informal agencies including patronage, influence, kinship and bribery, the shop floor foreman was a central figure.

To begin with hiring, the foreman played an important role in both official and unofficial procedures. Where skilled workers continued to be recruited the foreman remained an indispensable judge of aptitude. Employment department staff had difficulty ascertaining skill levels which would be immediately obvious to experienced skilled foremen. In the early years of the industry when skill was a more dominant factor in production the foreman would often have personal knowledge of the skilled workers in the district and would send out letters and telegrams or visit other factories in recruitment efforts. When foremen switched factories they were often followed by workers from their old department. Foremen were also often sent on recruiting drives to other areas.\(^{(47)}\) As the need for skill diminished these type of activities were reduced but foremen remained the final arbiter in the selection process. The employment office assumed the role of processing candidates for skilled work in response to labour requisitions from foremen but it was well known among workers that one of the best methods of securing employment was that of deception, about names, backgrounds, capabilities etc., and the employment office was the most easily fooled in this respect. As one employment official recalled, "There were many times when we thought we had secured a good man, as on theory he talked very good, but when he started working at

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the bench he was an absolute disappointment." Employment departments were thus forced to continue to solicit the final opinion of the shop foreman. Interviews by the foreman at the factory were conducted in the presence of an employment clerk but the latter's function was solely to record names, clock numbers and agreed rates of pay.\(^{(48)}\)

For the increasing majority of unskilled jobs a less rigorous formal selection procedure was set in train. Advertisements or information passed on by friends or relatives might bring prospective employees to the factory but more often than not workers turned up at the factory gates or employment office with no prior information, just the hope that hiring would take place that day. As the labour pool grew the queues for jobs outside factories became an endemic feature, even before the depression years. Because of the uneven levels of production this process could mean the sudden appearance of the foreman, rapidly selecting a group of workers, or a slow monotonous filing past a disinterested and unsympathetic employment clerk. Apocryphal stories abound, such as the foremen throwing apples into the crowd - whoever caught one being employed for the day. Skilled workers were not totally exempt from this experience and often foremen would walk down the line selecting particular workers, "hollering for electricians" for example.\(^{(49)}\) The notion of favouritism in this process was, perhaps not surprisingly, all pervasive.

Where workers were selected from the line by the employment department they would, as with skilled workers, be sent to the shop floor for the approval of the foreman. Assessments of aptitude might then be based on a brief practical demonstration, or more usually on a summary physical appraisal, given that most jobs called
for little intrinsic job knowledge. Stanley Gregory described one such interview by the foreman at Fisher Body; "He asked several questions, but he mainly seemed to be interested in my physical stature. He felt the muscles in my arms, shoulders, back and legs. In fact, I felt as though I was a horse on the auction block."(50) An analogy to a cattle market features in many accounts of the hiring procedure of the inter-war period.

This selection procedure was very often a foregone conclusion as it was the foreman who had recommended the worker to the employment department in the first instance. Recommendation could be a result of personal knowledge on behalf of the foreman or part of the process of securing a job via one of the clandestine methods outlined above. There was nothing clandestine about the foreman's ability to recommend workers to the employment office. GM for example stressed the right of their foremen "to refuse any prospect sent by the Employment Department, and also bring to the employment office any prospective applicant who has his personal approval." To this end many foremen carried a wad of employment passes with them.(51) "Personal approval" could be obtained via a number of routes. Many foremen were intimately involved in the sale of jobs in the inter-war period. Employment agencies, successful in securing short lived jobs, relied on contacts inside the factory. This might be the employment clerk, but more often it was the foreman who received a fee for provision of employment passes.(52) Foremen were also frequently involved in the car sales racket, again acting as the guarantor of a job which the car dealer then passed on as part of the car purchase package.(53)

The foreman was also the conduit through which kinship networks
operated in the factory. In the gaining of employment for a friend or relative the foreman's personal approval had always to be sought as a prerequisite. The foreman's own relatives were a celebrated feature of the employment process. Clayton Fountain for example was hired at GM in 1932 on the strength of his wife's distant relative being a foreman. (54) Workers frequently complained of being laid off to make room for relatives of the foreman, a problem especially visible during high school vacations when student relatives would be given work. (55)

Workers could also possess assets besides money or kinship. Sporting ability was often held at a premium. Many baseball players, footballers and boxers were hired at Ford into the ranks of the servicemen on the basis of their sporting achievements, but ordinary workers with talent were also often sought to man departmental teams. Norman Bully for example was hired at Buick because the foreman needed a catcher in the departmental baseball team. (56)

The corollary to the power of the shop floor foreman in the hiring process is that of his continued ability to fire workers, often to make way for newly favoured workers. Again the personnel department was involved in the process in the formal sense, usually to ratify the foreman's decision. A general survey of Michigan firms in the 1920s found 56 out of 59 firms where a foreman could discharge a worker from a gang or department and 21 firms where foremen could fire workers absolutely, without reference to any other authority. Briggs and Hudson were among the factories where foremen held absolute power. (57) Elsewhere the formal procedure involved submission of some form of "termination slip" to the employment office. These were seldom refuted and the employment office represented only a token appeal procedure.
More usual was the experience described by Bert Foster, at Fisher Body in the 1920s; "We had no such thing as being taken to the employment office to be fired. The foreman would fire you right on the floor."(58)

The ability to transfer workers between jobs or to other departments would often suffice as a indirect way of dismissing a worker. Transfer was often a euphemism for punishment of some sort and for many workers this meant that the end of their employment was merely delayed until they had had enough. In the early years of the industry many simply refused to be transferred and quit. Records at Ford show that in 1918 over 2,300 men left because they "refused the job assigned". (59) Later on, as unemployment rose, workers were unable to exhibit such resolve. Onerous or particularly unpleasant jobs were reserved by many foremen as punishment. In 1919 jobs in the hot and dirty Ford "cable department" for example were reserved for workers who had incurred the displeasure of the foreman. (60)

The foreman's continued power over hire, fire and transfer of workers was overshadowed during this period by his undisputed control of the lay off and rehiring procedure. Sooner or later almost all workers would be subject to lay offs and their order of departure and re-entry into the factory was entirely in the hands of the shop-floor foreman. Seasonal and short term fluctuations in employment, the absence of any formal procedure for determining seniority, and the lack of protection for workers from government or unions meant that any worker could be laid off without notice and had no subsequent rights to re-employment. As one foreman put it, "seniority or anything like that never entered our minds: we just kept who we thought were
the best men." The employment office would be notified by foremen of
those being laid off. If the list provided had "do not rehire" or
"agitator" indicated next to the name of an employee then he would
simply never be recalled, or would be refused employment on his
return. The criteria for deciding who were the "best men" was
dependent on influences outlined above. Likewise the order of
return to work was in the hands of the foremen, who generally kept
lists of workers and badge numbers and informed the employment office
when and who to recall. The same procedure applied to short lay offs
or "dead time" periods during the working day. Again the foreman had
total discretion. Favoured workers could avoid lay off periods
altogether if the foreman chose to transfer them to non-seasonal jobs
in maintenance or materials departments on a temporary basis.

Pay levels were another area where the foreman continued to exert
control. Although formal pay scales were in existence before the
advent of negotiated union agreements they usually involved a wide
band of differing rates. A worker's initial position on the pay scale
and subsequent movements up or down were decided by the foreman
exclusively. As the Dodge management outlined, "It is the policy of
the company that the employees shall always take up directly with
their foremen all matters that concern their work. One of the most
frequent of these is the adjustment of individual rates." In most
cases the foreman had considerable leeway to work with within the
general pay bands. At Chrysler for example workers doing identical
jobs in the early 1930s could earn anything between 54c and 96c an
hour. At Ford in the period before the $5 day there were over 69
different pay scales and foremen, in the words of J.R.Lee, "fixed a
weird variety of payment scales."(65) Even after the much vaunted rationalisation of the 5$ day in 1913 there were seven general divisions into which workers were to be reclassified and again it was the foreman who decided which division a worker went into. The same thing occurred at Ford in 1927 when the tool and die workers pay rates were compressed into three general rates, and also at Studebaker in the same year. At Chrysler in 1934 when a new series of rates replaced the bonus system it was again the foreman who allocated workers positions on the new scale. (66)

The foreman's power to move workers up and down the wage scale was facilitated by the endemic lay off periods in the industry. Workers throughout the 1920s and 1930s had no rights to a certain wage level and were frequently laid off at one rate only to be re-hired at a much lower one. The WPA investigation highlighted the example of a worker laid off when earning $13 a day in 1927 only to be re-hired on the same job at $6. Similarly the UAW reported workers wages regularly reduced by this method. Ford, GM, Fisher Bodies and Chrysler all feature in accounts of this process.(67) The usual rate set for re-hiring was that of a beginner i.e. at the bottom of the pay scale. The lay off mechanism facilitated the foreman's manipulation of wage rates but was not necessarily essential. Foremen could and did periodically reduce individual or group rates without recourse to any excuse. In 1932 at Chrysler for example there was a general trend of wage reduction "with unwarranted discrimination on the part of foremen."(68) For new workers the foreman also decided when a worker could move off probationary wage rates which were correspondingly lower than normal scales.(69) In setting wages the foreman usually
responded to periodically supplied cost data, but the unwritten assumption was that foremen should continually reduce the wage bill as far as possible whether by laying off and rehiring at lower rates or by straightforward reduction. (70)

Where group bonus or incentive related schemes were in operation the foreman's role in the rate fixing or, from the workers point of view, rate cutting procedure was also a central one. The Chrysler 54c - 96c pay band referred to above stretched to 65c and $1.85 after bonuses. With the notable exception of Ford, all the major manufacturers operated some form of bonus system during the 1920s and 1930s. These may in principle have operated on a fixed or graduated reward per unit of output basis, with rates set "scientifically" by rate fixers within the department or supplied by specialist agencies, but in reality rates were arrived at by a process of informal negotiation between rate fixers, the veto of the foreman and workers own abilities to regulate output. The foreman's continued power in basic rate fixing and general bonus level manipulation is revealed in the testimony of many automobile workers that bonus payments could never be accurately calculated by workers and that the whole process lay shrouded in mystery. Art Vega, at Briggs in the 1930s, recalled that he, "never understood (the group bonus), I have not found any employee who did." Similarly Hoffman, in his study of GM in the 1930s, "never talked to a worker, even a group leader, who could figure a pay from the available data." Adam Poplawski, at the Budd Wheel Company in 1928 was aware that "some sort of bonus system existed, but it seemed that no one understood it." (71) Even if workers could calculate accurately the levels of bonus due from a certain level of production

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the foreman could, and often did, insist that a proportion of output was scrap and therefore did not qualify, even though the said production might subsequently be used. There was no appeal to this procedure, and its effects could be multiplied since the rejection of output as scrap at one stage of production would usually mean the cancelling of bonus rates for all previous operations on a particular component or process.\(^{(72)}\) Arthur Rohan summed up the general situation with regard to bonus levels in 1927; "They don't know, at the end of the week, what they are going to be paid, they haven't any idea, it is a matter of chance."\(^{(73)}\)

All of the above aspects of the foreman's continued power - control of hiring, firing, job allocation, number of hours worked and wage levels were intensified as the depression deepened into the 1930s and the queues for jobs lengthened. Anyone who complained about the unfairness of any aspect of the job, wage cutting or lay offs for example, was met by by a response from the foreman which is recurrent in virtually all accounts of working conditions in the period; "Look out of the window and see the men waiting in line for your job."\(^{(74)}\) A similar situation had developed at Ford in 1915 when the introduction of the $5 day had drawn large crowds of workers to the Ford factory gates. Arnold and Faurote noted then that "every man knows the door to the street stands open for any man who objects in any way shape or manner to instant and unquestioning obedience..."\(^{(75)}\) In 1915 the relatively high rates of pay at Ford were enough to ensure compliance, in the short term at least, in the 1930s the mere fact of having a job was enough. Wages fell constantly as output levels increased during this period. Some workers at Briggs in the mid 1930s were earning as
little as 80c - 90c per day and workers in the supply industries, including many women workers, were earning as little as $3 per week. Ford's overall wage bill fell from $181.5 million in 1929 to $32.5 million in 1933. The average wage for automobile work fell from over $1600 per annum in 1929 to between $700 and $1,000 for those still in work in 1933. Skilled workers were not immune to this process - tool and die men at Ford for example saw their wage rates fall from $1 to 43c per hour during this period. (76)

In the general atmosphere of insecurity surrounding employment in the industry the foreman's continued influence ensured that many workers were compelled to take part in a range of activities in order to "keep in" with their supervisor. For those workers who had not the protection of kinship ties or influence of the type outlined above, staying in the foreman's good books could be attempted in a number of ways. Evidence around the relationships between foremen and workers in this respect is clearly subjective and oral testimony plays a large part in the reconstruction of ways in which foremen elicited favour by the use of their position, nevertheless the frequency of accusations of the following type in the oral record lends significant credence to their being an accurate representation of conditions on the shop floor at the time. At a simple level it was common practice to stand the foreman drinks and cigars at a local beer garden after work. During prohibition this would take place at the nearest "blind pig" or illegal bar. In Ed Lee's case the foreman at Murray Bodies actually owned the blind pig and patronisation of this bar was seen as compulsory among workers from the department. (77) Periodically, gifts might also be offered. During the hunting season the foreman might be
given game. Garden produce was also a popular gift. During Ford's garden project period when all workers were encouraged to keep small, company provided, plots of land under cultivation, foremen allegedly received a large share of the benefits.\(^{78}\) Various other gifts of wine or foodstuffs feature in accounts, as do semi-compulsory Christmas presents of a more substantial nature, wristwatches for example.\(^{79}\) Workers who engaged in this practice of softening up the foreman were known among their workmates as "red apple polishers", "red apple boys" or "fair-haired boys".\(^{80}\)

More serious "apple polishing" might involve working on "foreigners" or personal jobs for the foreman, or putting in time on the foreman's domestic projects. This latter practice seems to have been extremely common. Dan Gallagher, at Timken Axel in the 1930s, for example painted and decorated his foreman's house twice and was subsequently recommended to the superintendent for decoration of an apartment. No payment was involved in either case, merely the security of continued employment in the factory.\(^{81}\) House painting and gardening are among the most common domestic tasks recalled in this respect but projects of greater scope were also periodically undertaken. Building garages, laying driveways, digging basements, and other renovation work, often on houses purchased by foremen for investment, renting out etc., would usually take place over the weekend. Again no payment was expected or given, the foreman's sole outlay being the purchase of materials. Workers who failed to turn up for weekend work on the foreman's property would simply find their clock card missing from the rack on Monday morning.\(^{82}\) Resentful as some workers were they often saw that they had no choice in the matter

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if they wished to remain employed. As Martin Jensen, at Briggs in the 1930s put it, "By gosh you had to (work on the foreman's house and garden) to protect yourself. Actually what it was - it was dog eat dog"(83)

Sexual harassment was another charge frequently levelled against foremen. This is a particularly difficult area to assess in terms of the evidence nevertheless it seems clear that for many women in the factory, married or single, the rejection of an advance by the foreman could result in the loss of a job. As Morris Field noted, "many of the girls were told that if they did not step out occasionally with the foreman they would not have jobs."(84) As with the enforced extra-factory labour of male workers, the general attitude to this behaviour seems to have been one of grudging resignation. As Dan Gallagher put it, "they put out or they get out, that's all."(85) Relief and protection from the unwanted attentions of predatory foremen was to form one of the major appeals of unionisation amongst women workers in the later 1930s.(86)

Alongside this ad hoc system of gifts and favours existed a range of more systematic "kick backs" designed to ensure job security. Regular, straightforward cash payments were one method and numerous references can be found to foremen receiving a portion of a worker's paypacket each pay day. Amounts could be substantial. Harvey Kitzman cites workers handing over two dollars each week for example. The NRA's Henderson Committee found these "direct financial demands" common during its enquiry in the early 1930s.(87) Enforced loans were another feature of the period. Ford foremen were often sacked if caught borrowing money from their workers, sums involved often being
as much as $50 and $100, nevertheless many foremen continued the practice undetected at least until the late 1930s.\(^{(88)}\) Foremen also often used their position to run a series of "concessions" on the shop floor. Lottery tickets were sold and raffles were common, ticket sales usually exceeding the value of prizes many times over. Purchase of tickets, often as costly as $1 each, was seen as compulsory by many workers.\(^{(89)}\) Foremen were also reported to turn a blind eye to workers circulating on the shop floor to run the numbers rackets, in return for a percentage of the profits.\(^{(90)}\) By the 1930s the management at Dodge felt constrained to issue their foremen with a number of warnings that the continued sale or distribution of "punch boards, raffle tickets, baseball pools or benefit tickets" would result in their dismissal.\(^{(91)}\)

Larger items might also be sold to workers through pressure exerted by foremen. Car sales have already be touched upon above. Real estate was another popular commodity among foremen. Ford records indicate a number of foremen sacked for selling real estate throughout the period.\(^{(92)}\) Some foremen also acted as brokers in the oil share boom during the 1920s, often peddling counterfeit shares. Sales could be quite extensive. Around 1920 several Ford foremen were found to be among those involved in the sale of bogus drilling rights to between 600 and 800 employees at prices up to $200 each.\(^{(93)}\) Foremen were also known to run insurance agencies such as that found by Edward Hachtel at Studebaker in 1927, where foremen circulated their own prospectuses as well as those officially sponsored by the company. Again workers were under the impression that refusal to comply would result in victimisation.\(^{(94)}\)
Employers often frowned upon the obvious abuse of privilege by foremen engaged in such activities, to the extent of sacking those found guilty of transgression. They were however quite aware of the power which rested in position of foreman in terms of labour market manipulation and were content to devolve responsibility within the parameters outlined above. In addition they were not above using the foreman's position and its innate powers of persuasion to solicit support for what were deemed to be legitimate causes. During the First World War for example foremen had been trusted with the circulation of liberty bonds and thrift stamps, and employers supported the sacking of workers refusing to buy. Foremen regularly circulated with various petitions of a political nature which the company wished to compile, especially during the early 1930s when popular support against the spread of unionisation was being sought. Again many workers viewed this process as one of intimidation, condoned by the company. (95)

Using the above examples it can be seen that many foremen used their position of strength in the labour market and on the shop floor to promote personal gain. Clearly not all foreman were involved in such activities, but a significant number were, certainly enough to foster a general atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust among the workforce.

The continued power of the foreman was also exerted, not solely in terms of tangible material reward. As we have seen kinship or personal favour was a major factor in influencing the actions of foremen. Such favour might be based on wider factors of group identification. In the diverse ethnic and racial configurations of the automobile industry workforce the actions of the foreman in
manipulating jobs and job content was mediated through the prism of a range of social prejudices. In many ways the foreman's activities in this sphere merely reflect the trends generated in society in general, reinforced in factory life. Employers, workers and later unions were to reproduce wider social divisions within the factory so that inequality of opportunity in education, housing, work etc. were all enmeshed in the same process. Foremen, by virtue of their power were a central agency in the way in which these processes were worked out on the shop floor. The following section will turn to an examination of various groupings on the factory floor in an attempt to highlight the way in which foremen interacted with workers in terms of race, gender, ethnicity and religion.

The experience of black workers forms a particularly visible example of the ways in which prejudices were worked out on the shop floor. Blacks were sectionalised in the industry from the earliest years both between and within different factories. Some employers resisted hiring any blacks at all, GM and Fisher Body for example refused to hire black workers until compelled by the state in World War Two.\(^{(96)}\) Ford stands out as the major employer of black workers during the inter war period. By 1925 Ford employed over 10,000 blacks - 10% of the total workforce - 12 times as many as employed by nearest rivals Dodge and over three times as many as the next twelve employers put together. These ratios remained roughly static in 1935 and 1941.\(^{(97)}\) Ford adopted a particular form of paternalism with regard to blacks in terms of welfare, housing and support of religious institutions. This paternalism did not extend to equal opportunity within the factory however. Black workers were typically restricted to
jobs which were dirty, unhealthy or judged to be demeaning to white labour. This was true in all factories where blacks were employed. In the bodymaking plants of Briggs, Murray and Fisher for example they worked on the wet sanding processes which involved cold, damp conditions. At Hudson they were employed only as floor sweepers or icemen. At Packard they were janitors. (98)

The foundry became synonymous with black workers early on in the industry and remained so throughout the period, crude racial stereotyping deeming black workers better able to cope with hot conditions. (99) Chrysler and, later on, GM were notorious for restriction of black labour to the foundry and, although Ford's black workers were spread over a wider range of jobs than at most employers, here too they predominated in foundry type work, usually in those jobs requiring low skill levels. Statistics for blacks employed at Ford in 1935 for example show that 408 were core room workers, 282 were involved in iron melting, 331 worked in the moulding shop, but only one worked in the tool room. (100)

What were the relationships between black workers and supervision? Black workers did themselves become foremen. They did so however under a number of highly specific conditions. They could only hope to rise to foremanship in departments where black workers predominated, usually the foundry. The early years of the industry also favoured the promotion of blacks, before higher levels of black migration generated racial tensions in the Detroit region. (101) Generally though the percentage of black workers employed in supervisory jobs was well below the average for white workers. Two surveys highlighted this imbalance. The results are shown below:
1926 Survey of 118 Detroit companies;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Companies</th>
<th>Total Black Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No black foremen</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One black foreman</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two black foremen</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Several' black foremen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1929 survey of 67 Detroit companies;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Companies</th>
<th>Total Black Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No black foremen</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One black foreman</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two black foremen</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three black foremen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Several' black foremen</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In charge of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>janitor groups only</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aberrant figures in the 'several' category are caused by the presence of the large Ford plants in the statistics. Just as Ford offered greater employment opportunities to blacks so too promotion prospects were greater there than at other factories. Eugene Collins, a black worker, was in charge of the die casting department in 1924 for example. Throughout the 1930s there were more black foremen at
Ford than all other automobile plants put together and by 1939 Ford had promoted its first black general foreman, supervising six foremen and over 400 workers. Ford still came in for criticism however. Outside the River Rouge complex at Ford's smaller plants proportionally fewer blacks were promoted. The UAW was to later accuse Ford of tokenism in its promotion of black foremen when claiming the company had "elevated a selected few to positions of minor responsibility so that the company can say to the thousands of other negro toilers, underpaid and underprivileged: "Look what we have done for you!""

Whether these accusations against Ford bear any weight or not the racial prejudice in other factories in terms of promotion prospects was fairly unambiguous. Official figures disguise the actual functioning of supervision in many cases however since many black workers were expected to act as foremen without any official recognition. Carlson cites the case of a black worker in charge of a large department at one car factory who was paid a mere 1c. per hour above the prevailing rate. He was also excluded from taking part in foremen's meetings. George Robertson's experience at Chevrolet is probably typical, recounted in an interview with Roberta McBride:

"ROBERTSON: Their reason for giving the promotions to the whites was - well, they qualified, and the negroes didn't qualify.

McBRIDE: Did you have anything to prove that wasn't true?

ROBERTSON: Yes my merits and my seniority on the job and the fact they asked me to break in the individual they promoted to the job. This was proof positive he didn't know the job and I did know the job.
McBRIDE: You mean that you broke them in, but then you stayed at the same classification, and they moved up ahead of you?

ROBERTSON: They moved up ahead, right."(107)

Where blacks were promoted it was almost always to be in charge of other black workers. For the majority of black workers however white supervision was the norm. Black supervision of white workers was universally avoided in line with the racism among white workers which was a constant theme running throughout the period. This was revealed in a number of ways, from the black workers' deep suspicion of unions like the UAW, only overcome after strenuous efforts by union leadership, to the more manifest occasions such as the hate strikes at Packard and elsewhere in 1943 when white workers refused to work next to black workers."(108) In this atmosphere Carlson canvassed white workers about the prospect of working under a black foreman. "With but one exception...this caused such a wordy explosion and such looks of scorn that it was discontinued."(109) In Widick's words the request for a black foreman in charge of white workers before the war was simply "absurd"."(110) On the rare occasions when foremen were recruited from the ranks of black workers they were likely to meet with prejudicial treatment from their fellow white foremen. Willis Ward, in charge of black personnel at Ford in the 1930s for example, had to threaten white foremen with the sack to get them even to talk to him."(111)

Employers and white supervisors were content to reinforce, or at least capitulate before the general racism of the workforce. To put a black worker in charge of whites was dismissed as too risky or
provocative. As one superintendent put it, "We can't have negro foremen. We brought the negro into this plant to do the dirty, hard, unskilled work...we can't try any experiments here...we've got to keep our men satisfied...Personally I'd like to help them, but what can I do?" Supervision was simply "a white man's job". (112) For other employers the choice required no agonising, a white foreman over black workers was simple logic. When southern blacks came north, who better to control them than southern whites? Employers often subscribed to the notion that a certain kind of white worker "understands negroes". This myth was readily accepted by many of the foremen who saw the key to supervision in either brutality or patronisation. An example of the latter is revealed in the remarks of one white foreman; "I control my negroes by psychology. I kid them along, keep them jolly and happy and you ought to see them work for me." (113) Other white foremen continued to use their position to exert a more potent form of racism. The WPA acknowledged reports in the early 1930s that many members of the Ku Klux Klan were moving into Detroit with the influx of southern labour, and members of such organisations promoted to the rank of foreman were seen to be using their position in recruitment efforts. (114) Ford was to have particular problems with the racism of its foremen in the Willow Run plant built during the war. The racism of many white foremen was brought to bear through their everyday power over job content, wages etc. outlined above as many black workers were given low consideration in terms of basic rates, overtime, bonuses etc. (115)

Distinct ethnic or nationalistic patterns of foremanship were also a feature of the automobile industry. Waves of migration, kinship
networks, processes of group exclusion and foremen's recruitment preferences generated a workforce characterised by distinct groups dominating particular sections or shops within the factory. In the early years of the industry it was common practice to place foremen with a common ethnic background over specific groups of workers often because of language considerations. This was most important where skill levels remained high and communication needed to be of a complex nature. Skilled Finnish bodymakers working at Ford's Highland Park factory before World War One for example were overseen by Finnish foremen. Language variations among the general workforce were considerable. Among the 58 nationalities at Ford in 1917 for example there were 32 general language divisions and many more dialect variations.\(^{(116)}\) The dominance of German workers and foremen in another department at Ford was highlighted in 1917 when superintendent Carl Emde was accused of promoting only German workers in an attempt to retard war production of the Liberty motor. The ensuing Hughes Committee inquiry exonerated Emde in finding that this department had an established pattern of German worker - German foreman recruitment.\(^{(117)}\)

In many cases the presence of foremen with a common ethnic background to the predominant workforce was a result of internal promotion ladders which meant almost all foremen in the industry were recruited from the ranks. General trends developed following World War One however which were to undermine these patterns. As immigrants became Americanised, language receded as a primary consideration in the choice of foremen. As an added stimulus many employers actively promoted Americanisation programmes. The Ford programme initiated in

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1914 involved compulsory attendance at English lessons, while Packard went further in refusing to hire workers who were unable to demonstrate a proficiency in the language.\textsuperscript{(118)} The Americanisation programme at Ford had an important element of moral instruction but its main effect was in terms of linguistics. Between 1914 and 1917 the proportion of non-English speaking workers at Ford was reduced by two-thirds.\textsuperscript{(119)} With this development English speaking foremen began to replace ethnic foremen as part of the overall programme. Foremen were seen to be ideally placed to carry on tuition as "practical teachers from the shop floor".\textsuperscript{(120)}

The deskilling of the labour process was also a factor in the demise of the ethnic foreman. The complexity involved in skilled work often called for complex instruction or information, as noted in the case of Ford's Finnish bodymakers above, but where rationalisation and division became advanced communications were accordingly reduced to the bare minimum. Information on production matters could often be encompassed within a few hand signals or chosen phrases. As Bill Klann, a foreman at Ford, recalled; "One word every foreman had to learn in English, German, Polish and Italian was "hurry up". It was putch putch prenko in Polish, mach schnell in German and presto presto in Italian."\textsuperscript{(121)}

An increasing dominance of WASP foremen began to develop in the industry around this time which was reflected in a growth of nationalistic, religious and racist discrimination. Dodge was widely reputed to favour only Christian foremen for example while Ford, in addition to a popularly accepted anti-Semitism, was accused of fostering "a persistent movement of Protestant foremen and
superintendents". (122)

Just as black workers suffered under prevailing inequalities so too more recent immigrants from Europe became the subject of abusive and discriminatory activity from many foremen. In some cases this was condoned by employers. Official policy at Chevrolet's Gear and Axle and Drop Forge plants in the 1920s was to "treat foreigners rough" for example. The disdain felt for these workers is revealed in comments of one foreman that "only niggers, wops and dagos" would do the kind of work that most minorities were assigned to. (123) Arnold and Faurote as observers of the Ford labour process confirm a wider acceptance of prevailing assumptions about this sector of the workforce in their assertion that supervisors which they refer to as "malevolent despots" were nevertheless "indispensable where the immigrant is the principle worker". (124)

Quasi-religious organisations also begin to feature in claims surrounding prejudicial and discriminatory activity among foremen during this period. In addition to the participation in the Ku Klux Klan mentioned above, many foremen were alleged to be involved in Freemasonry and similar fraternal organisations. One contemporary observer claimed that foremen "strut around with lodge pins stuck in their coat or dangling from a watch chain. They know all the secret pass words and trick hand-shakes..." (125) Another account noted that workers were laid off while foremen "go around among their friends and lodge members...and tell them to work the rest of the week on our jobs." (126) Harry Bennett, head of the servicemen's regime at Ford, was a freemason, an undoubted factor in the advancement of this popular rumour of clandestine routes to advancement and favour on the
Another major division among the workforce was that between men and women workers. Although only a minor sector of the workforce in the period up to World War Two, women tended to be concentrated in particular areas, most notably small parts manufacture and trim shops. Gabin identifies four major categories of work seen to be "women's jobs" - sewing machine operators, trim bench hands, inspection and assembly of small parts. Prior to the greater influx of women workers in the Second World War there was some employment of women on larger machines such as drill presses during the 1930s, when they were widely exploited as cheap labour.

Some companies saw women as needing special supervisory considerations. At the Maxwell Motors in Detroit for example at the time of World War One, where about 12% of the workforce was composed of women, separate restrooms and cafeterias were provided and a matron appointed to take special interest in them. On the shop floor however men were placed in charge and under strict instruction to discourage "visiting" among workers - a habit to which women workers were allegedly prone. Men were also placed in charge when women workers were concentrated in Ford's battery department in the 1920s.

There were departments where women were promoted to supervision, although their pay levels did not correspond to that of men supervising equivalent work. It was company policy at Briggs for example for women supervisors to be paid around $30 per month less than men. Women supervisors had little prospect of advancement beyond shop floor supervision and as such they were generally

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restricted to departments entirely staffed by other women. As with
the exclusion of blacks from supervision of whites the dynamics
of this restriction can largely be traced to the predominant
prejudices of the workforce itself. This is supported by the testimony
of John Eldon: "In promotions the men hated to see a woman getting
promoted...I remember one plant where they promoted a woman to straw
boss. I thought there was going to be a revolution. This was something
the men could not understand - take orders from a woman?...I often
think that woman was lucky to have escaped with her life in that
plant."(133)

Forewomen, where appointed, did possess powers which mirrored
those of their male colleagues. Forewomen at Ford for example retained
control of the hiring process in similar ways to foremen there.(134)
Disciplinary powers were also similar, the forewoman in the bindery at
Chrysler's Highland Park plant was notorious for deducting 30 minutes
pay if a worker was one or two minutes late for work. Use of their
position for corrupt purposes was also not limited to male
supervision. There are reports of forewomen at Fisher Body accepting
regular payments and various gifts in return for continued employment
and at least one forewoman was involved in real estate sales rackets
uncovered at Ford in the early 1920s.(135)

In summary, this chapter has examined aspects of the continuing
power and influence of shop floor foremen in mass production.
Rationalised production had brought a shift in the level of skill
needed among the general workforce and as such had both capitalised
upon and stimulated a large influx of migrant labour from both the
rural areas of the USA and also southern and eastern Europe. Early problems generated in the labour market, particularly those of turnover and absenteeism among the highly mobile, low skilled workforce, had been briefly confronted by the high wage/social intrusion of Ford's $5 day period but had been addressed in the long term by continuing attempts by most employers to manipulate the local labour market and restrict competition for workers. The result of an increasing pool of labour, added to the continued attraction of relatively high wages, meant that an extensive and elaborate jobs market developed in the Detroit region, coupled with the emergence of a number of mechanisms to secure employment. In tandem with "official" labour agencies which provided many short lived jobs for a modest fee, there emerged a thriving black market in job procurement based on cash, purchase of goods, patronage or influence.

The jobs market in the industry during the inter-war period was typified by insecurity. Protection of workers rights either through collective action or through legislative intervention was minimal. In addition the developing cyclical nature of car production characterised by both seasonal and short term fluctuations, meant that jobs had to be continually re-secured by workers regularly laid off and rehired in a process with no formal regulations. Seniority meant very little in these circumstances, indeed longevity of service could in many cases prove a liability as discrimination against older workers was practised. In addition to the overall problems in getting a job and keeping it for any length of time, workers also faced an uncertain content to the day's work. The type of job allocated, length of the working day, level of pay etc. were all subject to short term
fluctuations.

In the process of securing and keeping a job, and maintaining a level of quality in employment, the shop floor foreman was a crucial figure. Foremen continued to hire workers, albeit with official ratification from a growing employment department bureaucracy. Foremen had the ultimate power of veto over selection and often initiated employment application, either by group selection from the factory gate or by pre-arranged means via the payment or influence mechanisms of the informal jobs market. Foremen also retained unreserved power to dismiss workers. In the few cases where reference to the employment department was required this was normally a simple formality. Transfer, often used as a means of punishment, was also at the sole discretion of the foreman on the shop floor. These powers were constantly in use in the regular lay off procedure, whether for part of the day or for more lengthy periods, over which the foreman was the sole arbiter. Pay levels were also under the control of the foreman who decided starting rates and positions on the wage scale, frequently readjusting these via the lay off procedure. Where bonus systems were in operation foremen also dominated the eventual outcome, so much so that many workers were unable to calculate their wages accurately from one one week to the next.

The result of the continued power of shop floor supervision in these areas meant that to ensure continued steady employment it was imperative to stay on the right side of the foreman. Skill in the job was an increasingly discountable factor and as the pool of unskilled labour increased, especially during the depression years, influence of some sort was increasingly necessary. Accepting the difficulties
presented by subjective nature of much testimony on this topic, it is nevertheless clear that a substantial degree of favouritism was generated via gifts and favours to the foreman. In particular many foremen benefited from the ability to obtain free labour for domestic and minor commercial projects, exploit women workers, solicit regular payments or substantial loans from workers paypackets, or use their position to promote the sale of goods or investments for which they held agency, whether legal or otherwise.

Another aspect of the continued power of the foreman was the part played in continuing ethnic, racial, gender and religious divisions in the workforce, in perpetuation of which the foreman played a central part. The relationship between black workers and supervision for example was notable in a number of ways. Restricted to ghettos on the shop floor, black workers were given limited opportunities of advancement to the ranks of foreman, often in spite of extensive job knowledge, and where they achieved promotion this was almost exclusively in departments with a totally black workforce. White supervisors were the norm for many black workers as employers reflected the racism of much of the workforce, and acquiesced in the practice of discriminatory and degrading foremanship, often by white foremen of southern origin. Ethnic and nationalist groupings formed by migration also generated distinct patterns of supervision typified in the early years by foreman-worker communality of background. This was rapidly superseded however by a growing predominance of white, english speaking foremen as programmes aimed at 'americanising' the immigrant workforce were implemented, and as language and skill barriers receded with the onset of rationalised production. Foremanship styles began to
reflect a developing disdain for the immigrant worker, who was increasing the subject of driving forms of supervision.

Women workers form a small but important sector of the workforce during the inter-war period, especially in certain sectors, and here again distinct patterns of foremanship emerge. Women were generally overseen by male supervision, and styles of supervision again reflected the predominant inequalities of society in general, but there were significant numbers of forewomen, and although comparatively badly treated in comparison with their male counterparts, these forewomen possessed a range of power in the labour market which mirrored that of their foremen.

Through an assessment of this nature, which highlights the residual power of the shop floor supervisor in the face of the structural reshaping of supervision inherent in rationalised, Fordist production methods and also the encroachments and subdivision caused by increasing bureaucratisation, a more accurate image of the power of the foreman in the inter-war period can be brought into focus. Just as gaps in methods of control of production by rationalised means leave space for the discretionary work activity of both worker and foreman, so too supervisory relationships in the factory are not dominated by a systematised or codified set of rules or constraints but are rather a series of social processes worked out through the intervention of kinship, ethnic, racial and religious, and gender factors in a workforce undergoing a period of high fluidity and change. The rhythms of production, generated in marketplace and in the specific strategy of employers, and the ensuing patterns of short term or seasonal employment, ensured a platform for the continuing exercise of power by
foremen, manifested in a range of favours, exploitation and preferment. Specialist employment and personnel departments are a feature of the inter-war period, but their advance as a symbol of the bureaucratisation of the labour market must be placed in the context of the continuing forms of foreman power outlined above, a power which was to continue largely unchallenged until the advent of industrial unionisation.

   Attention has frequently been drawn to the numbers of disabled workers employed at the Ford factories. C. R. Littler and G. Salaman, *Class at Work: The Design, Allocation and Control of Jobs*, Batsford 1984, p. 75, refers to the Ford boast that "of 7,882 kinds of job...4,034 did not require full physical capacity";

   Works Progress Administration (WPA) National Research Project, *The Labour Market in the Automobile Industry*, Special Research Section, Feb. 1938, pp. 2-3;

4. It is not known what the term "American" was meant to signify - probably US citizenship. This category would undoubtedly include many recent immigrants whose acquired citizenship thus disguises ethnic origins.
   Ford Factory Count, Ford Acc.572, box 27, folder 12.5;
   1920 figures quoted in Peterson, op. cit., pp. 36-40;
   see also D. Cohn, *Combustion on Wheels*, Houghton Mifflin 1944, p. 159 for influx of black workers.

M. Smith, 'Mr. Adamic's Detroit', The Nation, No.140, March 13, 1935;
WPA, Labour Market, pp. 15-16.

7. For re-migration to farms see ibid., p. 3;
Sanford M. Jacoby, Employing Bureaucracy: Managers, Unions and the Transformation of Work in American Industry 1900-1945, Columbia 1985, pp. 31-3, estimates that as many as 20% of workers from Europe may have re-emigrated;
Stephen A. Marglin, 'What Do Bosses Do?', Review of Radical Political Economy, 6, No.2, 1974, for reference to the need for employers to confront backward sloping labour-supply curves.

Jacoby, op. cit., pp. 119-136, uses the more recent exit, voice and loyalty theory to explain this phenomenon.

Petersen,A Social History of Automobile Workers, pp. 111-2,224-5;

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   Fisher, loc. cit..


15. 'Employees Leaving', Ford Yearly Reports 1918, 1919, Highland Park (The final years such reports were compiled), Ford acc. 572, box 28:12.7.1.


17. Peterson, op. cit., p. 31;
   Nevins and Hill, *Ford; The Times*, p. 517.

18. *Detroit Labor News*, March 5 1915, p. 1;

   Chalmers, op. cit., pp. 9-10;
   Shelton Tappes, Wayne State University Oral History, p. 4.

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22. Robert L. Cruden, 'Bloody Monday at Fords', unpubl. manuscript in Dunn, acc. 96, box 2, WRALUA ($50 - early 1930s); G. Prato, WSU Oral History, p. 1 ($50 - 1930s); E. J. Lee, WSU Oral History, p. 11 ($50-75 - 1930s); Detroit News, August 9, 1928 ($35-100 - 1920s); Transcript of radio WJBK broadcast, July 22, 1940, copy in Levinson, acc. 85, box 1, WRALUA.


25. Ibid., pp. 16-21; Ward, op. cit., pp. 52,66; Frank Marquart, WSU Oral History, p. 4; Canon M. Dade, WSU Oral History, pp. 2-6.

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27. The AFL's, craftism and voluntarism is dealt with in most accounts of the American labour movement see for example Bernstein I., *Turbulent Years: A History of the American Worker*, Houghton-Mifflin 1969;

28. For SCC in general see Jacoby, *Employing Bureaucracy*, pp. 180-1, 213-4;
   Fine, op. cit., p. 123;

   Peterson, *A Social History of Automobile Workers*, pp. 236-8;
   Letter from Harold Cranefield to R. Wohlforth, Jan 6, 1937; also Wallace interview p. 2, copies in Cranefield, Box 2:12.1, WRALUA;
   'Auto Workers Union: Causes and Results of Work Stoppages 1926-28', in H. Kraus, box 1, WRALUA, cites numerous cases of blacklisting.

30. Joseph Hattley, WSU Oral History, p. 8;
   For Chrysler see 'Corporations Auxiliary' and Chrysler Corp versus International Union of Automobile Workers, Wayne County Circuit Court, Case no.265472' in Van Kleek, box 32:15, WRALUA;
   For GM see Cranefield, Acc.595, box 1:1.14; box 2:12.1;

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for general details see, US Senate, 74th Congress, Report of Committee on Education and Labour, (Lafollette Committee), 'Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labour', passim;

31. Memo dated Jan.14, 1927, in Kraus, box 9, WRALUA.

32. J. A. Beni, WSU Oral History, p. 6;
International Labour Office (ILO), Studies and Reports Series N, no.17, p. 150;
NRA, Henderson Report, ex.4, table 1;
Chalmers, op. cit., pp. 43-4,138-47,176-8;
John Eldon, WSU Oral History, p. 4.

33. Fine, op. cit., p. 60;
WPA, Hiring Policies, pp. 13-4,17-8;

34. R. C. Ingram, WSU Oral History;
NRA, op. cit., p. 7;

35. Morris L. Marcus, notes in Dunn, acc.96, box 1, WRALUA;
Charles Beckman, WSU Oral History, p. 5.

36. Hattley, WSU Oral History, p. 19;
Chalmers, op. cit., pp. 144-5;
John Anderson, WSU Oral History, p. 42;
Fountain, Union Guy, p. 19;
Tracy Doll, WSU Oral History, p. 5;


39. WPA, op. cit., p. 23-4;
NRA, *Henderson Report*, p. 52; ex.19, pp. 18-19;
UAW, Radio WJBK broadcast, July 16, 1940. transcript in Levinson, Acc.85, box 1, WRALUA;


42. Joe Ferris, WSU Oral History, p. 4;
R. Leach, WSU Oral History, p. 3;
Marcus notes on Chrysler 1928, in Dunn, acc.96, box 1, WRALUA.

43. R. H. Berndt, WSU Oral History, p. 18;
Ford Worker, Jan. 15, 1927.

44. Fisher Body Worker, Jan. 1927;
Dodge Main Employee Representatives Committee Meeting minutes, Feb. 21, 1936, copy in Zaremba J., box 1, WRALUA.

45. Ingram, WSU Oral History, p. 3;
Beni, WSU Oral History, p. 5.

46. Marcus, loc. cit.

47. Arthur Rohan, WSU Oral History, pp. 2-4;
Chalmers, op. cit., p. 202;
    see also WPA, *Hiring Report*, pp. 9-10;  
    Fountain, op. cit., p. 202;  
    Nelson, loc. cit.

    Norman Bully, *WSU Oral History*, p. 2;  

50. Stanley Gregory, *WSU Oral History*, p. 2;  
    WPA, *Hiring Report*, p. 10;  
    Baxter loc. cit.;  

51. Memo from William S. Knudsen, March 28 1934, inter-organisational letters, GM Institute of Technology, Flint, Michigan;  

52. Chalmers, op. cit., p. 200;  
    *United Automobile Worker*, Nov. 15, 1940.


54. Fountain, loc. cit.;  
    see also Gallagher, *WSU Oral History*, pp. 1,3,5;  
    Bert Foster, *WSU Oral History*, pp. 1-2;  
    Hattley, *WSU Oral History*, p. 5.

55. Peterson, *Social History of Automobile Workers*, p. 114;  
    Babson, op. cit., p. 67.

56. Bully, *WSU Oral History*, p. 2;  
    Sports team members were highly prized. Many were put on exempt
lists when seniority provisions were eventually implemented in the later 1930s. see for example Dodge Main Plant Employee Representatives Meeting minutes, July 25, 1935.


60. NLRB, Case no.C.199, decided Dec. 22, 1937, p. 51;
   Ford, Operator 15 reports, June 13, 1919, acc.572, box 29;
   Robert L. Cruden, 'The Worker Looks at Ford', Labor Age, June 1928, p. 3.

61. Willis F. Ward, Reminiscences, p. 74;
   NRA, Henderson Report, p. 49.
   Dodge Main Plant Employee Representatives Meeting minutes, July 2, 1935, copy in Zaremba, box 1, WRALUA;
   Nevins and Hill, Ford: Decline and Rebirth, pp. 48,153.

62. Chalmers, op. cit., p. 140;
   Baxter, op. cit., pp. 30-31;
   Fountain, op. cit., p. 42;
   Art Vega, WSU Oral History, p. 3.

63. Dodge Main minutes, op. cit., May 19, 1936, p2; also Dec 1, 1936; Feb 2, 1937;
   Lewis. H. Michener, WSU Oral History, p. 2;
   Ford Worker, May 15, 1927, p. 3;
64. Ibid.;
   Doll, WSU Oral History, p. 3.

   Nevins and Hill, Ford: The Times, p. 529;

66. Ibid.;
   James O'Conner, Reminiscences, p. 28;
   Ford Worker, May 15, 1927, p. 3;
   Dunn, Labor and Automobiles, pp. 129-30;
   for Chrysler see Highland Park Works Council minutes, April 10, 1934;

67. Nevins and Hill, Decline and Rebirth, p. 154;
   WPA, Hiring Policies, pp. 15-17;
   Letter from Chalmers W.E. to Dunn R.W., in Dunn acc.96, 2:15, WRALUA;
   Rauschenbush, Fordism, p. 13;
   UAW broadcast Radio WJBE, August 5, 1940, p. 3, transcript in Levinson, Acc.85, box 1, WRALUA;

68. Highland Park Works Committee minutes, March 6, 1934.

69. Dodge Main, Works Committee Meeting, minutes, May 7, 1935.

70. Chalmers, Labour in the Automobile Industry, pp. 117,133.

71. Vega, WSU Oral History, p. 11;
   Hoffman, op. cit., p. 17;
   Adam Poplawski, op. cit., p. 2;
   Jefferys, op. cit., p. 102;
   Highland Park Works Council minutes, March 12, 1939;

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Dodge Worker, Mach 1927, letter from 'Dept. 5 Worker';
Doll, WSU Oral History, p. 3;
Dunn, Labor and Automobiles, pp. 132-3;
NRA, Henderson Report, ex.19, p. 12;
WPA, Non-Mechanical Aids to Labour Productivity, p. 64.

72. Michener, op. cit., p. 5;

73. First National Labour Health Conference, Cleveland 1927, Proceedings, Speed Up and Methods of Wage Payment, p. 44.

74. NRA, Henderson Report, pp. 8,51;
Doll, op. cit., p. 5;
WPA, Hiring Policies;
Ingrams, WSU Oral History, pp. 4-5;
Michener, op. cit., p. 2;


76. Nevins and Hill, Ford: Expansion and Challenge, pp. 523-33,588;
______________, Ford: Decline and Rebirth, p. 36;
WPA, Hiring Policies, p. 7;
South End, April 11, 1986, p. 2.

77. Edgar Lee, WSU Oral History, p. 11;
see also Hattley, WSU Oral History, p. 5;
Doll, op. cit., p. 5;
Gallagher, op. cit., pp. 1-3;

78. Lewis H. Michener, WSU Oral History, p. 3;
Babson, Working Detroit, p. 67.

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79. Pagano, WSU Oral History, pp. 2-3;  
   Cadillac Craftsman, May 16, 1928, p. 3;  
   Micheal Manning, WSU Oral History, pp. 35-6;  

80. J. A. Beni, WSU Oral History, p. 5;  
   Harvey Kitzman, WSU Oral History, pp. 12-14;  
   Charles K. Beckman, WSU Oral History, p. 5;  

81. Dan Gallagher, WSU Oral History, p. 8;  
   Leach, WSU Oral History, p. 4;  
   Kitzman, loc. cit.;  
   Marquart, The Auto Workers Union and His Job, pp. 4-5;  
   Fisher Body, loc. cit..

82. Manning, op. cit., pp. 35-7;  


   Peterson, A Social History of Automobile Workers, pp. 113-4;  
   Frank Manfred, WSU Oral History, p. 4;  
   Anderson, The Briggs Strike, p. 10;  
   John Anderson, WSU Oral History, pp. 4-5.


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87. Kitzman, op. cit., pp. 12-14;
   NRA, Henderson Report, p. 49;
   Jacoby, Employing Bureaucracy, pp. 23,31;
   Field, loc. cit..

88. Ford 'Bonus Lists 1917', Ford Acc.572, box 27:12:3;
   G. Rusanda, letters, May 1926, Ford Acc.572, box 28;
   Beckman, WSU Oral History, p. 6.

89. Dodge Worker, Dec. 1926;
   Auto Worker's News, April 1928;
   Eldon, WSU Oral History, pp. 10-11;
   Operator 15 reports, April 8, 1920, Ford Acc.572, box 29.


91. Management letters appended to Dodge Main Works Council and
    Employee Representatives minutes, Feb–May 1935, in Zaremba, box 1,
    WRALUA.

92. Ford, 'Bonus Lists 1917';
   Letters to Mrs. Henry Ford, Dec.24, 1931; Dec.3, 1931, Ford
   Acc.572, box 28;
   Manfred, WSU Oral History, p. 4;
   A. Sparks - R. B. Hough report, Apr.9, 1920, in Operator 15
   reports, Ford Acc.527, box 29.

93. Ibid., Apr.8 and 9, 1920.

94. E. Hatchtel, WSU Oral History, p. 7;
   Dunn, Labor and Automobiles, p. 151.

95. Ford, Yearly Reports, 1918, passim.;
   Fisher, 'Methods of Reducing Labour Turnover', p. 148;
   Sparks - Hough report, op. cit.;
   Ford Worker, March 1928, p. 2.
96. Anderson, WSU Oral History, p. 98;  
   Interview with Herbert Hill, Madison, November 12, 1985;  

97. Ford Factory Counts, Acc. 572, box 28;  
   WPA, Labour Market, p. 7;  
   Nevins and Hill, Ford: Decline and Rebirth, pp. 155-6;  
   B. J. Widick, Auto Work and It's Discontents, J. Hopkins U., 1976,  
   pp. 53-55;  
   Tappes, WSU Oral History, passim.

98. Tappes, op. cit., p1-4;  
   J. J. Lowery, Labour Relations in the Automobile Industry During  
   the 1920s, MA Thesis, Michigan State, 1954, p. 5;  
   WPA, Labour Market, p. 7.

   D. L. Lewis, A History of Negro Employment, p. 54;  
   G. E. Carlson, The Negro in the Industries of Detroit, PhD,  
   University of Michigan, 1929, pp. 121-2.

100. For GM and Chrysler see A. McPhaul, WSU Oral History, pp. 4-5;  
   for Ford see Ford Factory Counts, August 1935, Acc.572, box 28;  
   Widick, op. cit., pp. 56-57;  

101. Ibid., p. 3; Ward's father was a foreman at the Detroit Chalmers  
   plant in 1910;  

102. Tables from Carlson, The Negro in the Industries of Detroit,  
   pp. 174-5;  
   Carlson also cites a survey of firms employing a total of 22,000  
   workers in Chicago which found no black foremen at all, and a similar  
   result in Buffalo in 1927.

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104. Ibid., p. 73;
Peterson, *A Social History of Automobile Workers*, pp. 54-5.

105. UAW press release, Jan.13, 1938, copy in Brown, box 1, WRALUA.


107. G. Robertson, WSU Black Oral History, p. 2;
see also Mason Hodges, WSU Black Oral History, pp. 2,9-12;
Carlson, op. cit., p. 135.

108. James Neeley, WSU Oral History, p. 2;
Widick, *Auto Work and It's Discontents*, p. 55;
Tappes, WSU Oral History, pp. 76-7;
R. C. Mansfield report in Dunn, acc,96, box 1, WRALUA.


110. Widick, op. cit., p. 56.


112. Carlson, op. cit., pp. 134-5;
Hodges, op. cit., p. 11.

113. Carlson, op. cit., pp. 121,170;
Peterson, op. cit., p. 60.

114. WPA, *Labour Markets*, p. 5;
Headrick notes in Dunn, op. cit.;
Letter from the Catholic Vigilante Committee, June 1924, Ford Acc.572, box 30.


120. Meyer, op. cit., p. 76.

121. Klann, Reminiscences, p. 54.

123. Transcript of interview with Kroger P., Head of Accident and Welfare at Chevrolet, in Dunn, acc.96, box 1, WRALUA;
   Ibid., Mansfield reports;

124. Arnold and Faurote, Ford Men and Methods, p. 47.


126. Auto Workers News, Dec. 1927, p. 2;
   ____________________ , May 1928;
   see also Headrick and Munns notes in Dunn, op. cit..

127. Nelson Lichtenstein, in his interviews with surviving automobile workers, is taken by the regularity of the assertion of the pervasiveness of Masonry among supervisors. Based in fact or not, it remains a particularly virulent myth. Interview with Lichtenstein, June 12, 1986.

128. Gabin, Women Auto Workers and the UAW, pp18-20;
   'Women Workers' in Dunn, acc.96, box 1, WRALUA.

129. Nevins and Hill, Ford: Expansion and Challenge, pp. 532-3;
   see also Cadillac Craftsman, May 16, 1928;
   Auto Workers News, May 1927;
   Buick Worker, July 1928.
   Rankin, Detroit Nationality Groups, p. 189;
   NRA, Henderson Report, p. 19;
   WPA, Labour Market, pp. 11-2,21-2;
   NRA codes for the automobile industry fostered this substitution by officially setting the pay rate for women's work at 87% of the rates for men. NRA, Codes of Fair Competition for the Automobile Manufacturing Industry, August 26, 1933, Washington, p. 6.
130. 'Solving the Problems of Female Labour in a Car Making Plant', Automotive Industries, July 11, 1918, passim.


134. Arnold and Faurote, Ford Men and Methods, p. 74.

135. Highland Park Works Council minutes, March 6, 1934; Fisher Body Worker, Jan. 1928; Sparks - Hough letter in Ford 'Espionage Reports', Apr. 9, 1920; Headrick notes in Dunn, acc. 96, box 1, WRALUA; Cadillac Craftsman, May 16, 1928, p. 2.
Chapter Four: The Foreman's Job; Definition, Responsibility and Division

This chapter will continue to outline aspects of the foreman's job in the inter-war years in terms of power and control. Themes explored in this chapter will attempt to define the boundaries of supervision on the shop floor, as seen from a number of perspectives. In a formal sense the chapter will map out the precise job undertaken by the shop floor foreman in terms of content and responsibility. Explaining the paradoxical increase in human supervision which accompanied the technological rationalisation outlined in chapter two, and the style of foremanship which came to typify mass production during this period, the chapter will go on to examine a range of relationships between the foreman and specialist production functions and departments. Finally the chapter will explore the general division in the workforce between supervisor and supervised as a complex construction consisting not only of objective elements of status and material reward but also of elements of power, control and ideology, as outlined in this and the previous two chapters, to provide an image of foremanship on the eve of unionisation of the general workforce in automobiles, and the later unionisation of foremen themselves.

What was left to the foreman on the shop floor after the intense period of rationalisation of production culminating in the early 1920s? We have seen in the previous chapter that in terms of personnel related functions the foreman was not bypassed or superseded but retained effective control over most aspects of shop floor life.
including hiring, firing, job allocation and pay levels. We have already touched upon the way in which developments of specialist departments reduced the role of the foreman in production terms, especially in terms of overall control - design, production planning, materials flow etc. - and clearly there was a major reduction in the scope of the foreman's role. Yet within the subdivided, departmentalised mass production factory there remained an important production role for shop floor supervision, and beyond the formal delineation of responsibility, as with all aspects of rationalised production there remained areas where shop floor methods defied 'official' systems, with the intricate involvement of foremen.

Shop floor foreman were still necessary, indeed their numbers increased in ratio to the workforce throughout the inter-war period. This trend would seem to be paradoxical. The devolution of supervision implicit within the technological change to mass, standardised production techniques would seem to call for less human supervisory intervention, as machinery and systems became divided and automated reducing worker discretion and skill levels - "...the interlocking feature requires the operator always to do the correct thing at the correct time - he cannot do otherwise". Similarly the pace of work, as it became controlled within preset machine cycles, or tuned to overall line speeds would also seem to point to a reduced supervisory presence. Yet there was a discernible increase in numbers of shop floor foremen.

Data on the foreman-worker ratio is not straightforward. Overall industry figures disguise differences between factories and pose definitional problems over precisely who is listed as supervision. (1)
Also within individual factories ratios vary from department to department, often dependent on the nature of specific labour processes. Nevertheless, with these reservations in mind, distinct trends can be discerned.

Late 19th century Michigan census data puts the ratio of foremen to workers in engineering at about 50:1. Ford's payroll figures correspond to these figures as late as 1909 and 1910, often exceeding 60:1.\(^{(2)}\) By 1913 and 1914, the years immediately surrounding introduction of the machine pacing of production, two ex-Ford foremen put the ratio at 30:1 on the assembly lines, and once moving assembly was established, supervision intensified to a ratio of 15:1.\(^{(3)}\) Ford factory statistics confirm this trend recording total of 2523 foremen in a workforce of 41,200, a ratio of approximately 16:1 in 1915.\(^{(4)}\) This ratio seems to hold good throughout the 1920s and 1930s, although variations by individual departments can be considerable. The 1923 departmental ratios at Ford for example vary between 9:1 and 36:1. In the Chrysler press shop in the late 1930s foremen in different sections were variously in charge of 30, 33, 10, 6, 21 and 16 workers. Definitions also continue to obscure comparisons, the 1935 factory count at Ford for example shows a ratio of 29:1 for foremen, but inclusion of the category of "leader" - not listed in previous counts - brings the ratio back to 15:1. In addition this latter example does not include the 'serviceman' category of workers, who could be said to fulfil a supervisory function and were present on the shop floor in considerable numbers.\(^{(5)}\) Other factory ratios besides Ford are only available episodically and provide difficult comparative analysis.

Figures for GM in the 1930s vary between 15:1 and 30:1, Packard and
Briggs remain higher at 25:1 and 31:1 respectively. Hudson, Chrysler's Dodge Main and Murray Body ratios were at 18:1 in the late 1930s, with Plymouth and DeSoto slightly higher at 19:1. An NICB survey of the early 1940s found the number of workers per "manufacturing foreman" in a range of plants varying between 8:1 and 23:1. Nevertheless these figures confirm an overall trend of increase, and certainly no reduction, in the levels of shop floor supervisory staffing throughout the period. This is more remarkable when account is taken of the staff engaged in aspects of supervision now remote from the shop floor, involved in tasks which were once the official preserve of the foreman - personnel, production and quality control, time study etc. - who do not appear in these statistics.

While it is true that the overall numbers of those involved in supervision, local and remote, when calculated against overall production levels, can be seen to decline i.e. there are progressively less foremen and specialist staff per car produced, in the context of the experience of those at work on the shop floor, it remains true that there was a significant intensification. For the automobile industry worker of the 1920s there were more foremen about. Several factors explain this increase in the intensity of shop floor supervision. Firstly the new phase of integration of the production process brought with it a heightened degree of vulnerability to delays or stoppages. One of the major stimulants to adopting Fordist production methods was the consequent reduction of inventory levels that came with a rapid turnover of materials. Stockpiles of parts and materials waiting to be processed were to be eliminated as far as possible as the sequential arrangement of
processes, close grouping of machinery and steady overall flow of production "put a harness on time" as Norwood put it. (8) Aspects of supervision were made easier by these developments. Paced lines, whether by machine, slide or sequential layout, ensured that relatively slow spots were easily visible. Close grouping of machinery also aided surveillance. Against this however there was the risk that a slow down or stoppage in production could have a knock on effect, stalling production through all linked phases. Increased numbers of foremen were needed therefore to monitor each phase of production and to rapidly relocate workers, cover for absentees or relief, and arrange speedy repairs in case of breakdowns.

The nature of work on the new production lines also compounded their vulnerability as conditions on the factory floor militated against voluntary participation in increased output. Safety standards were often appalling. Foundries and paint shops were the among the most notorious, the latter particularly so when the introduction of Duco or pyroxylene spray paint came into use bringing the problems associated with air born solvents and lead poisoning. (99) The bodymaking plants were also hazardous. Commonly referred to in the Detroit region as "slaughterhouses", the harshness of the work environment there was reflected in their high labour turnover. (10) Presses frequently removed fingers and when streamlined bodies came into production, sanding down soldered seams released lead dust to poison many workers. (11) In machine shops oil on machined castings was for many years the breeding ground for bacteria which, entering through unavoidable cuts and abrasions, led to widespread incidence of dermatitis and related skin problems. (12) In 1916 "192 severed
fingers, 168,000 lacerations, 5,400 burns and 26,000 puncture wounds" were reported in the industry. By 1931 the Ford medical department was recording over 100,000 visits each month for first aid or hospitalisation. (13)

In addition to the physical hazards involved in automobile production of this nature, fatigue could also affect workers. When production was running at full strength the working day could be long and arduous, seven day weeks of 12 hours each day being not uncommon. (14) Workers might also spend many extra hours at the factory on "dead time", idle and unpaid while production was stalled. Workers on many jobs were forbidden to sit down, not just those involved in final assembly, but also many machine operators. Those at Packard for example in the 1920s could be fired for sitting on their tool boxes while the machine was running. (15) The image of automobile workers asleep on buses and totally exhausted at home is one that permeates accounts of the period.

Where the job itself was not physically onerous it often involved an extremely tedious small cycle of operation, sometimes repeated many hundreds or thousands of times each day, in an atmosphere of petty work rules which often included bans on talking, singing, whistling or smoking. The debate around the precise effects of this type of work, in terms of alienation, anomie and related concepts, has by now a long history. (16) What is clear is that conditions of this sort did little to engender enthusiasm for life on the shop floor, beyond the wage payment bargain. Lack of enthusiasm could be manifested in many forms ranging from sabotage of production to slowing down output to more tolerable levels. The foreman's increased presence was designed to
offset these effects.

In this atmosphere of hazardous or physically and mentally debilitating work in the industry there developed a constant conflict around levels of production. Foremen, who controlled line speeds and job allocation, had a range of methods available to increase output. Integrated production lines meant that the pace of work could be accelerated for whole groups of workers simultaneously. The "speed up" could be applied to machine paced production by simply turning up the line speed. Non-machine paced sequential lines could be speeded up by placing a fast worker at the start of the sequence. Such a worker, usually a relief worker or potential straw boss, could then push the pace of work. The "stretch out" - simultaneous operation of more than one machine by a single operator - was another method of increasing the intensity of work. Foremen could also withdraw workers from the line, or fail to provide adequate relief while the pace of output remained constant. Groups of workers might also be set up to compete against each other, often on and inter shift or racial basis, and foremen were known to falsify output figures from previous shifts' production to act as bogus targets. (17)

Evidence on a general policy of speed up throughout the industry is widespread. The Ford 5$ day is a good example of the increased effort which foremen were expected to secure. "They called us (the foremen) in and said since they were getting twice the wages they wanted twice as much work." (18) Some departments were worse than others. Department 30A at Dodge for example was known as the "race track" and was generally viewed as a punishment sector. Overall statistics frequently show a sharp increase in production levels where
no significant change in organisation or technology had taken place. The Ford radiator department for example increased its soldering requirements in 1927 from 35 to 80 per man per hour. (19) Speed up could also be a short term phenomenon. It was a frequent complaint that foremen tried to catch up on lost production due to some unforeseen stoppage during the shift. (20)

Efforts to speed up production, which the foremen were expected to make, were constantly met by countervailing pressure from workers to reduce the intensity of work or at least maintain effort norms. The general control of work by informal means, often at the group level, has been well documented. Jobs which are formally defined are in actual practice often carried out in different ways, designed by their participants. (21) Donald Roy's work provides one of the earliest accounts of this in identifying a "web" or "horizontal sub-organisation" of worker controls. (22) This could affect both the way in which work is done and the speed of output. Methods of work were established by custom and passed on to new workers by workmates as Whiting found out. "The instruction I got when I worked with the gangs was not from my foreman, but underground instruction from my fellow workmen." (23) Such practices could be put into effect against even the most highly rationalised production systems and as Olin Wright has noted "most workers, most of the time have been able to maintain at least some residual control over their immediate labour process." (24) Care must be taken not to misjudge the nature of such control. Many workers, in Friedman's terms do not have "creative" control of work, rather they more usually react to initiatives taken beyond the immediate workplace. (25) The scope of resistance is also largely

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determined by the nature of the labour process itself, of which there were many in the automobile industry, nevertheless there were ways in which workers did retain significant discretion over output.

Many workers sought simply to limit output to a fixed level at which the minimum wage could be assured, since high output levels would bring short term gain only and provoke rate cutting. Bonus levels were either seen as unattainable or not worth the extra effort involved. Manipulations could involve "goldbricking", or what Ulrich termed a "get by" attitude or more sophisticated system of "banking" production. (26) An example of the later, whereby production is stored up from periods of peak activity to either offset lost production through breakdowns or simply to ease the pace of work for a portion of the working day, can be found at Chevrolet in the 1930s. At the Flint No.4 shaft grinding department the men generally completed 124 shafts per shift. Up to 74 of these were completed in the first half of the shift and those in excess of the target were concealed as output was occasionally checked at the half shift point. By banking production in this way workers could take an unofficial 45 minute break late in the shift. Intrinsic to the ability to undertake such activity was either the concealment of the rate at which workers were able to produce or concealment of a method by which work could be done at a faster rate. (27)

Machine paced lines were not immune to group regulation of output. Workers regularly attempted to "go into the hole" - taking longer than their allotted time cycle to complete a task and consequently moving progressively off their work station. As James O'Connor, a foreman at Ford in the 1930s, recalled, "The biggest
trouble was the men. Everybody would get everybody's way and they would all be in a bunch. Then they would have to stop the line whether they wanted to or not."(28) Alternatively, individuals could work their way up the line by working with a burst of speed and thus create small rest periods.

Two factors were important in the regulation of work by the above means. Firstly all members of a work group, i.e. all those affected by regulation, must comply with output norms and methods. "Rate busters" were always a threat, especially in jobs requiring little expertise to achieve the required proficiency. New workers, especially those with a non factory background were a constant problem in this respect. The second crucial factor was the ability to "fool" the rate fixer or time study department. This was also a constant process. Various covert signals would usually telegraph the approach of a time study official, banging metal trays for example, and work rates would be correspondingly adjusted.(29) William Chalmers worked at Packard in the late 1920s; "When the time study men came to the department and observed one team and one operation after another, the whole group found themselves in the hole, that is their jobs carried off the line before they had completed them."(30) For their part, time study personnel usually incorporated an allowance in their calculations to take account of such activity reducing the "scientific" measurement of output to a process of arbitrary estimates and informally negotiated rates.

Informal methods of output regulation could lead to a variety of responses from supervision ranging from what Gouldner termed "indulgency patterns" whereby formalised job descriptions were

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largely ignored in tacit acceptance of informal methods, or alternatively viewed in hostile fashion such as by Taylor in his quest to eliminate what he saw as "systematic soldiering". Friedman has highlighted the ways in which different sets of workers can be subject to differing levels of intervention, dependent on skill and spatial differentials, in terms of enforcing formal job controls in his responsible autonomy/direct control typology. The adoption of Fordist methods of production, which dominate the industry, are of course themselves aimed at limiting the scope for such discretionary activity as far as possible and represent a preeminence of the direct control end of the spectrum, yet as noted, there remained areas of inertia and possibilities for intervention by workers in even the most sophisticated control systems. It was here that the need for a continued supervisory presence was at its keenest.

Individual foremen's reactions to this aspect of their job, i.e. seeking out and eliminating informal regulation and pushing production along at it optimum speed, could vary on an individual basis. Some foremen took an active part in systems of informal regulation or at least turned a blind eye. For example "Operator 15", an informant posing as a Ford worker in 1919, reported that one foreman had told him, "you see when the men haven't any generators for us and when my men haven't anything to do, I let them stall around and give them credit for the day for the generators that was left on the bench from the day before." Foremen might advise new workers on informal practices, Chalmers' foreman for example told him to rest on the inside of a car body to avoid being spotted. Similarly Operator 15's foreman would advise workers on the approach of other officials.
Some foremen also took an active part in efforts to outwit time study officials. Chalmers' foreman again informed new workers on the average they should produce "so as not to draw down a cut in the piece rate". A Pinkerton labour spy report of the 1930s reveals foremen "fixing" production production cards in order that workers who were behind schedule could make up their quotas. Mattewson's 1931 study confirms that foremen often attempted to make time study inaccurate. Even if they made no active intervention some foremen could chose simply to ignore such activity. Donald Roy maintained that most foremen preferred the role of "silent accessory after the fact" when it came to manipulating time study. After all, low time rates were often to the foreman's advantage, making departmental production targets easier to achieve.

It is unlikely that many foremen were unaware of the wide range of informal work practices which were a feature of most areas of the shop floor since almost all foremen were recruited from the ranks and had first hand knowledge of such activities. How they chose to use this knowledge depended on the individual to some extent, and some foremen, as noted, aided or at least acquiesced in the process. Many more however took a different stance, rooting out informal practices wherever possible and driving production and men unrelentingly.

Contemporary descriptions of many foremen's behaviour leave little room for doubt: "The worst brutes and slavedrivers in existence", "Whipcracking, browbeating, bulldozing attitude", "people with a bullwhip...they treated us like a bunch of coolies" and so on. Interaction between workers and this type of foreman was of a straightforward confrontational nature. Robert Headrick, at Ford in
the 1920s had one such foreman. "If he ever knew a civil word of courtesy he had forgotten it...not once did he treat me as if I were a human being." "A good old fashioned bawling out" was the extent of many foremen's personnel skills, and many went beyond this, using physical threats to supplement verbal abuse, often kicking or throwing things at workers. (37) Workers only defence against this type of activity was to walk off the job, a choice which many took in the early years of the industry. For many others, particularly as the jobs market tightened, this was not an option. Instead, workers became resigned to such treatment. A polisher, at Packard in the 1920s, summed up the reaction of many workers: "You've got to lose your confidence when you come in here. You've got to stand for a lot of things...You just have to see that the (foreman) get's nothing on you, and if he does just let him bawl you out. There you have the philosophy of the auto workers - just let him bawl you out." (38)

Such foremen would attempt to secure maximum production, often in excess of time study rates. Individuals were cited in the workers' press at the time as "a man without reason, a maniac for more production" and "trying to beat the efficiency man on penny pinching for the company". (39) Where production lines were machine paced their method was simple. At Chrysler for example "the foreman at that time - they had a conveyor and they had a wheel - would stand down at the end of the line and he would turn that and speed it up or slow down and no one could keep up." (40) The speed of the line was supplemented by a continuous stream of orders to "snap to it" or "speed it up". Ford foremen, as noted earlier, had, by the early 1920s, learnt to say "hurry up" in at least four different languages. On non-driven
production lines the foreman might simply increase the quota expected. Taking advantage of the fact that piece work rates and bonus systems were often not fully understood such foremen often manipulated output figures to the detriment of workers. Foremen at Dodge for example were in the habit of booking the first batch of cars, often as many as 30, to the previous day's production figures to disguise a speed up of current output. Relief times were also vigorously controlled by such foremen who, in addition to close scrutiny of production activity, scrutinized washrooms and timed workers in their absence from the line.

The growing dominance of this driving method of supervision was compounded with the deepening of the depression into the early 1930s which reduced still further the possibility of workers taking the "exit" option of protest. Constraints imposed in this respect are revealed in the reduction of turnover figures to between 1% and 3% in 1931 and 1933 as unemployment in Michigan soared to over 40%. Output per worker was greatly increased during this period, with no commensurate change in organisation or technology. As Frank Marquart asserted, "Every auto worker remembers how much harder he worked in 1934 than than he did in 1929." Foremen began to disregard manufacturers recommended speed settings on machinery and were reported to be intimidating time study workers into increasing standards. Production rates for workers involved in the manufacture of radiators at Chrysler for example were doubled during this period.

Safety constraints were also ignored by foremen in search of high output levels. There had been attempts in some factories to involve
foremen in initiatives aimed at reducing the number of accidents in factories. Monthly safety reports, accident reports, bonuses for foremen with good safety records, and special training courses for foremen were attempted at many factories including Ford, Fisher Body, Dodge and Buick.\(^{48}\) Despite this the shop floor remained an extremely hazardous environment. Workers often felt intimidated into not reporting accidents for fear of showing the foreman in a bad light and risking consequent lay off without compensation.\(^{49}\) In many cases unsafe working practices were actively encouraged by foremen to secure faster production. Press operators for example were often not allowed to wear gloves when handling sheet steel since this supposedly impaired their dexterity. Kenneth Bannon, at Ford's River Rouge plant in the 1930s recalled workers wrapping bandages around their hands to avoid cuts, but speedily disposing of these whenever the foreman came into sight.\(^{50}\)

The ability of foremen to manipulate output levels and the intensity of work, and to effectively exert control over the conditions of work, was contingent on their continuing power over what can be seen as competing groups of specialised staff, which had now the potential at least to take on certain of the roles of supervision. Just as in the previous chapter we examined the ways in which the foreman retained real power over personnel and disciplinary functions, despite the establishment of employment and personnel offices, so too in the administration of production foremen were to continue to wield an effective veto over functional departments and their staff. This is not true of all aspects of production. Product design, overall materials control and planning of production for example had left the
shop floor and the intervention of shop floor supervisors in these areas was now minimal. In terms of immediate, short term production decisions concerning speeds, priorities, manning levels and so on the foreman could still make significant decisions however.

One group of workers which seemingly encroach across the boundaries of the shop floor supervisors power were those involved in time study. Much was made of the recourse to neutrality of "scientific" measurement of output by precise measurement of production methods by post Taylor theorists. Applied systems such as that promoted by Bedaux for example set great store in the ability to combine the fixed performance capabilities of machinery with ergonometric measurements to arrive at indisputable optimum workloads. (51) Given the accepted neutrality of rate fixing and the inherent incentive of group bonuses, supervision was ideally to be devolved among what was to become a self regulatory gang. Subsequent accounts of gang systems in operation have claimed this to be a reality in certain British situations. Melman for example maintained that under Standard Motor's gang system the foreman's role was reduced since "it was not necessary for the management to police directly the performance of the production workers." (52) By contrast, in the inter-war American automobile industry, even in work situations where fully rationalised incentive based systems were attempted, measurement processes continued to be an ad hoc series of negotiation and compromise and the shop floor foreman remained a central part of the control process.

In spite of the rationalisation of technology during the period most automobile companies, with the notable exception of Ford,
continued to run bonus schemes related to productivity and therefore requiring rates to be set. Such schemes were in part a recognition that even highly rationalised labour processes left room for worker control at some level and also reflected the problems in fixing work methods absolutely with the onset of product cycles and the design changes inherent in "Sloanism". (53) Gang systems were in operation during the 1920s at Nash, Studebaker, Chrysler, Fisher Body and GM. The WPA report of 1934 found over 70% of Michigan factories using some form of bonus system at this time. (54) The size of work groups varied considerably, at Chevrolet gangs ranged between 60 and 400, at Packard the range was 125 to 600. Gangs could be subdivided into different earnings groups and it was usually the foreman who carried this out. (55) These systems were generally ineffective however and instead of devolving regulation to a partnership between time study engineers and gang members, they were widely distrusted, encouraged low levels of participation and were ruthlessly manipulated by foremen. Time study specialists were held in low esteem by both workers and foremen. The inaccuracy of rate fixing was seen to be merely masquerading behind precise measurements. (56) As time study men often talked of 1000ths of a second foremen arbitrarily intervened to retimc jobs or simply readjust rates. (57) At Ford, where job times were not formally tied in to bonus schemes the time study department acted as a general support for foremen, laying down guidelines on production speeds. (58) Foremen were free to do their own time study however and were known to carry stopwatches for this purpose. (59) A more usual method of setting standards was that described by Ford worker Percy Lwellyn. "The foreman comes along and works at the job like mad for five minutes -
works just as fast as he can stand it. That way he sets the production and we're supposed to keep it up at this rate for eight hours."

Foremen retained power to set rates and determine bonus levels, overriding time study officials, until the widespread decline of incentive related schemes during the mid 1930s. By 1934 GM had moved away from incentive packages, closely followed by Chrysler and Packard, due to a mixture of revealed failure, and the current ability to push production by other means during the deepening depression. When unions were established one of the early features of most agreements was the scrapping of any remaining schemes of this type.

A more serious intrusion on the power of foremen to control both the speed of output and general shop floor disciplinary activity was to be found at Ford in the inter-war years. The servicemen's department, unique to Ford, was to develop a range of authority on the shop floor which affected foreman and worker alike, and as such represents an interesting example of the specificity of a particular managerial regime during the period. Ford did not attempt to implement incentive related schemes, relying instead on a straightforward philosophy that in return for relatively high wages workers would submit to the compulsion of machine pacing and/or robust, driving supervision. In tandem with the formal supervisory hierarchy which included usual grades of shop floor foremanship, Ford established a group of workers in the mid 1920s, known as Servicemen, which was to grow in numbers and power until by the mid 1930s, at the major River Rouge complex, this department had virtual total control of shop floor life.
It is difficult to put an exact figure on the number of servicemen employed throughout the period, but it seems likely there was a substantial increase with the move from the Highland Park factory to the River Rouge in 1926 and 1927 in line with splits in higher management. By the mid 1930s estimates put the number as high as 10% of the entire workforce. One factor which makes calculation difficult is the inexact definition of the post of serviceman. Nevins for example estimated that there were 800 "underworld characters" in addition to 8,000 to 9,000 "spies and stoolpigeons" out of a total of 100,000 workers during this period, again roughly one in ten. Official figures reveal only 250 to 260 servicemen employed between 1929 and 1933, but these figures are highly misleading since many servicemen were on the books as machine operators, labourers, security guards etc.

The post of serviceman was by its nature a clandestine occupation. The department operated under the aegis of Harry Bennett, who was renowned for recruiting celebrated criminals and underworld figures, "ex pugs and thugs", or retired athletes, and used his position on the state prison board to obtain the use of "tied" services of many parolees. Official basic pay for servicemen was quite low, around 90c. and hour in 1929 and falling to 65c. in 1933, but was undoubtedly supplemented by unofficial means and by the endemic system of bribes, kickbacks and rackets which accompanied the system. Official duties, where they were acknowledged, were to "patrol the aisles, watch for leaks in equipment, keep fire aisles open, watch for violations of safety rules, man the gates, park cars and stand guard in the grocery." In practice they often patrolled the factory in
pairs, distinguished by the wearing of "civilian clothes" - often leather jackets, and a badge with a "A" prefix instead of the normal "F". (67)

The shop floor codes of behaviour which servicemen were to impose included a series of petty rules which went beyond safety considerations. Leaning on rails or machinery, sitting down, whistling singing, spitting, chewing tobacco or smoking were all forbidden in various degrees and infringement of these minor rules could mean instant dismissal. The ban on talking, imposed partly as an attempt to offset the spread of unionisation, led to bizarre accounts of workers with "Ford face" caused by talking out of the side of the mouth too much, workers conversing in morse code and, when allowed to talk in the lunchbreak, shouting out baseball conversations to avoid suspicions of "talking union". (68)

One of the main preoccupations of the servicemen's department was to arrest the spread of union membership. Individual servicemen often searched workers clothing, patrolled washrooms and interrogated and forced the sacking of individual workers suspected of union activity. Following the passage of legislation protecting workers' rights to organise, in the 1930s, servicemen were known to pick fights with workers suspected of union activity as a pretext for dismissal. (69)

Servicemen also featured in the more overt anti-union activity of the 1930s involving beatings of union organisers or those distributing literature at the factory gates. At the infamous "battle of the overpass" in 1937 when Walter Reuther, Richard Frankensteen and other senior UAW organisers were severely beaten outside the River Rouge factory, the employer's ranks were largely composed of servicemen. (70)
Servicemen could intervene over production decisions, chiefly in terms of speed, but their major activity remained in the disciplinary sphere. They were invested with the power to dismiss or transfer workers without reference to any other authority than their own superiors and certainly without consideration of foremen. (71)

What was the developing relationship between this specialist group of workers, who can in many ways be seen to fulfill a parallel role to "ordinary" shop floor foremen, and those foremen with more orthodox duties? Following the move from Highland Park to the River Rouge in 1927 Charles Sorenson and Ernest Liebold had emerged in overall control of production at the new plant. The conflict over control had filtered down to the ranks of shop floor supervision and many of the old Highland Park foremen had not been rehired to work at the Rouge. Those who made the transfer tended to conform more closely to Sorenson's ideal of driving foremanship and thus, at the outset, many foremen whose methods might be antipathetic to the activities of the serviceman had been eliminated. (72) Nevertheless there were a significant number of foremen who made the transfer or were promoted following the move, who were uncomfortable with the conflicting power structure. Rauschenbush commented at the time that "the workers of course both fear and hate the servicemen, and some of the foremen share their feelings. Foremen are watched as much as anyone and Ford is said to have the highest known rate of turnover among foremen." (73) More moderate foremen might on occasion attempt to intervene on behalf of workers facing disciplinary action from servicemen, or attempt to override their decisions. This was usually ineffective. James O'Connor, foreman at the Rouge in the 1930s recalled being told by a
serviceman to fire a worker: "'He's the best man I've got.' I would
tell him. "It makes no difference. You've got to get rid of him."
was the reply. (74) Mutual fear of the serviceman might force foremen into
conspiratorial alliances with workers. Laurence Yost witnessed such
activity: "it was a minute before quitting time and the pusher came up
to you, the foreman, he said "Serviceman is coming, grab a towel, do
anything, look busy." Immediately people would spring to whatever it
was with great alacrity." (75)

The Servicemen's department at Ford represented a significant
incursion across the boundaries of foremanship. Unlike the time study
department however such an intrusion was not to replace or subvert the
power of the foreman but rather to introduce a group of workers
concentrating on one aspect of what had become the accepted task of
foremanship. In their way the servicemen can be seen as merely a
deviant form of foreman, although not tied to a specific area, and not
concerned as closely with production related matters. In many resects
the serviceman might be seen to fulfil Taylor's criteria for the
disciplinary foremen as part of the functional foremanship typology.
For many foremen the pressure of work overseen by the servicemen's
regime was particularly onerous, and many may have left Ford to work
in other factories during the early 1930s. (76) Still more were
undoubtedly content with such activity, their own behaviour being
virtually indistinguishable from that of the servicemen in driving
production, arbitrarily dismissing or disciplining workers and joining
in the more overt anti-union activity. (77) For many foremen however,
robust as their style of foremanship undoubtedly was, the added
imposition of control by the servicemen may have been a factor in
building a resentment which was later to be a stimulus in the call for a foreman's union which was to find its strongest constituency at Ford in 1941.

**Supervisor and supervised: elements in division on the shop floor.**

Having established the extent of the power of foremen both in terms of their control over the labour market, control of shop floor life, control of production and control of workers, we now turn to an examination of the manifestation of this continued power in terms of the essential division on the shop floor between those who supervise - the foreman - and those who are supervised - production workers. Class is of course a problematic concept, yet it is fair to say that shop floor foremen represented a group, or class of workers whose outlook and ideology, whose self image of status and prestige, was different from that of of the production workers around them. The divide between the job of foreman and that of ordinary worker was, and remains, one of the basic divisions perceived by those involved in industrial activity at the level of the shop floor. In this section we shall build on the notions of difference manifested in the power outlined above and explore occupational, material and ideological elements in the construction of divisions on the shop floor during the inter war period.

The first point to consider in establishing the genesis and nature of the divisions between foremen and worker is that of origins. Throughout the period foremen continued to be predominantly recruited internally from the ranks of ordinary production workers. Selection
was usually made by the foreman or superintendent and followed an established route of advancement through the offices of utility or relief man, assistant foreman and so on. (78) The criteria involved was related to mechanical or technical skills in the early years of the industry when such knowledge was essential in the control of work and recruitment of workers, but as production became rationalised job skills came to be seen as less important. There were attempts at various times to recruit externally, usually from the ranks of college graduates. A 1927 survey published by the Federal Board for Vocational Education found widespread recruitment of college graduates to supervision in US industry but the A.M.A. estimated that, by 1930, only 20% of foremen in the USA had some form of college training. (79) Figures for the automobile industry were lower than average. The chairman of Dodge for example outlined their policy in 1930s: "The company follows the promotional system among its employees; that is, it promotes from the lower to the higher brackets wherever possible, rather than hiring outsiders for the better positions." (80) At Packard "practically 100%" of assistant foremen, foremen and general foremen had been recruited from "the hourly rate ranks in the factory" before the Second World War. (81) Ford also recruited internally, although many foremen received some college equivalent training at the Ford Trade School which was established in 1916. (82)

As with general access to jobs, the route to foremanship was viewed with suspicion by most workers. There was a pervasive understanding that a worker needed "pull" to achieve promotion. (83) In this way a worker was often viewed as standing apart from the ordinary rank and file before stepping into a supervisory job. When
unionisation was gaining momentum the promotion of shop floor representatives in works councils was similarly viewed with suspicion as the "kick upstairs". Later, when a formal union presence was established the shop steward to foreman ladder of promotion became a celebrated feature of shop floor life. Anderson, at GM in the 1930s, recalled that at least three early union local presidents were promoted to foremanship.

The foreman's origins were firmly rooted amongst the ranks of ordinary production workers. On the assumption of the foreman's role, how much did the job itself, in terms of content and skills acquired, mark the foreman of as a visibly separate class of worker? Specialist training was not a precursor for most of those promoted. Foremen did receive specialist training once appointed although the duration and content of the courses provided was limited. During the 1920s there was a general upsurge in the level of training in foremanship in industry in general and the automobile industry was well represented in this field. The main emphasis of this training movement, led by government, educational institutions and specialist consultancies, was towards personnel skills, aimed at the dissemination of human relations managerial practice. The full extent and impact of this training will assessed below in chapter nine, it is enough to note here that in general its effects in imparting an intrinsically unique framework of knowledge to foremen were limited. Foremen remained in possession of the same range of formal job skills, restricted by rationalisation, as the production workers under them.

In the early years of the industry job skills were important, and when foremen were chosen significant consideration was given to their
technical abilities. Foremen during this period needed to judge accurately the technical expertise of new recruits, could take an active part in product development, and generally control complex production. (86) Boyd Fisher found machine shop foremen before the First World War were expected to "set speeds and feeds and depth of cut, decide on best angles and shapes of tools, the best cooling agent, the kind of steel to use. They are expected to set piece rates, plan to keep all machines busy, but not congested, to order work through the department in relative importance, keep data on idle equipment time, break in new men, adjust differences as to wages, keep up discipline, keep down rejections and act as stock chasers...and must furthermore hire men." (87) As rationalisation advanced the technical aspect of the foreman's job began to recede. Only in the pockets where skilled work remained such as the tool room and maintenance departments did the foreman's technical knowledge continue in demand. (88) Formal job descriptions for the foreman continued to stress the need for technical skill but the reality of their everyday job content began to bear little resemblance to such outlines. (89) By the 1930s Speier noted that the relationship between technical and non-technical work of the foreman had "practically been reversed" and that the foreman now spent 80% of his time on non-technical activities. (90) Evidence presented before the NWLB later confirmed this trend. By 1945 less than one third of the 555 foremen at the Murray Corporation held jobs which were not interchangeable i.e. over two thirds of foremen's jobs could readily be undertaken by any other foreman with minimal specialist training. (91) Among foremen who were specialists in a particular skill there had been a notable decline in

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the need for "all round men". Technical expertise was often limited to one particular machine or operation rather than involving a broad range of skills. (92)

In the majority of cases then foremen had become deskillled in line with ordinary production workers. On the job specialist knowledge was retained in most areas of work but such knowledge was common to both worker and supervisor, and often narrowly confined. The intrinsic technical skill which had in previous years marked the foreman off as a different class of worker was, by the 1920s, largely diluted. A typical foreman's day now involved a range of duties, different from those of production workers, but in no way involving the need for specialist technical knowledge.

A typical foreman's day was now occupied in maintaining supplies of stock and material flows in compliance with supplied production schedules, distribution of labour at the beginning of the day and during changes in production, allocation of overtime, breaks etc., authorising various requisitions for tools, parts etc. and organising repairs to breakdowns or eliminating stoppages in production. (93) A large portion of the day was often taken up with the progress of "hot parts" or pressing problems unforeseen due to breakdowns or rescheduling of production programmes. (94) Foremen were also required to take control of training programmes for new workers and evaluate their competence, decide on probationary periods etc., but given the reduced training cycles which now typified the car industry this responsibility had also progressively diminished. (95)

The move to foremanship thus involved no lengthy training period or accumulation of specialised knowledge, nor was it any longer
founded on the display of a particular aptitude in terms of technical capabilities. Confrontational personnel skills, in terms of ability to drive production, were now seen as more important.

Power then, and not intrinsic job skill, marked the inter-war foreman off from those who worked under him. We have seen how this power was manifested in the foreman's frequent intimidation of workers for personal gain, or through foremen's control of jobs and shop floor life.

The divide between foreman and worker was also reinforced through formal material reward, status and prestige. The most straightforward measures in this respect are pay differentials. In the 1890s a foreman in Michigan would earn around half as much again as a skilled mechanic. On the eve of the doubling of operatives pay to $5 a day at Ford in 1913 foremen were already receiving between $6 and $7. The reduction in differential caused by the general industry wide rise for workers which followed the pattern set by the $5-day was the source of some acrimony among foremen. Differentials were reestablished somewhat following World War One. At Ford for example, by the 1930s the differential on the assembly line was nearing the 50% mark at 70c and $1.00 per hour for worker and foreman respectively, and with foremen guaranteed more hours work annually the true difference was much greater. During the depression years this difference was accentuated even more as the customary lay off periods were extended. Ford foremen averaged over twice the salaries of assemblers between 1929 and 1933. Like their operatives foremens wages in general were on no fixed scale. Ford foremen in 1927 for example could earn anything between $300 and $800 dependent on pay levels set by their
superintendents. (99) This variance makes calculation of precise differentials difficult but on average the figure by the mid to late 1930s began to fall to around 25-30%. Many firms had a specific formula for differentials incorporating a percentage below which foremen were not allowed to fall. GM for example paid their foremen at least 25% above the average of the five highest paid workers in the department. (100)

Although foremen usually benefited from a lower level of unemployment there were negative effects to their salary structure. Foremen generally were not expected to clock in to work but usually were required to sign a timesheet. Many were still paid on an hourly basis although there was a general shift towards putting foremen on a salaried basis during the 1930s, partly to avoid the hours of work regulations of the NRA codes. (101) Salary payment was also encouraged by employers in the early 1940s as a means of separating off foremen from general workers following the first signs of interest in supervisory unions. A bigger problem for foremen in receipt of fixed wages was that they were ineligible for overtime payments. Foremen were usually expected to put in a significant number of extra hours during peaks in production or problem periods, often working long hours or over weekends. For this they received no extra pay beyond a minimal allowance for expenses. (102) Foremen also lost out on bonus schemes where they were in operation. Since foremen were expected to administer such schemes, set basic rates, oversee the quality of production and control output levels, obvious difficulties of self interest would arise if foremen were themselves in receipt of payments linked to decisions over which they had control. Foremen might set low
production or quality standards in order to achieve greater bonuses. (103) Some schemes made provisions for the inclusion of foremen on an average departmental basis, but in general the foreman did not receive bonus payments of the type given to ordinary production workers. An NICB survey of 2,700 US companies in 1939 found only 18% operating schemes which included foremen. (103) Foremen were more likely to receive some form of general bonus, paid annually, than one which was directly tied to production levels. (104)

Exclusion from bonus plans and overtime payments was not too much of a problem for foremen during the inter war period since they continued to enjoy greater regularity and security of employment than workers in general. (105) This security was another factor which marked off the rank of foreman from those below. During periods of seasonal lay offs the foreman was usually the last to be laid off, if at all. Foremen could prove harder to replace when rehiring took place so it was often deemed too risky to lay them off. (106) Foremen were also needed since they administered the rehiring of production workers. Occasionally foremen's hours were reduced, but they were more likely to be kept on full time. Foremen were frequently called upon to undertake some production work during slack periods or may have had to undertake some maintenance tasks, but they remained in virtual full employment, unlike the majority of production workers. (107) In extreme cases involving long lay offs foremen might eventually be laid off but they were always the last ones out and the first back, often working on production jobs until output levels were back up to scratch. (108)

Generally foremen during the inter war years enjoyed a significantly higher level of real wages, in spite of their exclusion...
from bonus systems and overtime considerations, and also had much greater job security. These were tangible factors which continued to add status in terms of rewards. Such monetary related differentials cannot be said to form the basis for any real class divide however. The difference in wage levels did not put the foreman into an equivalent position with the professional middle classes. He remained a factory floor worker, albeit a relatively highly paid one, but a factory worker none the less. Within the realm of the shop floor however there were residual trappings of status and prestige which went with the job of foreman and which were to contribute to the enduring notion that, from the vantage point of ordinary production workers, the foreman did indeed belong to a separate 'class'.

Foremen had traditionally been distinguished by their appearance on the shop floor. The 19th century engineering foreman on both sides of the Atlantic wore a uniform consisting of superior clothing, particularly headgear, intended to signify the need for respect, and symbolic of their non participation in manual labour. The bowler hat came to be the archetypal symbol of traditional foremanship in Britain, while in America foremen were reported to have "deporting themselves with great dignity and...customarily reported for work attired in silk hats, cutaway coats and attendant accessories."(109) The wearing of distinctive clothing endured into twentieth century mass production, although on a somewhat reduced scale. American foremen generally worked in their "street clothes" as opposed to changing into overalls or working clothes.(110) This usually meant working in suits with a collar and tie and continued wearing of the ubiquitous foreman's hat, by now a trilby or derby.(111) Photographs
of the foremen who were to picket Ford for the FAA in the late 1940s show men uniformly smart in appearance and it was noted that at the Foreman's Association of America (FAA) annual conferences foreman delegates more closely resembled businessmen than workers. Foremen often wore distinctive badges although those at Hudson refused even this token of shop floor identity. (112)

Foremen were generally equipped with a desk, even if at Ford it was a stand up version in the middle of the shop floor, and some had separate offices complete with filing cabinets, phones, clerical facilities and so on. Some had desks on raised podiums to enhance prestige and to facilitate observation of production. (113) Separate washrooms and catering facilities were often provided, while some ordinary workers had no washrooms at all. (114) Foremen could also take longer breaks and at Packard they were afforded special "talking privileges" in contrast to workers who were expected to be silently about their work. (115)

Outside the factory foremen are difficult to trace as a distinct social group. Their salary levels, though often greater than that of their workers did not mean that they lived in exclusive areas. During strike activity by the embryo UAW during the mid 1930s anti-union foremen and their families were reported to be ostracised by their production worker neighbours. (116) Some foremen owned several properties and were minor landlords. James O'Connor, a foreman at Ford in the 1920s, supplemented his income in this way for example. This was fairly widespread among foremen, facilitated by the availability of inexpensive or free labour from the ranks of production workers to effect repairs or renovations to property. (117)
The transition to foremanship often meant the enforced dropping of familiarities like first name terms and accusations of the assumption of an air of superiority. The initial step was seen to be the decisive in this respect. Straw bosses, or working foremen, as Meyer notes, were singled out as having, "an inflated sense of...importance and authority". (118) Evidence on this aspect is extremely subjective and difficult to assess. It may be significant that when the foremen formed their own union they were to shun the use of the term "shop steward" or "committeeman" in favour of the more prestigious title of "building chairman" and were to equip their union with a fairly lavish "country club". One foreman summed up the position in explaining foremen's reluctance to join the union of the production workers: "...they are considered, you know, a little below us. We are foremen." (119)

Foremen - Class, Status and Ideology

In what ways can foremen be seen to constitute a separate class of workers from those involved in direct production. This is a complex question since the term "class" itself can be defined in many ways, each of which involves the inclusion of a new set of criteria for membership. Objective measures such as economic position, relationship to the means of production or control over the labour process can be added to an overdetermination by subjective ideological frameworks formed within and beyond the factory floor to define class positions. The term "class" itself may be unnecessarily misleading since it implies fixed groups within a class based schema, whereas a more
heterogeneous typology involving a multiple of distinct groupings and complex interconnections might be more useful. The following section will examine some of these definitional problems in terms of foremen and class and by drawing on the foregoing analysis of the foreman's position in terms of income, power, control and relationship to the ethno-religious and gender configurations of the workforce, will attempt to delineate the factors which marked off foremen of the inter-war period as a separate group of workers.

It is necessary to establish the elements of the separateness of the foremen from the ranks of production workers precisely in view of the subsequent developments in unionisation in the industry. The following chapters will trace the effects of unionisation on the ranks of supervision, both in terms of transfers of power and control and the erosion of the foreman's economic position, and also the spread of unionisation among foremen themselves. In order to fully understand these developments it is necessary to outline the ways in which mass production and attendant labour markets, deskilling, and control structures had driven the foremen as a class closer, or further away from, the ordinary worker on the shop floor.

In purely economistic terms the differential in wages and related rewards put foremen in a bracket above ordinary workers, but only marginally so. As noted wage differentials towards the end of the 1930s varied between 25% and 30% in weekly terms but could vary more widely in real terms annually. Such a difference was enough for Sufrin at least, who, by analysis of wage levels, savings accounts, charge accounts in shops etc. put foremen into "what is normally considered a "middle class" financial and social definition". (120) Even if foremen
can be seen to form a distinct group in these terms such an analysis, based solely on income related criteria does little to inform debates around ideology, attitudes and political power which divide the workforce. In many ways this problem parallels that surrounding the definition of a "labour aristocracy" in 19th century industry and the inherent difficulty in extrapolating political and ideological stances from empirical measures such as pay levels.\(^{(121)}\) Notions of class, as they exist among the workforce, are a complex construction, not based in such objective measures. As the Coxon and Jones study of occupational prestige pointed out "members of the working class come to hold a conception of the class structure which is not in accord with external reality, or with their objective class interest." In addition divisions between supervisor and worker may be only one of the many cleavages that exist in the modern factory - skilled versus unskilled, shop floor versus office worker and so on - each of which may overlay the worker-supervisor division.\(^{(122)}\)

One solution to this problem of a class position too narrowly defined is to attempt to incorporate wider aspects into the analysis. Olin Wright makes such an attempt when incorporating levels of control and ownership of the means of production in determining class positions. In such a schema the "traditional" foreman of the pre mass production factory, by virtue of his control over investment and resources and full control over the physical means of production and labour power of others, and legal status as employer, is closely tied to the bourgeoisie. The mass production foreman, by contrast, now occupies a "contradictory class location" by virtue of his retention of partial control of the labour power of others. "The development of
the capitalist enterprise has pushed foremen in two opposing directions: they have moved further from workers by becoming less involved in direct production, and they have moved closer to workers by having their personal power bureaucratised."(123) Olin Wright is correct in broadening the analysis and yet if we take the example of the automobile industry foreman up to the 1930s the latter assertion - that of the bureaucratisation of personal power - can be seen to be inaccurate given the retention of power by foremen as outlined above. In addition there is the problem of individual and spatially based difference in class perceptions. Where do those foremen fit for example who readily identified with workers rather than any other group? The Operator 15 reports at Ford highlighted several such relationships for example: "This department is run like a kindergarten. The foreman shows no foremanship and lets his men do as they please...he is looked upon by his men as a swell guy. Personal he is to the men, but for the company he is not."(124) The workers press was also quick to highlight what they saw as particularly cooperative and friendly foremen.(125) There were also foremen who actively promoted, or at least indulged, the regulation of work by informal means as noted above. Such examples further complicate any project which attempts to delineate a class basis for foremanship, even when a wider criteria is taken into account. Despite these reservations, there was a general cleavage between workers and foremen and in summarising this chapter and the previous one the elements constituting this overall division can be reconstructed.

Foremen had power in the workplace. The labour markets which typified interwar automobile production, the skill levels and methods
of securing and maintaining work, the location, intensity and remuneration involved in that work continued in the hands of foremen. This also enabled foremen to exert racial ethnic and gender preferences and pressures on the general workforce. In terms of control of production the recognition that Fordist production methods themselves ushered in new imperatives in terms of vulnerability, increased capital losses in the event of stoppages, and the continuing space for worker intervention in even the most highly rationalised production systems, saw an increase in the supervisory presence and intensity both in absolute terms and in increased ratios of foremen to workers. The attendant problems of low levels of voluntary commitment on behalf of workers due to the arduous, repetitious and often hazardous nature of many jobs also led employers to foster a style and intensity of supervision - driving supervision - which workers were to grudgingly accept as a trade off against relatively high wages. As the depression deepened, competition for jobs increased and wages fell, this became a trade off against unemployment. The net result was a group of foremen with absolute control over the experience and quality of work for those on the shop floor. There were varying responses to this power from individual foremen. Some acquiesced or aided in aspects of workers control of production for example, but the majority, whether by choice or through the compulsion of production imperatives, readily adopted a confrontational and uncompromising style of supervision. Many also exploited their position for personal gain. The bureaucratisation which was to have replaced the foreman's despotism in the 20th century factory was either ineffective - as in the continued secondary role played by personnel and employment
departments - or left sufficient gaps in which foremen could manoeuvre - as in the continued manipulation of rates of output, wage levels etc. by foremen.

There were limits to the foremen's power. Clearly the general control of production decisions was now in specialist hands, remote from the shop floor. There were also specific factory settings where competing power structures were in place on the factory floor. Ford's servicemen are a particularly visible example of an alternative power hierarchy coexisting with and often overriding the imperatives of the ordinary foreman. Throughout the industry in general however the characterisation of the relatively powerful foreman in terms of control of workers and the labour process holds good.

The step up to foremanship, predominantly via internal promotion ladders, and the assumption of this range of power, represented a major transition for those who chose it. For the majority it was not to be the first step of the ladder to management, since most foremen never progressed beyond the shop floor, but rather it represented a step across the divide between those who worked on production and those who did not. This transition did not involve a significant need to acquire new skills. What it did involve was a different style of work altogether, and an accompanying set of prestige and status related aspects which reinforced the idea of difference. Higher pay levels, regularity of work and security of employment were tangible wage related gains. Only in abnormal work periods of high productivity or during temporary incentive schemes could foremen's differentials be threatened. In addition foremen were afforded the privilege of a series of status indicators ranging from not having to clock in to the

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wearing of non-work clothes. The accoutrements of management were also provided in the form of offices and desks etc. which also served to delineate the boundaries between foreman and worker. Again this was not an even process and in some situations the foreman's status was less well enhanced. At Ford, just as the servicemen compromised the foreman's power, so to the trappings of status were somewhat less visible. Bans on foremen's record keeping, the insistence on stand up desks out on the shop floor and the general pressure foremen themselves were put under to secure production targets stands in contrast to the experience of foremen at other automobile factories. (126)

Bearing in mind these reservations at Ford, there remained at significant level of perceived prestige for shop floor foremen, the product of a combination of power, control and status. There were limits on that power imposed by the changing control structure of mass production, nevertheless from the vantage point of the shop floor foremen stood out as a separate and important group. Production workers viewed the power of this group with a mixture of grudging resentment and resignation. Developments were to take place in the later 1930s and during World War Two however which were to fundamentally change this relationship.
Chapter Four: Footnotes

1. See for example, 'Selection and Development of Foremen and Workers', American Management Association, Production Series, No.127, 1940, passim.


   Ford Highland Park statistics are only fragmentary due to the discontinuation of the practice of including foremen on the payroll counts after 1910. See 'Early Model T Production, Sales and Man Count Tables' 1909-1910, Ford Acc.922.


4. 'Personnel' reports, Ford Acc.62, box 59.

5. In 1923 for example department ratios at Ford varied between 9:1 and 36:1. Ford Small Accessions, Box 3:147;
   A. Nevins and F. E. Hill, Ford: Expansion and Challenge 1915-1933, NY 1934, p518, puts the reduction to 15:1 at a later date, between 1921 and 1925, with the intensification of management under the Sorensen regime;
   National War Labour Board (NWLB), Hearing into Certain Disputes Involving Supervisors', Washington 1944, (Slichter Panel Testimony), p. 1556.

   For Packard see 'Wage Changes and Conditions of Work', Section XI of 1944 memo from A. J. Spero to NWLB Slichter Panel, copy in Littauer
NWLB collection 'memos';

For General Motors see GM, A History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in the Automotive Industry: December 1938 to May 1945, GM Michigan, 1945, p. 85;

For Hudson see NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3429-30;

US Senate, Hearings Before the Committee on Labour and Public Welfare, 80th Congress, 1st session, 1947, Labour Relations Programme, pp. 1871-2;


7. In Britain the intensification of ratios is also evident although only general figures are available and definitional caveats outlined earlier must be born in mind. The trend also occurs at a later date - a reflection the slower adaptation of rationalisation compared to the US. Friedman's calculations show a fall in the percentage of workers employed as "foremen, inspectors and supervisors" from 2.25% in 1921 to 2.12% in 1931 in Britain overall. The figures for Coventry however, a centre of automobile and machine tool manufacturing, show an increase from 2.48% to 2.72%. By 1951 the Coventry figure reached 6.83%, well over a two fold increase. Friedman A.L., Industry and Labour, Macmillan 1977, pp. 202-3;

Bain shows a similar trend with the number of supervisors in Britain as a percentage of manual workers rising from 1.73% in 1911 to 4.08% in 1951. Bain G.S., The Growth of White Collar Unionism, Oxford U.P., 1970, p. 12.


S. D. Jefferys, Management and Managed: A Study of the Development of Shop Floor Industrial Relations at Chrysler

11. R. Harris, Wayne State University (WSU) Oral History, pp. 6-7;

12. Norwood, op. cit., pp. 49-77 for a resume of Ford attempts to counter these problems.

13. South End, April 11, 1986, p. 3;
Norwood, op. cit., p. 79.


15. Packard Worker, Apr-May 1927, p. 3.

Harry Braverman, Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the 20th Century, MRP, 1974, pp. 139-151;

17. 'Voice of the Ford Workers', WJBK Radio broadcast transcript, July 20, 1940, copy in Levinson, box 1, WRALUA;
Dunn, op. cit., p. 131;
Chalmers, op. cit., pp. 154-7;

18. Klann, Reminiscences, p. 84.


20. O'Connor, Reminiscences, p. 55;


Taylor had of course identified what he perceived to be such trends much earlier in his campaigns to eliminate "systematic soldiering".

23. Whiting Williams, 'Practical Plans to Carry on Safety Work', Iron Age, Vol.105, no.15, April 8, 1920;


26. Micheal Burawoy, *Manufacturing Consent*, Chicago 1980, pp. 63-64 and passim, is more concerned to show how "making out" or "goldbricking" can be part of a consensual fixing of output levels.


27. Internal company memo by informer, taken by strikers during occupation of GM Flint plants in 1935, in Kraus H., box 9, WRALUA.


30. Chalmers, op. cit., p. 122;

   Roy, op. cit., p. 257.


   Friedman, *Industry and Labour*, p. 4 and passim.;


33. Chalmers, op. cit., p. 159;

   Operator 15, July 24, 1919;

   Lawrence Yost, WSU Oral History, p. 6.
34. Chalmers, op. cit., p. 127, see also pp. 122,161; Peterson, *A Social History of Automobile Workers*, p. 228.


36. *The Call*, July 8, 1916, p. 2; Radio WJBK broadcast, 'Voice of the Ford Workers', July 22, 1940, transcript in Levinson, box 1, WRALUA;


39. Ford Worker, Jan.1, 1927; Pontiac Auto Worker, Sept.24, 1937.

41. Dodge Main Plant Works Council, minutes, Oct. 8, 1935; Oct. 6, 1936, copy in Zaremba, box 1, WRA LUA.

42. Pontiac Auto Worker, Feb. 27, 1940; Vega, op. cit., p. 9.

43. For an elaboration of the 'exit, voice and loyalty' interpretation of employee response to managerial strategy, applied to the automobile industry, see Foreman-Peck J., 'Exit Voice and Loyalty as Responses to Decline: The Rover Company in the Inter-War Years', Business History, No. 23, 1981, pp. 191-207.


45. Frank Marquart, The Auto Worker's Union and His Job, Wayne County Educational Committee, UAW/CIO, undated, pp. 10-11.

46. 'Production Standards', Brown, box 2, WRA LUA; WPA, op. cit., pp. 14-5.


48. For Ford 1917-1918 see Ford, acc. 62, box 59; for 1923 see Ford, acc. 572, box 27:12.1; see also Peterson, op. cit., p. 139; For Fisher Bodies see Transactions of the National Safety Council, 1927, p. 483; For Buick see 'Buick Plant Hold Foremen Accountable for Safety', Iron Age, Vol. 128, Oct. 22, 1931, p. 1064; For Dodge see Dodge Main Works Council, minutes, May 5, 1936.

49. See for example Hudson Worker, August 1928.
50. K. Bannon, WSU Oral History, pp. 2-3; see also Dunn, Labour and Automobiles, p. 137.


57. William Genske, WSU Oral History, p. 2;  
    Joseph Hattley, WSU Oral History, p. 6;  
    Mansfield reports in Dunn, acc. 96, box 1, WRALUA;  
    Stool Pigeon Reports - 1931-37, Daily Digest for Thursday March  
    19, 1931, Dodge Plant, in Ross, box 6, WRALUA.


59. Nevins and Hill, Ford: The Times, p. 506;  
    H. L. Arnold and F. L. Faurote, Ford Methods and Ford Shops  
    Engineering Magazine, NY 1915, p. 106;  
    Klann, Reminiscences, pp. 6-7.

60. Radio WJBK broadcast, July 23, 1940, transcript p. 3, copy in  
    Levinson, acc. 85, box 1, WRALUA.

61. R. L. Kanter, WSU Oral History, pp. 24-7;  
    Joe Ferris, WSU Oral History, p. 18.

62. Carl Rauschenbush, Fordism, League for Industrial Democracy, NY  
    1937, pp. 19-21;  

63. A. Nevins and F. E. Hill, Ford: Decline and Rebirth 1915-1933,  
    Arno NY 1976, pp. 47-8, 150-1.

64. 1929-1933 Wage Statistics, Ford, Martindale, acc. 157, box 196;  
    Factory Counts, Ford, acc. 572, box 28.

65. WPA, Hiring Policies, p. 34;  
    United Auto Worker, Flint Edition, Sept. 11, 1937;  
    Rauschenbush, op. cit., pp. 14-15;  
    Dan Gallagher, WSU Oral History, p. 7;  

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69. Bannon, WSU Oral History, pp. 4-6; Rauschenbush, op. cit., p. 15; NLRB, op. cit., p. 38.

70. Statements of R. Sentman and R. Dunham, in Brown, box 32, WRALUA.

71. WPA, Hiring Policies, p. 22; Rauschenbush, op. cit., pp. 10-1; Nevins and Hill, op. cit., pp. 111-7; Jensen, op. cit., pp. 8-9,12; NLRB, op. cit., p. 49.


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75. Lawrence Yost, WSU Oral History, p. 6.

76. Dunn, acc.96, box 1, WRALUA.

77. United Auto Worker, Flint edn., Sept. 11, 1937 cites foremen's involvement in the 'battle of the overpass', when UAW organisers, including the Reuther brothers and Richard Frankensteen, were badly beaten.

78. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1556-62.

79. Federal Board for Vocational Education (FBVE), 'Foreman Training in the US', Bulletin no.131, 1926, pp. 6-7;
   S. M. Lowry., 'Which Men Will Make the Best Foremen?', A.M.A. Production Series, no.127, 1940, p. 11.

80. Dodge Main Works Council, minutes, May 19, 1936, p. 2.

81. NWLB, op. cit., p. 3086;
   National Foreman's Institute, A Report on Foremanship Attitudes, Deep River, Conn. 1946, passim.

82. Ford Motor Co., The Ford Industries, Detroit 1927, p. 20;
   WPA, Non Mechanical Aids to Productivity, pp. 37-8;

83. Anderson, WSU Oral History, p. 166;
   Williams, Practical Plans, p. 1026;
   Letter to the editor, Dodge Worker, May 1928;


94. NWLB, op. cit., pp. 1541, 1553-4, 1564; Ulrich et al., loc. cit.

95. Dodge Main Works Council, minutes, May 7, 1935; 'Student Workers', Ford acc. 572; WPA, op. cit., pp. 38,47.


98. Comparisons between motor assembly, body assembly and foremen in Ford acc. 157, box 196.


100. GM, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, p. 83.


103. 'Foremen's Bonus Plans', in NICB, Foremen's Compensation; Automotive Council for War Production (ACWP), Foremen's Incentive Plans, ACWP Manpower Division, Study no. 3, Detroit 1944, passim.


106. J. Geschelin, 'Firing Foremen is an Expensive Pastime', Automotive Industries, April 23, 1932.

107. WPA, Hiring Policies, p. 18;
       Cadillac Steward, Local 174 edn., June 20, 1939, p. 1;
       Undated letter from Deeming A., Brown, box 10, local 212 file, WRALUA;
       UAW-Chevrolet Local 235, Shop Committee minutes, Jan. 5, 1939 p. 4; Jan. 25 1938; March 22 1938, copy in J. Oneka, box 1, WRALUA.

108. O'Connor, Reminiscences, p. 37;
       Klann, Reminiscences, p. 148;


110. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1539-40;
       Photographs of FAA pickets in Ford acc. 533, box 97;
       Packard Motor Car Co., Brief of the Packard Motor Car Company before the National Labor Relations Board, Case No. 7-R-1884, Detroit 1944, p. 15.

111. NWLB, op. cit., p. 3517;
       Nevins and Hill, Ford: The Times, p. 505.

112. NWLB, loc. cit.;
       UAW-Chevrolet Local 235 Shop Committee minutes, Feb 16, 1938;

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113. 'Raise for Foremen', Factory Management and Maintenance, Vol.91, no.4, April 1933; 
NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1539-40.

114. Norman Bully, WSU Oral History, p. 7; 
UAW-Chevrolet Local 235 Shop Committee minutes, Dec.7 1937, p. 4.


117. O'Connor, op. cit., p. 49; 
for details for foremen's exploitation of free domestic labour see above, Chapter three.

Ternstedt Flash, July 15 1937, p. 3.


125. See for example *Pontiac Auto Worker*, Oct. 8, 1937, p. 2; *Flint Auto Worker*, May 25, 1937, p. 4.

Chapter Five: The Impact of Unionisation

This chapter will examine the impact of unionisation among production workers in the automobile industry on the structures of shop-floor power outlined in the previous chapters. Tracing the development of unionisation from the early state supported efforts of the New Deal period and resultant company union movement, to the establishment of unionisation proper through such unions as the United Automobile Workers Union, it will be shown how the resultant codification and proceduralisation of such aspects as wage levels, seniority provisions, grievance procedures and negotiated effort norms resulted in the major restructuring of the shape of shop-floor supervision and consequently the job, and working experience of the foreman.

The first area pertaining to the eventual rise of unionisation among car workers must be an examination of the early New Deal initiatives of the Roosevelt administration from 1933 onwards. An extensive analysis of the dynamics of state intervention in the economy, of which the New Deal forms a seminal example, lies beyond the scope of this work. (1) We can however assess the ramifications of the legislative initiatives of this period and government attempts to influence, regulate and control industrial production. In common with most other branches of industry the automobile industry was issued with codes of fair competition by the National Recovery Administration (NRA) in August 1933. These codes laid down minimum wage levels, maximum average hours to be worked, provisions covering child labour and general support of employees rights to organise and bargain.
collectively.\(^{(2)}\) The codes covering wages and hours were aimed at regularising employment and ironing out seasonal variations in numbers hired. Pegging wages to a minimum was aimed at reducing competition for jobs, and hence reducing turnover, while maximum average hours codes were aimed at regularising work patterns. A 35 hour week (increased to 40 hours in September 1934) with a peak of 48 hours, meant increased employment on a regular basis eliminating peaks and troughs which had previously seen work opportunities fluctuating between six and seven day weeks or no work at all.

The automobile industry codes did not contain "unfair practice" provisions as did other industry codes however and codes governing seniority in the event of reduction or increase in the labour force were specified separately in a settlement announced by Roosevelt in March 1934. This marked out the automobile industry as one of the first to receive special treatment from the NRA and coincided with the setting up of the Automobile Labour Board (ALB).\(^{(3)}\) The codes were generally a failure, in particular those covering seniority. The key to an understanding of the failure of the codes in this respect was the inclusion of a "merit clause". This particular clause had been advocated by the National Association of Manufacturers in June 1933 and was aimed at nullifying any attempt to erode the arbitrary power of employers, or in practice foremen, in deciding who worked and who did not.

The government's primary concern in setting up seniority codes was to minimise the social impact of lay-off periods. By ensuring that married men with families were kept at work as long as possible, with "seniority, individual skill and efficient service" being given
secondary consideration, the codes enshrined a moral commitment to the protection of family welfare. When the ALB's recommendations were issued however they contained a clause exempting from the codes those whose work "in the judgement of management is essential to the operation of the plant and production or who have received special training or have exceptional ability."(4) This clause, outlined in section 1(d) of the board's statement gave rise to the term 'D' lists - lists of "exceptional" employees which were to persist in the frustration of efforts to establish meaningful seniority provisions throughout the 1930s and ensured that no fixed criteria would supplant managerial prerogatives over hiring and lay-offs.

In addition the ALB codes contained the proviso that employees hired after September 1st 1933 should be the first to be laid off irrespective of marital status, unless they fell into the 1(d) category. Also, the period of lay-off which could be construed as a break in service, and thus put workers into the post-September 1933 category, was not specified, the ALB preferring to leave this factor to company discretion. In practice the period varied between six months at Chrysler and Dodge, 12 months at GM and 14 months at Fisher.(5)

The ALB itself and the automobile employers were in reality to exhibit only a lukewarm response to initiatives aimed at establishing some formal regulation on the labour market and working conditions. Leo Wolman, chairman of the ALB, and holding a casting vote over employer representative Nicholas Kelly and labour representative Richard Byrd, was in truth unsympathetic to the problems of labour. He preferred at best only gradual change. "Here we come along to an
industry that has formerly been accustomed to pick anybody they like and suddenly we shut the doors on the whole thing and you get no option. That is bad for the men and for the industry."(6) For their part employers exhibited a mixed reaction even to the diluted codes eventually published by the ALB. Ford had ignored the NRA from the start and continued to do so despite government pressure in the form of withdrawal of contracts for the supply of trucks to New Deal projects such as the C.C.C..(7) The two other major manufacturers, Chrysler and GM nominally accepted the codes and instructed their foremen accordingly.(8)

The codes, had they been administered in the spirit originally intended, would have struck directly at some of the major sources of power of shop-floor supervisors. Seniority and regulation of wages and hours by formal, codified criteria would have undermined the foreman's control over hiring, firing, job allocation, overtime or deadtime and all other factors outlined in previous chapters and which supported the foreman's social position on the shop-floor. In reality the codes, even in their watered down ALB form, were largely ignored at this level. Foremen placed as many as 30% of their men on the now ubiquitous 'D' lists. Discriminatory and arbitrary firing of workers, especially those suspected of union activity, continued apace while foremen used the upper hour limit of 48 hours as a means to lay off more workers and hire in new unprotected labour.(9) Workers knew that foremen still held sway over job security and the ALB's own report, published ten months after the implementation of the codes, conceded that "favouritism, usually charged to the foreman" formed the major part of complaints received.(10) The Henderson Committee report of

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1935 also outlined the failure of the codes, adding that workers often did not fully understand their meaning, a fact which foremen often exploited; "Upon complaint they (the foremen) give answers such as "there is nothing we can do under the code" or "It's the regulations of the NRA..."."(11)

By the time the NRA was declared unconstitutional in 1935 the codes had been revealed, in the automobile industry at least, to be largely ineffective in regularising employment. 61,000 families in Detroit had remained on the relief rolls throughout 1934, and 1935 saw little improvement.(12)

Another aspect of the early initiatives surrounding the NRA was the attempt to foster union representation among the workforce which, had it been successful, would have represented a further constraint upon the role of foremen. This is important not in terms of its success - meaningful unionisation was to come later - but rather in terms of the company union movement fostered by major employers in an attempt to offset unionisation proper.

Company unions, i.e. employee representation schemes overseen by the active involvement of factory management, were not new to American industry in the 1930s. Introduced in significant numbers after the 1914-18 war they rose in number from 145 in 1919 to a peak of 399 in 1928.(13) In the automobile industry there were none in existence before the enactment of NRA legislation in 1933. Almost immediately following this legislation however almost all automobile companies set up some form of representation plan.(14) Given various names such as the Chrysler Employee Representation Plan, the Hudson Industrial Association or the Chevrolet Association and Works Council, they were
all to assume similar forms. (15) The temporary expediency of these organisations as a bastion against the threat of unionisation was obvious to most of those involved. As one contemporary commentary noted, "...employers, in private, are quite frank in their expectation that, with the passage of the more acute phases of the present labour situation their plans will be allowed to die a natural death." (16)

In this holding operation the foreman was to continue to play a central role. In the formal worker-management balanced structure of the councils foremen usually attended as representatives of management. The Dodge Main Works Council for example was composed of 53 employee representatives and 53 members of supervision with issues to be decided by a two-thirds majority. The smaller Chrysler Jefferson Plant Joint Council had 24 members - 12 management and 12 employee representatives. Seven of the management representatives were shop-floor supervisors. At Buick in 1933 a foreman was appointed president of the council. (17)

If not actually sitting on works councils foremen often exerted considerable pressure firstly to ensure that workers voted in favour of initiating such plans and subsequently that the 'right' candidate was elected to office as employee representative. Campaigning by foremen on behalf of preferred workers might involve straightforward 'advice', simple bribes such as cigars, or thinly veiled threats. (18) Underpinning this process was the commonly held belief that foremen were monitoring the ballots cast in elections. "No employee was sure that the ballot he voted was not secretly marked. In some instances the foremen deliberately circulated this rumour". (19) It took considerable courage even to cast a blank ballot or write the name of
a movie star or comic strip character as many voters did.

When the councils were set up the first step in grievance procedures was always to report to the foreman, a process which often intimidated workers who were reluctant to set themselves up for possible victimisation, despite assurances issued by management.\(^{(20)}\) Besides, foremen were often seen to simply ignore requests and official procedures, continuing to act without reference to higher authority.\(^{(21)}\) At Dodge for example the foremen repeatedly canvassed individual workers on issues such as hours and overtime. Works council protests over this matter came to nothing.\(^{(22)}\)

Where employees managed to vote representatives into power who were not favoured by foremen these were often assigned permanent security men to report back to the foreman on their every move.\(^{(23)}\) Where the chosen candidate was that favoured by foremen there was often extensive collusion. Interesting examples of this can be found in papers seized by the UAW in the 1930s and subsequently filed under "Stool Pigeon" reports. At Chrysler in 1936 foremen filed a "Daily Report of Interview with Employee Representative". These reports clearly show that foremen and employee representatives acted in accord to frustrate the spread of genuine unionism. Entries such as "Claims he (the employee representative) is having a tough time keeping men in line in his district as they are getting after him to join the union" and "...constantly being bothered to join the union and that there is a great deal of activity in his district. Spoke of nothing else" are typical of the reports indicating a general consensus of anti-unionism among foremen and their selected representatives.\(^{(24)}\) It must be noted that many genuine union activists managed to get elected and
attempted to work through the company union movement towards real
gains for workers, although with limited success beyond exposing the
limits of the system. Nevertheless for a large number of foremen and
tame representatives the movement represented merely an opportunity to
legitimise their anti-union efforts.

Ford remained the only major automobile manufacturer not to set
up a company union, although the Brotherhood of America established at
the River Rouge plant functioned as a surrogate in many ways,
especially as an anti-union organisation. Foremen at Ford openly
recruited members for the brotherhood frequently paying dues on their
behalf. They also circulated petitions in support of Ford's anti-NRA
stance. (25)

If the major rationale behind the company union movement was to
offset workers needs for independent representation, how far did this
process go in granting concessions which might detract from the power
of the foreman? Discussion of such topics as seniority, grievance
procedures, wages and hours of work was potentially a way of bypassing
the unilateral control of the foreman, but if we examine the record of
companies while company unions were operating we can see that in the
case of each of these issues little progress was made.

At the Dodge Main plant requests for seniority lists by the works
council were repeatedly turned down while foremen continued to run an
unofficial handicap system. When lists were eventually published they
contained only the names of those with over 12 months unbroken
service. This slight concession was to last only a few months however
until by October 1936 the system had reverted to what employee
representatives described as, "the malicious, vicious and unfair
application of seniority" by foremen. At Chrysler's Highland Park plant the employee representatives did not achieve even temporary success. As early as December 1933 seniority and lay-off procedures were matters "not discussed further by the council and were considered as closed".

Similarly wages were considered to be an area beyond the influence of works councils. Wage claims were put forward on numerous occasions by the councils and were invariably rejected by management. Again individual determination by the foreman remained the norm. As the Dodge Main council was told, "...it is the policy of the company that employees shall always be free to take up directly with their foreman all matters that concern them in their work. One of the most frequent of these is the adjustment of individual rates." While the foreman's arbitrary behaviour was never seriously challenged at meetings of works councils the main business tended towards discussion concerning minor aspects of physical plant and safety. Items such as the provision of gloves, repair of windows and car parks, ventilation improvements, speed limits, sweeping of floors and the provision of lunch wagons and drinking fountains usually dominated the agenda. A member of higher management would put in an occasional appearance to deliver a lengthy peroration concerning the good works the council was undertaking and to elaborate the need for management to retain control of wage and output determination.

The failure of these councils to address the real needs of workers was undoubtedly a major stimulus to the bona fide union movement which was eventually to replace them as Jeffreys has noted. The employer's alternative had been tested and revealed to
be unequal to the task of bolstering workers insecurity at the hands of their foremen. Richard Frankensteen, later to emerge as one of the leading figures at the head of the eventually successful UAW, had attempted, in common with many other UAW activists to work from within the works council at Dodge. By October 1936 he had had enough. He told fellow representatives, "This system is the rottenest damn sham anybody was ever forced to go under...if we want to be docile mild and humble and bow down to the foreman I believe perhaps we could, as individuals, we might be able to do more for the men, but are we going to subject ourselves to that in a free country?"(33)

The eventual success of the C.I.O. unions in the mid to late 1930s saw the automobile industry at the forefront of efforts to establish industrial unionism. Following the failure of strikes at Briggs in 1933 and Chevrolet in Toledo in 1935 the United Automobile Workers eventually emerged to secure a series of victories at virtually all major automobile factories. Most notorious were the sit-down strikes at GM's Cleveland and Flint factories - widely seen as a turning point in the general unionisation drive of the period.(34) The UAW signed agreements with Chrysler and GM in 1937 with Ford holding out until wartime government pressure prevailed in 1941.

The dynamics behind this wave of unionisation are many and complex. The state's reaffirmation of NRA principle's through the Wagner Act combined with political developments within the labour movement, notably the AFL - CIO fracture and the incorporation of communist party organisers into mainstream union agitation within the CIO.(35) Workers' backgrounds had also changed as a large number of second generation immigrants brought new forms of radicalism to shop-
Against this general background factors intrinsic to shop-floor life also stimulated the demand for unionisation. The general deskilled, unfulfilling and often dangerous nature of work outlined previous chapters had been exacerbated by the general speed up of the depression years which provided a catalyst for the sit down strike wave.

As we have seen the foreman was intricately involved in the nature and conditions of work undertaken and a central character in the latest phase of speed-up and this was reflected in the immediate demands of the union. As Russell Leach, at Murray Body in the 1930s recalled, "...the problem that we had in practically all of the automobile plants was getting dignity on the job...while we did ask for increased benefits as far as economics was concerned, our primary reason was to get (the foreman) off our backs..." Dignity also meant no longer being subject to the whim of the foreman in the determination of job security. This security was to be enshrined in protection against arbitrary dismissal or favouritism through the setting up of grievance procedures and seniority rights. Seniority demands were particularly popular, most contemporary organisers putting this at the top of the list of requirements called for by members joining the UAW.

Clearly such demands, and their eventual fulfilment engendered a radical redefinition of the limits of power open to shop-floor supervision and an introduction of new levels of accountability for their activities. Before turning to a full examination of these changes however it is necessary, in order to understand the immediate reaction of workers and in view of later developments in foremen's
unionisation, to look at the actions of foremen in the transitional phase as the UAW became established.

Since the early years of the industry foremen had been looked upon by employers as the first line of defence against unionisation. Early advocates of training foremen in industrial relations techniques could be found but the main thrust of applied employer strategy was to use the office of foreman as a spearhead in the constant guerilla war against union activists. Foremen were normally under unambiguous instruction to root out and sack any worker suspected of organising for the union. They received information via a number of routes. Black lists compiled by employers, such as the one used by the Chrysler employment office, were circulated among foremen. Informants supplied names of union members to foremen. Even employee representatives on works councils were later to inform on suspected union activists as noted above. Foremen themselves might act as spies, working in departments where they were not known in order to obtain information. There were also widespread allegations of foremen searching workers clothing in attempts to find proof of union membership.

In the years before the UAW secured agreements a union worker, once detected was simply dismissed or laid off and not recalled. In such cases such a ban could extend across a number of employers. One group of workers, fired from the Graham Paige factory in the 1920s found work in another factory only to be picked out by a visiting Graham Paige foreman and sacked again. With the advent of NRA protection in 1933 this process became marginally more difficult for foremen. Legally at least foremen's activities were restrained by the
mid-1930s, especially following the passage of the Wagner Act. Greenman, in his book "The Worker, The Foreman and the Wagner Act" pointed out that foremen, as employers representatives, should be particularly cautious over union discrimination. "The Wagner Act makes the foreman hold his tongue about union affairs, even if he is asked for advice." With chapter titles such as "Hands Off the Union Or Else" Greenman outlined no-go areas for foremen including no interference, restraint or coercion away from unions, no promotion of company unions, no hiring, firing or laying off on the basis of union membership, and no discrimination against employees who complained to the NLRB. (46) Reality was to prove somewhat different.

The mechanism of the permanent lay-off was still available to avoid accusations of outright discriminatory sacking of union members. If a group of men approached management for a pay rise they could find themselves at the top of the foreman's list when the next round of lay-offs came along. (47) Foremen at Dodge during this period were given special forms to record the names of "undesirable" workers not to be rehired. If a pretext for sacking a worker was needed this could usually be arranged. Some foremen were known to deliberately sabotage production in order to incriminate suspected union activists. (48)

More overt activity against unionisation carried on unrelentingly taking the form of circulation of various petitions and votes of confidence for the company and against the NRA. Foremen were invariably chosen to take these around the shop-floor for signature. When foremen at the Oldsmobile plant took loyalty petitions round the shop floor in 1937 workers refusing to sign were told that they would be ineligible for employee loans during the lay-off period. (49)
Workers knew that refusal to sign what they termed "I love my boss" petitions was perceived as a virtual admission of union membership. When Ford foremen circulated with their "vote of confidence" petitions they openly recorded the badge numbers of those refusing to sign as a method of intimidation. As the early NRA initiatives failed foremen generally returned to more open anti-union activity. This atmosphere is reflected in a telegram sent to its headquarters by one union local, "...undergoing abuses from employers South Bend Woods Parts Co., since NRA was declared unconstitutional, through fear and intimidation through their foremen..."

Foremen also featured prominently in direct action against unions during strike activity. In addition to their expected willingness to recruit and organise blackleg labour or work at the tools themselves, foremen could also be found in violent confrontations with strikers. Foremen at Ford during periods of unrest were openly involved in the formation of anti-union vigilante groups. During the GM strikes foremen were seen to lead anti-union gangs in picket line clashes. Foremen at Guide Lamp in Anderson carried on this type of activity even after the UAW had secured an agreement. In an appeal for calm Victor Reuther advised union members, "Do your work well in the shop. Treat non-union members with friendliness. Our fight is not with them. The foremen who lead the vigilantes and General Motors who tolerate such actions are the people who oppose us."

Thus we can see foremen into the 1930s in general and specific opposition to the spread of unionisation. It would of course be inaccurate to typify all foremen as engaged in this activity. No doubt some foremen took little part, and of those who did many probably did...
so under duress, or through fear of their own jobs. Examples can be found of foremen who stood out against the anti-union trend such as Clifford Shelden, foreman in the trimming section of Ford's River Rouge plant who objected to orders to form a vigilante group and was fired as a union sympathiser. Pretexts for such action might be even more slender. Another Ford foremen was fired for shaking the hand of union lawyer Maurice Sugar at the funeral of the foreman's father. The union press carried numerous references to "friendly" foremen during the 1930s. The 'Pontiac Auto Worker' for example referred to, "...the familiar tale of foremen urging their workers to pin on the (union) button. Being part of management can't spoil them all." Similarly the 'Cadillac Steward' reassured workers that, "Speaking of the Foreman (sotto voice (sic))...more of them are with you than you think."  

While it is difficult to quantify evidence revealing the foremen's general anti-union activity it seems clear that these latter pro-union foremen were in a minority, at least while organising drives were under way. Perhaps an insight into the depth of foremen's anti-union activity can be gauged by the reaction of workers when they gained the security of formal union protection following the signing of agreements. If we turn to an examination of the immediate circumstances surrounding the establishment of union representation we can see that workers new found security created real problems for foremen with a history of repressive activity.  

Quite understandably workers often reacted in extreme ways when first given the protection of an agreed union contract. James O'Connor, foreman at Ford during the union settlement recalled, "The
men were very resentful to anything after this. They didn't want to recognise the foreman. They tore up stuff and threw it all over the place...They were just a bunch of wild men. "(58) Workers put forward a flood of grievances which the new shop-stewards or committeemen were only too pleased to press. "They simply had that new feeling of being able to run to the foreman and say "this is wrong, that is wrong, get something done about it!"."(59)

The union press continued a campaign of vilification aimed at what they perceived to be recalcitrant foremen. Stewards would forward details of "tough" foremen to the papers' editors who would feature them in specialised columns such as the "The Fisher Pan", "Socket
"Socks", "Yellow Yarn" and "The Pontiac Griddle". (60) Foremen at GM's A.C. plant might be given the "Cat-o-nine-tails" award for brutal treatment to workers. Straightforward warnings were also popular such as, "Ted Anderson - 966 - Cut out the driving or we'll burn you sure - on the Griddle." (61)

The union press could also dish out praise for those foremen who were seen to be adapting to the new unions. The Packard Union News for example carried a message from "the boys in Dept. 305" who "appreciate the cooperation they are receiving from their foreman Charley Howard, in regard to having better ventilation and also having their hot boxes fixed..." (62) Other items might defend reasonable foremen against the incursions of others - for example the message to a replacement foreman in the Pontiac Auto Worker of October 1937; "Now that a good (foreman) is on his vacation, why try to upset the work he has built up. That hood line has been running very smoothly". (63)

Some foremen could now be seen to be settling grievances rapidly simply to avoid confrontations with committeemen. (64) Other accounts recall some foremen taking on a new attitude of politeness towards workers. (65) This was at least partly dependent upon the reciprocal attitude of the new committeemen. If they adopted what was deemed by foremen to be a reasonable posture this could often achieve results. Indeed some foremen expressed a feeling of relief with the regularisation of relations between union and employers, and welcomed the chance to dodge the animosity inherent in the old systems of unregulated grievances and more especially, lay-off procedures. (66)

Many foremen remained intransigent however as they attempted to carry on their old style of autocratic rule and continued "bawling
out" workers. Some persisted in active campaigns to discourage men from joining the union or keeping their dues up to date. As Joe Pagano recalled, "There were a lot of foremen who just could not conceive that their absolute power of life and death so to speak, no longer existed. They created quite a problem and each one had to be treated in his own particular way." Older foremen in particular found the adjustment difficult, some never accepting that a major change had taken place.

Employers agreed to transfer some problem foremen and dismissed others. Ford in particular had great difficulties with their foremen who, up until 1941, had operated from a particularly strong power base and had for many years been selected on the basis of the intransigence of their character and their ability to drive production. Many had to be fired. "They had been trained so well in the viciousness of the Ford Motor Company. Even with the union they still had to be just as vicious. Even the Ford Motor Company officials could not break it down." At Chrysler the management reinstated workers who had quit under pressure from driving foremen and made pledges to the union that they would "clean up (their) house" as far as foremen's behaviour was concerned. The remarks of the plant manager at GM Chevrolet are indicative of the frustration which was felt by higher management over the refusal of many foremen to adjust to the new situation. When told that a foreman had acknowledged an error he exclaimed, "Jesus Christ! We finally have a supervisor who admits he made a mistake."

For their part the UAW leadership made some attempts to diffuse the situation. They had turned early on to a strategy of suppressing the use of sit-down strikes as they attempted to consolidate their
position. Sit-downs and wild-cat strikes were a manifestation of a level of rank and file militancy against which the union leadership, despite the cloak of the apparent radicalism of the CIO, sought to establish a controlled, top-down hierarchy of command. (72) "Irresponsible supervision" were seen by the union to be deliberately provoking wild-cat strikes in an effort to discredit the UAW, seen at the local level to be ignoring grievance procedures and unauthorised strike clauses. (73) Increasingly stewards and committeemen were finding that they themselves were expected to discipline workers and enforce production standards. (74) As one committeeman summarised the situation, "Our job was putting out fires... You would be in with the superintendent trying to work out a problem and the plant would go down... It was hard to get discipline because once we got a contract they did not have too much patience... our real job was to educate them not to walk off the job..." (75)

Following the general release of antagonism between newly unionised workers and supervision there also developed the need to establish some sort of long-term working relationship between union representatives and foremen. With regard to this nascent foreman-shop steward relationship most union handbooks stressed the need for a softly-softly approach or at least a degree of give and take. Ford shop stewards were advised, "When the foreman is right, give him his due... but... If a foreman doesn't negotiate in good faith don't cast reflections on his parentage. Write up a grievance against him." (76) In the UAW shop stewards' guidelines "How To Win for the Union" a section was reserved for "The Care and Feeding of Foremen". This recognised the problem of educating foremen as "one of the toughest
the union has to face", and advocated the use of psychology in the finest 'human relations' style; "...(the foreman) is also a human being. Approach him like one. Find out what he is interested in. If he is a baseball fan, a little talk about batting averages won't hurt anything. Or if he likes fishing..."(77) In many cases of course the foreman-shop steward relationship remained unresolved and confrontational well after the UAW had become an established part of shop-floor life.

The initial chaotic period of foreman-shop steward conflict threw into sharp relief the lack of training available on both sides. In many ways it was the shop steward who was better equipped. The employers and their foremen had spent most of their effort over previous years in simple intimidation against union activity and very little time considering how they should handle the situation should the UAW prevail. The stewards for their part had a better idea of the kind of bargaining structures likely to emerge if, as they hoped, the union came out on top. To be sure, some union representatives were very inexperienced(78) but on balance the foreman had the worst of the situation. This problem was compounded by the fact that, as we have seen, many foremen were selected purely on the basis of their domineering presence on the shop-floor. Cases emerged of foremen who were unable to read or write to any great extent. (79) Such men were at a loss to deal with the new complexity of written grievance procedures. Shop steward Bernard Hoffman recounts in his diary receiving an unfavourable ruling on the eligibility of one worker for backpay. By judicious underlining of selected parts of the transcript he was able to fool the foreman into authorising the payment. (80)
The problem of inarticulate or illiterate foremen was especially acute in areas where ethnic or racial prejudice had governed promotion. In the Ford foundry where black workers were concentrated and overseen by white foremen, the latter ran into immediate problems. Willis Ward recalled that, "...the smart coloured fellow was elected steward, head of shop. He could read and write, could keep facts and records, and we found that the foreman, because they were selected on a prejudicial basis, couldn't come in and answer their intelligent complaints."(81)

Shop stewards often compounded the problems which foremen had in adjusting to unionisation by deliberately bypassing early grievance procedures. They openly encouraged workers to talk to their union representative first, without reference to the foreman and thus giving the shop-steward the edge in opening negotiations. Indeed the official UAW guidelines advised such an approach in advising stewards to "Guard against the foreman who encourages workers to settle grievances individually..."(82) Evidence also suggests that foremen were initially intimidated by the level of their responsibility in the new procedures. Often they would refuse to sign grievance slips in the mistaken impression that they were committing themselves to some decision, being unaware that this action merely signified acceptance of the first step of the grievance procedure. Others were fearful of making any decision and thus many simple grievances, which would normally be easily settled, were "kicked upstairs".(83)

These problems of unease with the new procedures were in part due to the slow response of many managements in terms of equipping their foremen with training or documentation. In many cases the foreman was
simply left to his own devices. As one foreman testified, "...we were trained to oppose the development of the union. You can imagine what we as individual foremen faced after the union had won the election...we had to learn overnight, without any help from the company, how to handle the situation."(84) Employers did slowly turn towards some form of formal industrial relations training for foremen. Outlines of the foreman's position and responsibilities under the Wagner Act were distributed to some supervisors for example.(85) Commentators such as Donald Lescohier had urged early on that foremen should be equipped to deal uninterrupted with grievances, stressing that, "...no one should come between (the foreman) and his men." (86) He went on to advocate an adoption of the standard human relations conference and role play methods of training in an industrial relations context. Goodrich, Socony-Vacuum and Eastman Kodak were among those who went on to use these methods.(87) The "schooling" of foremen was supplemented in some cases by a loose-leaf foreman's manual where updated union agreements could be filed.(88)

In general however the major automobile companies remained remiss in the training of foremen or even keeping them informed of developments. Ford for example did not bother to issue their foremen with copies of the UAW agreement signed in 1941.(89) G.M. simply issued bulletins advising their supervisors to adopt a stone wall position on certain issues. Production standards were one such issue; "avoid personal or individual conflict. The rate of production has now been fixed...If you are questioned there is but one answer; "the union has agreed...""(90) Chrysler had no fixed written guide to procedures for their foremen to follow until 1944, seven years after the signing
of the first agreements. (91) Similarly Hudson did not make any attempt to train their foremen in industrial relations until November 1943 when the strains of wartime production began to compound already difficult conditions. (92) In many cases foremen had to resort to asking shop stewards to furnish them with copies of grievance procedures etc.. (93)

The National War Labour Board (NWLB) enquiry of 1944 into the foreman's position in the automobile industry was struck by this lack of attention to the training and informing of foremen. As one member of the board noted, "...the thing that surprises me...in discussing this is the lack of knowledge of the contractual relationship between the union of the rank and file worker and the employer by the foremen." (94) Early training programmes, where they had been applied had been proved to be largely ineffective and were not maintained. Again at the NWLB, an illuminating exchange took place:

"ELLiot (Chrysler foreman): ...at one time we had a school to explain (the union contract), but I haven't been for several years.

ISERMAN (Chrysler's lawyer): Do you know that there have been many changes in the contract since you were there?

ELLiot: No.
ISERMAN: You know there was a contract entered into in 1939?
ELLiot: I believe we went to school on that.
ISERMAN: Do you know when the last contract was signed?
ELLiot: No." (95)

During this initial phase of confrontation and eventual accommodation with the establishment of unionisation, and as foremen
began slowly to learn by their mistakes, the boundaries of shop-floor power were being redrawn. Whole areas, previously the under sole determination of the foreman were now becoming enshrined in fixed procedures. Formal agreements with unions and the procedures they incorporated must not of course be taken as first hand evidence of what actually occurred on the shop-floor. Agreements made between management and union leaders had in effect to be constantly renegotiated informally between workers, shop-stewards and foremen. Written rules did not guarantee adherence by those who put them into practice. With this in mind it is worth examining, section by section, some of the major areas covered by agreements to see firstly, to what extent they proposed to circumscribe foremen's control and secondly, how far these new procedures actually succeeded in achieving this circumscription.

Firstly the issue of seniority - always a major facet of foremen's power and one of the primary areas of concern to workers involved in the unionisation drive. Early attempts at seniority through the NRA codes had proved largely ineffective as we have noted. UAW measures were to be more effective. The earlier NRA schemes had been set up in an attempt to give priority in employment to workers with family commitments. Union schedules had no such wider social aspect, advocating a strict chronology as far as possible i.e. last in - first out. In fact the UAW national leadership fixed no definitive, universal rule regarding seniority clauses, leaving this instead to the discretion of plant level bargaining committees. Most agreements followed a common pattern however. A probationary period, usually six months, was stipulated wherein new employees had no
protection and thereafter seniority was determined either plant-wide or departmentally and within occupational groups. Individual contracts did vary considerably in this latter respect. One GM agreement for example had 76 separate non-interchangeable occupational definitions i.e. each defined job having its own seniority table. Another Ford agreement had only 21 such groups. 

Many agreements also stipulated an overall reduction of hours throughout the plant, usually to a 32 hour week, before lay-offs began to be implemented. Rehires were simply applied in reverse order to lay-offs.

The administration of these seniority rules continued to cause numerous problems however. Foremen and committeemen had to get used to some quite complex group definitions and again there appears to have been a period of conflict while the procedures were broken in. An examination of the 1937-38 minutes of the GM Chevrolet UAW local reveals that, in this particular lay-off season (the first in which the new procedures came to be applied) there was a great amount of confusion and disagreement. Workers were brought back to work while their specific jobs were not yet in production, seniority lists were not distributed to committeemen and demoted workers were accused of 'bumping off' other employees i.e. in the process of being downgraded they forced the lay-off of a lower grade worker. Management and unions also had great difficulty agreeing the levels of production necessary to require lay-offs and recalls.

Within these levels of flexibility regarding the interpretation of procedures foremen still held some vestigial degree of power. Most controversial was their position in respect of 'exceptional employee' lists. All union agreements carried a clause concerning the lay-off of
certain workers deemed to be more indispensable than others. The UAW-Chrysler agreement definition is somewhat typical; "Exceptional employees are employees whose work in the judgement of the management is of exceptional value to the department."(102) Just as the 'D' lists under the NRA codes had provided a loophole for employers to bypass seniority so too did this exceptional employee clause. In this issue foremen are important in two ways. Firstly they controlled who went on the lists and, secondly they were expected to be on it themselves.

Foremen's power to decide who was and who was not an exceptional employee ensured a resumption of the allegations of abuses of privilege common in pre-union days. Since the list might encompass 30 or 35 percent of the total workforce accusations of favouritism, perhaps not surprisingly, mirrored the levels of the early 1930s. Workers at Fisher Body in 1938 with over 20 years service found themselves laid off in advance of workers with many years less service.(103) When challenged about bias in selection for the lists foremen might react by threatening not to retain anyone.(104) The situation was exacerbated by the degree of secrecy surrounding the lists which were not made available to many committeemen in the early stages.(105) Foremen were also accused of transferring workers to safe jobs in the event of forthcoming lay-offs.(106) In addition foremen could always lay workers off before they became entitled to a place on the seniority list i.e. before the probationary period was completed. At GM's Ternstedt plant foremen openly signed release forms writing "to avoid attaining seniority" in the explanation section.(107)

That foremen themselves automatically went on the exceptional employee list, regardless of seniority was also a cause of continuing
friction. Foremen retained during the lay-off period were often accused of working at production jobs. Management quite openly claimed the right to put their foremen to work. As the manager of GM Chevrolet put it when confronted, "Listen Mr., if I want to go out there and run a machine myself I am going to do it." Attempts by the union to stop foremen doing the work of those laid off seem to have been largely unsuccessful well into the 1940s. The grievance records of Chrysler UAW Local 7 for example contain repeated references to foremen setting up jobs, running production and doing their own inspection.

Not only current foremen but also demoted foremen were often protected from lay-offs on the basis that they might be repromoted when work picked up. Moreover these demoted foremen could be placed in work in any department in the plant. Relief men could also be granted privileged status. Even workers deemed to be "potential" relief men and supervisors were designated exceptional employees. This practice if left unchallenged meant that virtually any employee could legitimately be protected from lay-offs.

The UAW experienced uneven success in enforcing the application of a fair system of seniority. The foregoing abuses were a constant source of friction. By 1944 however the Bureau of Labour Statistics was reporting that their series of management interviews had revealed that seniority administration was entirely the prerogative of the union. The UAW however continued to rebut this as "more theory than practice." It must be noted that some foremen adhered to the new rules and were glad to be relieved of the burden of deciding who should work and who should not. As one foreman put it, "Seniority is a
It used to be that...I was subjected to harrowing stories of wives in hospitals, sickness in the family etc...I am not a callous son of a bitch but what could I do?...Now that we have seniority I have no choice in who is to be laid off...Seniority has made my job much easier and pleasant."(113) Generally the conflict persisted, at least until the more rigorously enforced regulation of the labour market which came with state intervention in wartime.

Other major areas of the foreman's power threatened by the onset of unionisation included hiring, firing, transfer, promotion and wage determination. Some of these aspects overlap into seniority procedures but all were essentially a separate concern and will be dealt with in turn.

Hiring of new employees continued much as before although the advent of unionisation caused a significant expansion in the role of employment departments and thus affected the ad hoc way in which hiring had been undertaken in previous years. Foremen continued to file requisitions for labour to employment offices and retained the right of final decision, usually after a shop-floor interview, as to a candidate's suitability.(114) Informal labour market connections also carried on as before in this sense, with the foreman remaining in a pivotal position.(115) Once hired a new worker's continued employment was at the almost complete discretion of the foreman for the probationary three or six month period. Following that new levels of security for employees were to be derived from union negotiated employment protections, manning levels, formal grievance procedures etc..
Wage determination was one area where foremen were almost entirely stripped of discretionary powers. Union negotiated rates and scales, becoming automatic following probationary periods, replaced the broad bands within which foremen had previously operated. All workers on the same operation were now to receive equitable rates of pay. Foremen could still exert some pressure where piecework systems were in operation, for example by authorising payment for work ultimately rejected due to faulty tools or materials. The days of individual pay rises or reductions dished out in arbitrary fashion were now gone however. As the employment manager of GM Chevrolet insisted in response to a worker's appeal for a pay rise, "(The foreman) never promised that man a rise and he never will promise a man a rise nor will any other foreman because it must first pass this office." "Dead Time" - the practice of keeping workers waiting unpaid around the factory while production was delayed was also abolished, thus removing another method by which foremen had previously been able to manipulate wages. Overtime working also became controlled and distributed evenly by the establishment of rotas. Union officials kept their own overtime rotas to ensure even allocation and to dispute allegations of favouritism.

Unions achieved less success in gaining control over decisions pertaining to transfers and upgrading. With regard to transfers union-management contracts were usually phrased so that seniority applied only when "ability, merit and capacity" were equal in the unilateral opinion of management. This ensured that in effect no seniority principle could apply. Foremen could thus still arbitrarily transfer workers and often did so as an indirect means of punishment.

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This also led to overlapping problems where seniority was determined on a departmental basis, a newly transferred worker losing his seniority rating. (121)

Moving workers into a higher job classification also remained the prerogative of foremen. Again managements inserted qualifying phrases in clauses governing upgrading such as, "if, in the opinion of management, they are qualified" and "based primarily on merit and ability." (122) Foremen usually put recommendations for better jobs through on special reports. This practice caused continued friction with union representatives who continued to press for seniority in upgrading. Stewards at Chrysler for example complained that, "the supervision in Department 73 have a long record of promoting men to a higher classification without any regard to seniority, claiming that they will promote anyone they please." (123) Foremen also decided on candidates for any training courses which might periodically arise. (124)

Promotion to the foreman's job itself also continued as before, with management retaining absolute rights. Promotion ladders tended to be fixed - utility or relief man to assistant foreman to foreman and so on - usually decided by those on the rung of the ladder immediately above. (125) Union pressure usually applied to the job at the bottom of the ladder, the relief man in the case of GM. Success was limited since managements were reluctant to give way on even this modest promotion. GM's plant manager stressed that the relief man was "a stepping stone to supervision...Just because a man has seniority does not mean a thing concerning promotion." (126) The relief man's job was also controversial in that it assured a place on the 'preferred
employee' list when lay offs came around, and again, as with promotion in general, widespread accusations of favouritism are to be found.(127)

The control of discipline and the ultimate sanction of dismissal was clearly one area where unionisation should have had a major influence over the powers of foremen. Again a complex rearrangement of practices emerges. Dismissal on grounds such as union activity, to create room for another worker or by some act of caprice on behalf of foremen was abruptly curtailed. Dismissals continued but now a set of procedures was laid down and termination offences clearly categorised. Procedure now usually involved the foreman completing a dismissal report and forwarding this to the employment department, reminiscent of the scheme temporarily in force at Ford in 1913. The union was often successful in the early years in obtaining a reversal of decisions and the knowledge that a grievance might result clearly coloured the foreman's decision in any marginal cases or those which might be open to accusations of discrimination against union representatives. Nevertheless foremen were still involved in a great many dismissal cases and evidence suggests that the role of the employment department, though expanded, remained one of rubber stamping the foreman's decision in cases not directly involving union pressure.(128)

The new reliance upon "procedure" accounts for the many claims put forward by foremen of this period that their powers of dismissal had in fact been seriously curtailed. The findings of two contemporary surveys chart the decline in the number of foremen who considered themselves to have absolute right of dismissal. Figures fell from 55%
in 1940 to 13% in 1944.\textsuperscript{(129)} At least part of this change is attributable to wartime labour market regulations in addition to union procedures, nevertheless many foremen were to view the latter as the primary cause as evidenced by numerous statements before the NWLB hearings in 1944.\textsuperscript{(130)}

It is clear that foremen could, after unionisation, no longer administer the ultimate sanction of dismissal in the same random fashion as previously. In the case of lesser disciplinary activity the presence of union protection also made a major difference. Foremen did retain a range of penalties which they could administer. Workers could be sent home for a number of days - one to three at Packard for the first offence, five at Chrysler. Examples of offences incurring this penalty include fighting, "loafing", drinking, gambling, smoking, unofficial absence, "not working correctly" or abusing the foreman.\textsuperscript{(131)} The latter would be certainly worth a discharge in pre-union days. Other forms of punishment included the downgrading of workers to a lower class of work, and putting workers on special reports equivalent to three months probation. These reports were commonly referred to as "death warrants", any subsequent indiscipline resulting in the sack.\textsuperscript{(132)}

The "death warrant", as with forms in support of other disciplinary action, needed the countersignature of the union representative however. Certainly the need to obtain this tacit support was bound to limit the likelihood of spurious punishments being inflicted. Also many disciplinary actions were doubtless rejected successfully by union representatives. Quantifiable evidence on this point is difficult to find since disputed cases went
unrecorded. Stewards were likely to acquiesce in obvious cases but foremen frequently complained before the NWLB hearings that union representatives held too much power of veto and frequently forced the abandonment of disciplinary action through the threat of invoking full grievance procedures. (133)

A final aspect of foremen's power to be affected by unionisation was that of control over the pace and direction of production. As outlined in previous chapters the power of the foreman in this respect had been significantly reshaped during the phase of acute technological and organisational change up to the 1920s. Significant areas of worker discretion, and hence foremen's discretion had been left however and this situation was left largely unaltered by the advent of unionisation. Codification of procedures could not impinge too closely on activities relating to production levels and methods which existed in the informal sphere. Group regulation of output was equally likely to occur around the contest to fix rates for payment within a universally agreed pay scale as it was when pay levels were uneven. This is confirmed by the U.S. Senate enquiry of 1945 into Detroit factory practices which was to uncover widespread informal production quotas in operation. (134)

Official union activity in production regulation differed at local and national level. The international leadership of the UAW abandoned at an early stage any pretensions about controlling production and concentrated instead on bargaining around pay and conditions related issues. Local initiatives did attempt to exert some controls over production however, if only in terms of the pace of output. (135) Control mechanisms on paced lines were normally locked up
by union agreement thus line speeds could now theoretically only be altered under the scrutiny of a shop steward. (136)

Piece work rates were another area in which unions attempted intervention. At GM the UAW locals' first priority was to abolish piece work altogether and replace it with fixed day rates. Once established, using the average of the previous three months output, foremen were instructed to have no truck with disputes involving speeds or rates as these were now fixed. (137) Elsewhere the process of setting rates and speeds under various remaining piecework related systems could now be overseen by union representatives and where this was not done an appeals machinery involving subsequent retiming could usually be resorted to. Such appeals were not necessarily binding and in the event inexperienced stewards lost many appeals in the early stages, forcing many locals to train their officials in time study. Despite such early problems this new system of monitoring and appeals represented a significant shift away from the days when foreman could increase output quotas without reference to anyone.

Some foremen were still prone to push production by various means however. Manning levels might be reduced while output remained constant, workers might be expected to increase the number of tasks in their cycle for a given line speed, or another shift's production held up as a target, with workers unable to dispute output figures. (138) Foremen were still widely accused of "bumping up" production figures in an attempt to force subsequent shifts to produce faster. (139) Using this method foremen then had recourse to the locked line speed controls to fend off complaints by stewards. In one such altercation at GM the foreman insisted that, "the job was set by the day shift and
was locked, and that he would not unlock it if he had to shut the whole plant."(140) Still more foremen simply stuck to their old tactics of standing over workers and constantly urging faster production, although now they were as likely as not to find themselves the subject of a formal grievance.(141)

In summary, some major aspects of the foreman's power underwent substantial change in the early years of unionisation. Seniority provisions meant a hitherto unknown sense of security for most workers and clearly reduced the foreman's propensity to exert pressure or practice favouritism. Wage determination also moved substantially beyond the foreman's grasp. Dismissal and discipline were now mediated at least partially through the offices of union and the labour relations department. If hiring and promotion remained much as before and production control continued under the same process of informal negotiations and confrontations between foremen and workers this was overlaid with the shift in levels of security and discipline. Foremen now had to deal with a new set of relationships on the shop floor as they found themselves in this tripartite arrangement with union representatives and an expanded industrial relations department. The precise nature of this new relationship is of crucial importance. Much was to be written following the unionisation of workers, and later during the attempted unionisation of foremen, of the "marginalisation" of foremen in industry. Epithets such as "forgotten men", "cinderella of industry" and assertions that foremen were now "inhabiting a twilight zone" became commonplace in industrial relations related literature.(142) To assess the validity of this assumption of the bypassing of foremen in the new proceduralised industrial relations it
is necessary to examine the precise position of the foreman, particularly in the newly installed grievance procedures, and also to examine the relationships which developed between foremen and shop stewards.

Formal grievance procedures varied from plant to plant but all tended to conform to the same basic pattern of five or six steps leading ultimately to some form of arbitration. Only the initial two or three steps need concern us here i.e. those involving the participation of foreman or shop steward. Under the individual bargaining system which preceded unions, workers were supposedly free to approach the foreman directly with any query or complaint. Formal union-company agreements usually sought to retain this arrangement as a first step in grievance procedures. (143) Virtually all such agreements were written in ambiguous terms however. Phrases such as "Workers should first take the grievance up with the foreman..." or "may take the matter up with the foreman" characterise the non-mandatory nature of this first step. (144) Many procedures gave the worker a choice of consulting the foreman or union representative first. A worker need only consult the foreman to request a consultation with his or her union official. (145) At some plants even this cursory consultation with the foreman was not necessary. At Chrysler's Desoto plant for example workers could simply place a grievance in a box and await the union representative on his round. (146) At this stage of the procedure grievances were discussed orally. No records were kept of the amount of grievances reaching this first step, or of how many were subsequently settled either by the foreman or union representative alone, or by consultation between the
two. Estimates proffered of settlement at this stage vary widely - between 40% and 90% - but must remain the subject of conjecture. (147)

Where agreement could not be reached at the initial oral level, the grievance procedure then moved on to the first written stage as formal submissions were passed on to the labour relations office to be dealt with at committee level. This marked the passing of the grievance out of the control of foremen and into the hands separate, remote, employment department workers. It thus became a major area of concern to foremen that the first step should at least involve them, that they should be properly consulted and adequately informed before the grievance went 'upstairs' to the office. Linked to this concern was the amount of time and freedom allowed to union representatives in consultation of workers and investigation of grievances.

A union representative roaming the shop-floor at will and consulting privately with workers was clearly anathema to many foremen, especially those with a background of untrammelled power and anti-union activity. Yet in many cases the union representative was allowed a fairly loose rein. At Hudson for example the stewards were required to work only the first and last hours of each day. Although an official pass was needed in order to leave the job these were being issued at an average of twelve per day for each steward in the early years of unionisation. The chagrin brought about by this arrangement is evident in the remarks of Hudson foreman Joe Hornet. "Well, Hudson, in their contract with the UAW-CIO have been very generous. In fact so generous that we have found it almost impossible...to make a chief steward do a days work or job." (148) A survey over a one week period at Chrysler in November 1944 found that none of the stewards on any of
the three shifts did any production work at all. Management and foremen did attempt to enforce some restrictions on the free movement of stewards but these were largely ineffective. Many foremen remained sceptical of the true nature of much alleged union business, accusing stewards of taking up their time discussing "the weather or baseball scores" and then subsequently informing foremen they had settled some non-existent grievance. There was no strictly logistic reason why foremen could not keep track of stewards movements and activities since foremen and stewards were often in the same ratio to workers.

Perhaps more serious were concerns by foremen that they were being systematically excluded from grievance procedures as part of deliberate strategy by union representatives. At Chrysler for example the anxiety was fuelled by the practice of shop committeemen bringing in chief stewards before consulting foremen and often refusing to discuss the grievance in question with the foreman, even if it had been settled. At Chevrolet the union representatives objected to the foreman even discussing a grievance with any worker who might be involved. Many foremen complained that they were further eliminated from the procedure as stewards and chief stewards took complaints directly to superintendents or the labour relations office without recourse to the foreman on the spot. Foremen at Packard claimed there was no point in them keeping informed of union agreements and procedures since they were never consulted.

The union representatives began to exclude foremen from grievance procedures from a number of motives. Firstly they often maintained that foremen had not the authority or were reluctant to deal with any
but the most basic complaints - those usually settled at the oral level. (157) This opinion was reinforced in many ways by the visible exclusion of foremen from subsequent steps in the procedure. Whereas union shop-floor representatives often had a place on the committee which met with the company labour relations teams to discuss grievances foremen very rarely attended - even where grievances directly concerned actions taken by particular foremen. (158) For their part company officials maintained that if it was one man's word against the that of the foreman then they would assume the foreman to be correct. (159) Many foremen remained unconvinced. One Chrysler foreman summed up the general situation. "If a man comes to me and there is a door open and a draft blowing in, and he wants it closed, okay, but regular grievances, they are not bringing them to me at all. They are taking them up with the general meeting. You go back there to Desoto, you will find that I haven't had a grievance, a written grievance with any name signed, unless maybe a few years ago, in a long time." (160)

In many ways this circumventing of the foreman was a logical outcome of plant-wide bargaining. Individual foremen were bound to be left out of negotiations which now took on the scale of official company policy. Grievances which could be said to effect or set precedents for "company policy" were deemed to be most expeditiously settled between trained industrial relations personnel or higher management and shop committees, rather than individual foremen. (161) Some companies were more stringent than others in allowing their foremen a certain degree of leeway in settling disputes. GM for example, as we shall see later in chapter nine, were to adopt a more
enlightened approach to the general training and bestowal of industrial relations responsibilities upon the foreman than Ford or Chrysler. Although GM did more to protect their foremen's position at the first step of grievance procedures, and made attempts to involve them in subsequent proceedings these were only differences by degree. (162) (It must be noted however that the subsequent unreceptiveness of GM foremen to the recruiting efforts of the Foremen's Association of America (FAA) - the major foreman's union of the 1940s - was no doubt due in part to this particular company strategy.) Foremen in general felt themselves becoming increasingly remote and ill-informed of company policy. Robert Keyes, foreman at Ford and subsequently head of the FAA, summed up the situation as many foremen saw it, "...today the average foreman is not part of management in any sense. He is hired to supervise the work of certain people. He does not participate in the formulation of any policy. Generally speaking he learns about company policy from the shop stewards." (163)

The foreman's dissatisfaction with the reshaping of power inherent in the restructuring of industrial relations seems not to have been reflected in any overt hostility to the nascent power of industrial relations or personnel departments. Foremen's attitudes generally seem to be one of grudging acceptance. This may be partly so because the two seldom came into direct contact. Union representatives, as we have seen, tended to liaise with office personnel as written grievances were processed or through contact at weekly meetings, from which foremen were generally excluded. The perception of many foremen was that it was not so much the usurpation
of areas of their power by another grade of worker as the absorption of that power into the structure of bureaucracy which had taken place. Employment and labour relations departments were merely the administrators of that bureaucracy.\(^{164}\) For example, in response to questioning about the authority which the labour relations department at Chrysler exerted over supervision its director claimed power "only in enforcing the terms of the contract. In other words, the labour relations man enforces the terms of the contract on management as well as labour."\(^{(165)}\)

In addition to arbitrating over the stages of grievance procedures labour relations departments expanded their activities in the provision of administrative back-up for certain supervisory functions, compiling seniority lists, keeping attendance and timekeeping records, compiling information relating to workers suitability for promotion and so on. It could be argued that these tasks represented a service to foremen as much as an erosion of their responsibility, but there is no doubt that the official compilation of such material, be it accessible to the union or merely for company use, curbed many of the possibilities which foremen had previously had for manipulation of jobs, wages and promotion.

The most important change brought about by unionisation, at least in its initial phases, remained that of the effect of foremen having to deal with the nascent power of the shop-floor union representative rather than the remote offices enhanced by increasing levels of bureaucracy. To be sure not all foremen were content to surrender power or accept marginalisation. As noted above, some intractable foremen were relocated or fired following their inability to adjust.
There were certainly many others who continued to openly treat union representatives with contempt, conducting negotiations in terms of a stream of profanities and abuse and assertions that they were the boss in their own department. Foreman Ed Freeman at Chevrolet for example told stewards, "You'll never get any place writing a grievance out against me, I never give you anything. I just love grievances like this, you are wasting your time." (166) Some foremen continued to take every opportunity to undermine the union, especially during the war when stewards could be accused of working against the war effort. (167) Some continued the tactic of attempting to provoke wildcat strikes, bringing local union officials into conflict with both the company and their own international. (168) Stewards were sometimes locked out of the foreman's office while workers were being disciplined, others were constantly harassed on their jobs and frequently moved from one department to another. (169) Shop stewards who subsequently lost their union office had to be particularly careful as anti-union foremen saw their opportunity to exact what they saw as some form of revenge. Such workers could often expect transfers to the worst jobs or general provocations in the hope that they might react and be liable to suspension or dismissal. (170) Some foremen continued in their attempts to divide workers or use their office to influence stewards. Bernard Hoffman's foreman for example said he was "going to take care of" the steward if he dropped an attempt to get a departmental pay rise. "He said individual rises was the stuff and if we held out for a general increase we would never get it." (171)

The overall picture of the foreman's reaction to the power of the union once established, and his attitude to the union's shop floor
representative, is thus a complex one. Certain aspects of their power now gone, some foremen did indeed claim to have been "forgotten", to be mere men in the middle in a situation of conflict now entirely beyond their control. Others as we have seen bucked against the new system of industrial relations and the powers of shop stewards. Many simply became resigned their new position, passively accepting their changed role and doing their best to accommodate, or at least come to some working arrangement with shop stewards. Bernard Hoffman himself noted that, by 1942, his foreman was "cooperating very well now."(172) The testimony presented before the Senate hearings on manpower problems in Detroit in 1945 illuminates this latter trend:-

"Mr. BONE (foreman at Packard): ...There is never a move I make in the department that (the shop steward) doesn't know it...If the night shift is short a man he even allows me to put an extra man in there...

Mr. MEADER (Senate Committee): You say "he allows you to"!

Mr. BONE: Well, he says it is alright, and he could say "No"."(173)

In summary, this chapter has traced the impact upon the foreman of the evolution of unionisation among production workers. From an initial position of general anti-union activity and uncompromised power over most aspects of shop floor life the foreman had now to recognise that unions were an established fact and that certain aspects of supervisory power had been taken from the foremen's realm, or at least were now mediated through the intervention of a growing
formal industrial relations bureaucracy. To be sure, unions did not wrest control over all aspects of production. Many elements of control, as we saw in chapters one and two, had essentially left the shop floor in the organisational and technological restructuring which accompanied the shift to mass production. Informal control - especially the regulation of the pace of production - continued as a process of covert negotiation between workers, foremen and production departments, individual foremen deciding on their particular allegiance.

The extent to which unions in general aim to exert control over all aspects of production or the general direction of corporate life is the subject of a major debate. In the sense of shop floor life, which is our primary concern here, we can see that, in spite of the compromises on union control imposed in the macro sphere, the implementation of union procedures codified and routinised important controls which had remained with the foreman into the 1930s. Seniority provisions in particular meant that once the probationary period was complete, it became increasingly difficult for foremen to manipulate the jobs market for their own ends. Preferred employee lists did mean that foremen retained significant controls in this field, but for the majority of workers there is no doubt that seniority rules engendered a new level of security over keeping a job, and new levels of protection from daily, weekly and seasonal fluctuations in employment. Wages levels were now fixed at a general rate and if the conflict around that rate continued it was no longer a personal conflict between foreman and worker, but one between union and management. Grievance procedures had shackled many foremen in their arbitrary
dispensing of rough discipline and provided a new route by which complaints could be transmitted. Indeed the formal grievance structure had effectively done away with the need to inform foremen of complaints in many cases and, as we have seen, led to their bypassing and alleged marginalisation.

Foremen as a group had reacted in different ways to this restructuring of control. Some had vigorously resisted the change, clinging to their old methods of autocratic rule. Of these some had been dismissed or transferred, more had continued in frustrated opposition, attempting to subvert union influence or compromising and hampering the work of union representatives as much as possible. Still others had accepted change, albeit grudgingly, and attempted to modify their work patterns to take account of their new responsibilities. This in spite of the general unpreparedness and lack of managerial foresight in training foremen in formal industrial relations. Other foremen, certainly in the minority, had welcomed the change which unionisation ushered in, glad to be rid of the invidious responsibility of decisions affecting workers livelihoods in a period of general depression.

The advent of industrial unionisation was to have further ramifications for supervision beyond redrawing the boundaries of foreman's power however. The spread of unionisation into the ranks of supervision itself was to follow in the wake of the success of the UAW, and it is to the complex dynamics of that movement, in particular the foundation of the Foreman's Association of America, that we must now turn. This union, the product of a combination of a new phase of wartime restructuring of production, the influence of production
workers unions, protective state legislation and labour market changes, was to exert an influence on the shape of post war supervision and industrial relations far in excess of its numerical impact, and reveal the essentially contradictory and problematic position of industrial supervision in a unionised and increasingly bureaucratised environment to a wide audience of employers, legislators and others in the business of shaping industrial relations.
Footnotes: Chapter Four

1. See Theda Skocpol, 'Political Response to Capitalist Crisis - Neo-Marxist Theories of the State and the Case of the New Deal', Politics and Society Vol. 10, No. 2, 1980;
   Ralph Miliband, 'The State in Capitalist Society', Quartet 1982;

   Sidney Fine, 'The Automobile Under the Blue Eagle' passim.
   On the issue of state support for the right of workers to unionise the National Industrial Recovery Act section 7(a) specified that, "Employees shall have the right to organise and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing..."

3. The ALB took the form of a tribunal initially composed of a 'neutral' chairman, Dr. Leo Wolman, management representative Nicholas Kelley of GM, and Richard Byrd representing labour.

4. Statement issued by the ALB, Detroit, May 18th 1934.
   See also Sidney Fine, Sit Down: The General Motors Strike of 1936-37, U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor 1967, p. 31;


6. WPA Hiring Policies Report, p. 39. Wolman had earlier expressed satisfaction that the employers were doing their best to "straighten out" employment fluctuations before the intervention of the NRA.
He was to reveal himself in the vanguard of anti-union activity by the late 1930s.

For the American Federation of Labour's (AFL) criticism of the ALB see American Federationist Vol xliii, March 1935, p. 246.


8. A Statement of General Motors Corporations Basic Policies Governing Relations with Factory Employees, issued to all GM supervisory staff August 15, 1934, p. 10;
   Chrysler Corporation's Fundamentals of Foremanship, 1935, mimeo in Mary Van Kleek collection, box 29:7, WRALUA.

   Fine, Sit Down, pp. 36-7;
   Chrysler Corporation, loc.cit.;
   UAW Toledo local report, M. J. Manning collection, WRALUA.

    Fine, Sit Down, pp. 60-1.


12. W. Green, Labour Proposals for Revision of Codes for Automobile Manufacturing Industry, AFL, Jan. 24 1935. (Copy in Dillon F.J. collection, box 1, WRALUA.


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Industry in general followed suit. Over 400 new company unions were set up in the wake of the NRA. See Dunn R.W. *Company Unions Today*, International Pamphlets, No.43, 1935, p. 5.

15. A. Hughes, Wayne State University (WSU) oral history collection, p. 1;

Dunn, op.cit., pp. 3-5;

Nash Employee Representation Scheme and Hudson Industrial Association details in Van Kleek, box 29:6,


17. Dodge Main Plant, Employee Representative Meeting Minutes (hereafter Dodge Main Works Council) in Zaremba J. collection box 1, WRALUA:

Chrysler Jefferson Plant Council Minutes, Jan 2 1935, in Van Kleek, box 29;


For Buick see A. Case, WSU Oral History, pp. 2-3.

18. R. Harris, WSU Oral History, p. 3;

Dodge Main Works Council minutes, op.cit., Dec.1 1936;


19. Weick, op.cit., pp. 43-44;

WPA, *Hiring Policies Report*, p. 29 gives similar findings at Hudson and Buick;

Fine, *Sit Down*, p. 43, for Fisher Body.
20. Chrysler Highland Park Plant Works Council Minutes, in Van Kleek box 29:2, April 10 1934;
   Dodge Main Works Council minutes, Feb 21 1936;


23. Ibid.


   National Labour Relations Board (NLRB), Case No. C199 hearing transcript, pp. 30-3;
   Carl Rauschenbush, Fordism, League for Industrial Democracy, N.Y. 1937, pp. 32-3

26. Dodge Main Works Council minutes, July 2 1935; Feb 21 1936; July 7,21,23 1936; Oct 6 1936 (p. 16).

27. Chrysler Highland Park W.C., Dec 5 1933.


29. Dodge Main Works Council minutes, May 19 1936;
   See also Gallagher, WSU Oral History, p. 6.

30. List of matters referred to Dodge Main Works Council during May, June and August 1935, in Zaremba collection, box 1, WRALUA.
Joseph Hattley, WSU Oral History, p. 8; Chrysler Highland Park W.C., Feb 1934, passim.

31. Dodge Main Works Council Minutes, May 19 1936; Chrysler Highland Park W.C., passim.


37. Fine, Sit Down, pp. 54-7; Jefferys, op.cit., pp. 170-1; Hoffman, op.cit., pp. 18-9;

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It must be noted that the notion of total spontaneity in the wave of sit down strikes must be tempered with the acceptance of a high degree of organisation and leadership from officers of the UAW. Mortimer, the Reuthers and Travis for example proved to be excellent strategists, often striking plants with a minority of workers actually sitting in, and frequently staging diversionary tactics to frustrate employers' counter strategies. H. Kraus, UAW organiser, interviewed July 1, 1986.


42. 'Find Proof of Espionage By Buick Foremen', Flint Auto Worker, May 25 1937, p. 4; 'Stool Pigeon Reports', Ross collection box 6, WRALUA.


47. Affidavits, August 1940, James T. Nunn, Ralph Cox and Fred Eilers, UAW P.R. Dept., Ford Motor Co. series box 1, WRALUA.

   Affidavit of George Cranmore, Feb 19 1937, copy in Kraus collection box 10, WRALUA.

49. Lansing Auto Worker, Jan 9 1937, p. 5; Jan 26 1937, p4;
   Cleveland J., WSU Oral History, p. 2;
   Fine, op.cit., p186.

50. Flint Auto Worker, Jan 12 1937, pp. 3-4

51. 'Brown Book of Ford Terror' file, UAW P.R. Dept, Ford Motor Co. series box 1, WRALUA;
   NLRB Case No.C.199 testimony, pp. 30, 48.

52. Telegram to Frank Morrison of AFL, in AFL series 7, box 30, Wisconsin State Historical Society.

53. NLRB, op.cit., p. 31.

   Feb 13 1937 p. 1;
   Punch Press (UAW Local 156), Jan 21 1937;
   Fine, op.cit., p. 213.

55. NLRB, op.cit., p. 42.

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56. Transcript of radio broadcast by Maurice Sugar, Van Kleek coll. box 32:11.

57. Pontiac Auto Worker, June 1 1937; Aug 24 1937, p. 3; Cadillac Steward, June 23 1937, p. 3.


60. Interview with Henry Kraus, editor 'West Side Conveyor', conducted May 1986; C. Haessler, WSU Oral History, p. 20; For a particularly extensive example see Pontiac Auto Worker, Sept 18 1937, which, in addition to the columns mentioned contains a poetry column entitled, "The Portrait of a Foreman I Know" plus a two page spread devoted exclusively to articles about foremen.

61. A.C. Shop Notes, April 17 1940; Pontiac Auto Worker, Sept 24 1937, p. 4.

62. Packard Union News, 1940, p3. (copy in UAW Local 662 collection, WRALUA.

63. Pontiac Auto Worker, Oct 8 1937, p. 2; Flint Auto Worker, July 29 1937.

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64. John Anderson, WSU Oral History, pp. 222-3;  
   J. Cleveland, WSU Oral History, p. 4.

65. Joe Pagano, WSU Oral History, p. 12;  
   A. Case, WSU Oral History, p. 51;  
   Frank Marquart, *The Auto Workers Union and His Job*, Wayne County Educational Ctee., UAW/CIO, p. 4.

66. J. Cleveland, WSU Oral History, p. 16;  
   Orin Peppler, WSU Oral History, pp. 7-8;  

   Chrysler UAW Local 7 Grievance Reports, (in Digaetano collection, WRALUA), Grievance No.203.

68. Pagano, op.cit., p. 12.

69. J. Hattley, WSU Oral History, p. 23-5;  
   Nick Digaetano, WSU Oral History, p. 72-3;  
   Beebe, op.cit., p. 40.

70. J. Eldon, WSU Oral History, p. 14;  
   Beebe, op.cit., p. 41;  


73. Review of the Situation at General Motors, Report published by UAW GM Dept., 1939, p. 4. (Copy in Roeder collection, box 2, WRALUA);

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Letter from Homer Martin to Walter Reuther, Feb 25 1938, in Kraus coll. box 10;
J. Ferris, WSU Oral History, p. 20;
Haessler, op.cit., p. 22.


76. Sparks From the Grievance Anvil, Ford UAW Local 600, Education Department, c.1942, passim;
US Department of Labour, Preparing a Steward's Manual, Division of Labour Standards, August 1943, passim;

77. UAW, How To Win for the Union: A Discussion Paper for UAW Stewards and Committeemen, UAW/CIO Education Dept., Detroit 1941, passim;
Pigors and Sheffield, op.cit., passim.

78. Digaetano, op.cit., p. 71-2;
Eldon, op.cit., p. 22.

79. Hattley, op.cit., p. 25.

80. Bernard Hoffman, Diaries, Dec 10 1941 (in Hoffman collection, WRALUA)


82. UAW, How To Win for the Union, p. 10;
Shop stewards in Britain adopted a similar strategy when their union was established. Fred Blake, union representative at Dagenham in the 1940s - "...in the agreement it always says the lads got a
complaint - go to the foreman first. We always used to say to the lads, "Well, that's alright, but you don't want to look a fool do you? Come to the shop steward first and he'll give you advice." So gradually...you built up your strength that way." Oral history transcript, Steve Tolliday collection.

83. Chevrolet UAW Local 235, Shop Ctee. Minutes, Jan 5 1938; Mar 30 1938, p. 5;  
   F. Fagan, WSU Oral History, p. 11;  
   R. Ozanne, op.cit., p. 222.


85. Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, Labour Relations Training, extract in Dartnell Corp., Special Investigation: Experience of 132 Companies in Improving Relations with Foremen, Ex.20;  
   Research Institute of America, A Guide for Supervisors: Dealing With Employees in Compliance with the Wagner Act, passim.


87. Ibid. p. 23

88. See for example Bell Aircraft Corporation's Know Your Job! Foreman and Leadman's Manual of which 50% is taken up with union procedures. (Copy in Littauer collection, Harvard).


90. Letter to all foremen at the GM Ternstedt plant from J.M.Skinner, General Manager, July 6 1937. (in Ed Cote collection, WRALUA)
91. Chrysler had no fixed written guide for their foremen to follow regarding procedures at least until 1944. Shall the Rank and File Boss the Plant?, Brief prepared for Chrysler Corp. by Rathbone, Perry, Kelley and Drye, and filed before the NLRB, March 20 1946.


95. Ibid., p. 1525;

Memo R.A.Winters to Frank Rising and John Lovatt of NWLB Detroit Regional Board XI, undated, in Witte papers, Wisconsin State Historical Society, passim.


97. UAW, Gains We Have Won, Ford Local 600 Education Dept., Detroit 1941.

98. Although some unions, the United Rubber Workers for example, gave account to family considerations if all other factors were equal, the UAW went strictly by neutral, non personal factors. The UAW-GM Chevrolet agreement of 1941 for example stated, "Seniority of employees with the same seniority hiring date shall be alphabetically determined from 'A' to 'Z' ('A' the oldest man, 'Z' moved first)."

Seniority Rules, 1935 memo prepared by United Rubber Workers/AFL in Manning collection, box 1, WRALUA;
UAW Local 235 - General Motors Corporation Local Seniority Agreement, Oct 23 1941, passim. (copy in Oneka box 3, WRALUA)

For NRA codes see Princeton University, The Seniority Principle in Employment Relations, passim.

99. UAW Local 235 - GM Agreement, op. cit.
UAW Local 906 - Ford Motor Co. Agreement, June 23 1944, (Copy in Ford Dept. UAW collection, box 18, WRALUA;
UAW Research Department, Representative Clauses in UAW-CIO Agreements on Type of Seniority, Detroit 1940, passim.

100. UAW - Chrysler Agreement, April 1 1937, Section II(2). (Copy in Hoffman, box 1, WRALUA);
UAW Research Department, op. cit., pp. 4-5;
In some cases this was reduced to 24 hours.

101. Chevrolet UAW Local 235, Shop Ctee. Minutes, Dec 7, 25 1937; Feb 7 1938; May 19, 26 1938, Sept 1 1938;
See also GM - UAW list of grievances in Ed Levinson collection, box 1 Acc. 85, WRALUA (Plants not specified), for prevalence of grievances on seniority related issues.

102. UAW - Chrysler Agreement, op. cit., section II(2)a. (Author's emphasis)

103. UAW Minutes, Fisher Body Conference, August 1938. (copy in Reuther W. collection, box 18:18, WRALUA;
United Automobile Worker, May 7 1938;
UAW Local 705 Evansville Chrysler, grievance No. 1, Nov 1942;

104. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No. 1714, July 1945. (Copies in Digaetano collection, box 2 Acc. 23, WRALUA)

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105. Letter from C.V. O'Haloran to Elmer Dowell, May 3 1938, in UAW local 216, box 8, corresp., WRALUA.


107. Photocopy of release form in Brown coll. box 18, WRALUA.


Pontiac Auto Worker Sept 24 1937.

110. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, 1944 grievance Nos.1579,1590,1595,1618,1663;
See also UAW Local 262 Chevrolet Drop Forge, grievance No. 1226, Aug 1947.

111. Chevrolet UAW Local 235, Shop Ctee. Minutes, Oct 20 1938; see also Jan 26, July 15, Sept 26, Nov 17 of the same year.

US Bureau of Labour Statistics, War Policies Division, op.cit., pp3-4

113. Foreman interviewed by Joe Brown, Dec 1939. Brown coll. box 18, WRALUA.

114. Chrysler Corp., Shall the Rank and File Boss the Plant?, op.cit., pp8-9;
Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 1822;
Hearings before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of
Representatives, 78th Congress, 1st session, 1943, Full Utilisation of Manpower, pp. 342,358.

115. A survey of Studebaker, conducted in the late 1940s, revealed that over 50% of employees had immediate relatives in the factory. Another 20% had more distant relatives. University of Michigan Survey Research Centre, A Comparative Study of Worker, Steward and Foreman Attitudes in a Unionised Automobile Factory, Ann Arbor, August 1950, p. 7.


120. See for example UAW - GM Agreement, Oct 19 1942. Copy in Haessler coll. box 13, WRALUA.


123. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No.1603, April 1944.

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124. Telegram UAW Local 705, Chrysler Plymouth - Evansville, 1942. In Local 705 coll. box 6, WRALUA.


126. Chevrolet UAW Local 235, Shop Ctee. Minutes, Jan 25 1938; Feb 1 1938; Nov 17 1938.

127. United Automobile Worker (156 Flint Edition), Nov 13 1937, p. 2; Nov 6 1937 p. 3.
   Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 2269-70.

128. Ibid., pp. 70,1823,3458-9;
   Chrysler Corporation, Brief before NWLB Case No.111-4747-D, prepared by Rathbone, Perry, Kelley and Drye, June 1944, pp. 23-4.


130. Slichter Panel Testimony, passim.

131. UAW GM Detroit Forge, Grievance E166, April 1948;
   Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1486,3095-8;
   General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in the Automotive Industry: December 1938 - May 1945, Michigan 1945, p. 64.

132. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No.1662, Nov 1944; Plant Shop Ctee. Meeting Minutes, June 26 1945.

133. Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 157,163,188,1537,3270-4;
   General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, op.cit., pp. 64-5.

135. Chevrolet UAW Local 235, Shop Ctee. Minutes, Feb 1938 to June 1939, passim;

   Fine, op.cit., p. 325;

137. GM Ternstedt General Manager, J.E.Skinner, letter to all foremen, July 6 1937.

138. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No.1650 Sept 1944; Jan 28 1952.


140. Ibid. Oct 1937.

141. UAW Local 490 Grievance No.78, August 1942. UAW Chrysler Dept. box 6, WRALUA;

   N. G. Shidle and L. Peat, 'Industry's Forgotten Man', *Forbes*, May 15 1940, passim;


General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, op.cit., p. 87;

GM - UAW(AFL) Agreement, July 15 1940, p. 11;

Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3265-7.

145. Ford - UAW Agreement, June 20 1941, p. 4 item 24, for example states, "An employee having a grievance shall present it in the first instance either to his foreman or to his departmental committee man." Cranefield papers, box 1, WRALUA.

146. Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 1826.

147. Chrysler Corporation, Shall the Rank and File Boss the Plant, op.cit., p. 27;

Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3089-92;


149. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, Plant Managers - Plant Committee meeting, November 1944.


151. General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, op.cit., p. 87.

152. At Dodge for example there was one section steward for each foreman or 25 workers. At Fisher Body, Lansing however foremen were outnumbered two to one.
Jefferys, op.cit., p. 140;
UAWA Fisher Body Conference, August 1938, Minutes.

153. Memo from A.A.Appleford to R.Condor (Labour Relations Director) in Chrysler-UAW Local 7 coll., box 2, WRALUA.


156. Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 135.


159. Ibid., pp. 2292-3,3004.

160. Ibid., p. 59;

161. Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 132-3,3259 The Packard - UAW contract section 5(II) spelled this out, "All grievances will be referred to the department foreman except those concerning company policy";
General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, op.cit., p. 65;

162. A. Lenz, (Asst. Manager, GM Chevrolet Foundries), 'Foreman Has the Key Role in Maintaining Harmonious Relations With Employees', Automotive Industries, Vol.72, No.2, Jan 12 1935, passim;
William S. Knudsen, (Chairman GM), 'Back on the Bench is Where

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Personnel Belongs', *Automotive Industries*, May 26 1934, p. 651.


163. US Senate, *Labour Relations Programme*, p. 1235;
Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 125.

164. Ibid., pp. 1861-5.

165. Ibid., pp. 1824-5
Arthur Hughes, WSU Oral History, p. 5.

166. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, Nos.1591,1592 Apr 1944.

167. Ibid., No.1579;
UAW Local 3 Chrysler-Dodge, Grievance No.175, Feb 1943;
Hoffman, Diaries, Nov 1 1943.

168. UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No.1593 Mar 29 1944,
No.1674 Jan 1945.

169. UAW Local 705 Chrysler-Evansville, Grievance No.4, Pts.I,II, 1942;
UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, Feb 4 1952.

170. UAW Local 108, Chrysler, Grievance No.242, Jan 4 1940.

171. Hoffman, Diaries, Mar 13 1941.

172. Ibid., Apr 1942;
UAW Local 7, Shop Steward Grievance Reports, Plant Shop Ctee Meeting Feb 16 1945;

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Structures of Control: The Changing Role of Shop Floor Supervision in the U.S. Automobile Industry 1900-1950.

Richard Coopey

Vol. 2

Submitted in fulfilment for the degree of PhD in Social History, at the University of Warwick. December 1988.
Studies undertaken in the Centre for the Study of Social History.
The Origins of Foremen's Unionisation

The Foreman's Association of America (FAA) was formed in 1941 in Detroit. Essentially a phenomenon of the automobile industry, this union was by far the most important supervisory union in US history both in terms of its size and strength, and its ultimate and lasting influence on American industrial relations. Before examining the causes and impact of this union it is worthwhile looking at the long term history of foremen's unionisation, since this was not a new phenomenon in 1941, and also outlining briefly the trajectory of the FAA from its rise in the wartime factories of the Ford Motor Co. to its demise in the post-war world of Taft-Hartley and business unionism.

In several industries the unionisation of foremen already had long history by 1941, either in separate unions exclusively for foremen, or in the unions of production workers themselves. Building and printing trades are notable examples of the former. In printing, unions such as the International Typographical Union had closed shop agreements which included the membership of foremen from as early as 1889. In the building trades carpenters, plumbers, elevator constructors and other related unions affiliated to the AFL had recruited foremen since 1886. In both cases foremen usually worked at the tools alongside those they were supervising. In addition some unions in the metal trades also insisted that working foremen maintain membership, as did some packinghouse unions. In this way unions could exert considerable control over immediate shop floor supervision by the threat of withdrawal of membership.
Some transport industry foremen were also organised, notably those in railway and maritime related occupations. The Railroad Brotherhods had organised some foremen since 1890 but many foremen in this sector belonged to separate unions for supervisors only. Separate unions for foremen were generally the norm in the maritime industry such as the National Organisation of Masters, Mates and Pilots or the National Marine Engineers Beneficial Association. There were also some government departments where supervisors were members of separate unions, notably in the postal services.

These union configurations usually existed where craft based work was the norm, and they had by the 1930s, a well established relationship with employers. In the more recently established mass production industries such as automobiles both a general craft tradition and indeed any form of unionism had been eliminated at an early date. Production workers themselves had only succeeded in organising in significant numbers after 1937.

Some foremen had enrolled in the automobile workers' unions, such as the various AFL affiliated locals, which were struggling for recognition in the early 1930s. The majority of these foremen were those who attempted to maintain membership in the union following their initial promotion. At AC Spark, Flint a foreman was elected president of UAW-AFL local 18444 in 1933. He was subsequently forced to resign however, due to company pressure in objection to someone "with the right to hire and fire" being a union member. Other foremen held membership of the CIO unions when they first formed, being careful to conceal this effectively as possible. Foremen at Ford for example were recruited by the UAW as early as 1937, although
this recruitment usually took place in clandestine surroundings, such as a baseball game - well away from the gaze of the ubiquitous servicemen. Detection at this time simply meant dismissal.\(^7\)

These foremen clearly represented only a small minority however. As the production workers unions, notably the CIO affiliates, gained official recognition so areas of legitimate recruitment became rigidly defined, almost always to the exclusion of foremen. Some workers at the bottom of the supervisory ladder such as the utility men and leading hands at Chrysler or the material supervisors at Packard, did remain in the UAW by virtue of their continued work at the tools.\(^8\)

Generally though, the foreman and those newly promoted were excluded. Definitional criteria varied little. The Chrysler-UAW agreement of April 1937 is typical; "...the term "employee" for the purpose of this agreement shall not include foremen, assistant foremen, timekeepers, plant protection employees or confidential salaried employees."\(^9\)

Even temporary supervision jobs involved compulsory cessation of union membership. A National Industrial Conference Board (NICB) survey conducted in 1941 found this to be the case in 15 out of 17 companies surveyed.\(^10\) The best that UAW locals could do was to negotiate agreements whereby foremen ex-members could continue to accumulate seniority after they were promoted thus enabling them to resume their place on the seniority list without penalty in the event of demotion. Such agreements were made at Hudson, Briggs, Murray and Chrysler in the early 1940s for example.\(^11\) This applied to internal promotions however, outsiders could expect no such protection. Other firms maintained a system whereby promoted foremen lost all seniority. If a foreman at Ford, Packard or Gar Wood returned to production work he
could expect to be back on the seniority list with the rating he held on the date of his promotion. (12)

There were some attempts to get foremen into the same union movement as production workers during the late 1930s. The most notable of these was the short lived United Foremen and Supervisors Local Industrial Union No. 918 (CIO). First formed at Kelsey Hayes Wheel Company in December 1937, it spread through Universal Cooler and then to Chrysler. (13) The CIO granted a charter to the union in 1939 by which time it could claim around 900 members. Meanwhile the appeal of the union had spread to Murray, Hudson, Briggs and GM Chevrolet and had even recruited isolated members as far afield as California, New York and Georgia. (14) Clarence Bolds, president of Local 918 talked of spreading foreman's unionisation "from coast to coast" and made clear his union's allegiance to the production workers cause - "(Foremen's) organisation closes the last door through which the company ushers militant union men onto the street under the guise of promotions." (15)

Local 918 remained primarily concentrated around Kelsey Hayes and Chrysler and it was involvement in the 1939 strike by UAW workers at the latter which was to give the foremen's union its notoriety, and ultimately lead to its demise. The strike itself was instigated over general pay and conditions for production workers. After some weeks of the strike, and in an unrelated incident, Chrysler management sacked nearly 50 foremen at the Dodge truck plant for membership of Local 918. (16) The union appealed to the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB) on the grounds of unfair dismissal only to be told that they must first approach the company for to demand a certification election i.e. ask for and be refused as a bargaining agent before the NLRB
could act. (17) A telegram demanding recognition was duly sent in November 1939. This was promptly seized by the Chrysler management as an opportunity to inject a new stream of propaganda into what had now become after about 50 days, a deadlocked strike. (18) The resultant conflict which erupted around the question of foremen's rights to organise in CIO affiliated unions became the precursor of, and set the pattern for, major debates which followed the later emergence of the FAA.

The attitude of the UAW leadership was a tentative approval of Local 918 in the initial stages. (Rank and file members were less equivocal, even refusing to cross Local 918 picket lines during a strike in Lacrosse. (19)) The CIO and the AFL had made informal agreements that neither would attempt to organise foremen. (20) Despite this, UAW president R.J. Thomas had welcomed the organisation of foremen stating that, "Their assistance and fraternal relations to our members either in time of strike or in routine work in the plants will be of inestimable value. In return we pledge our complete solidarity with the new union." (21) This was soon revealed to be rhetorical solidarity only. Chrysler took out full page advertisements in the local press under the headline "CIO Now Demands Right to Sit on Both Sides of Collective Bargaining", and began to stress the foreman's role as part of management. (22) Talks between the UAW and Chrysler now became dominated by the issue of the foreman. Dick Frankensteen of the UAW rapidly disclaimed connections with Local 918 when called before the State Labour Mediations Board which had been called in to attempt to resolve the strike. (23) The foreman's local was persuaded by the UAW to withdraw its demands and the UAW took out its own advertisements.
claiming that the unionisation of foremen was only a marginal issue. (24) Company propaganda continued apace however, reflected in a leader in the Detroit Free Press asserting that the idea of foremen in CIO unions was "a scheme that might well have been thought up in Moscow; and probably was... beyond it would lie, as a logical step, an attempt by the CIO actually to seize the plants as their own... there would be slavery and eventual terrorism." (25) Implausible as were accusations and general propaganda of this type put out by the company, it did cause anxiety among the UAW leadership. Support for the foreman's local was rapidly withdrawn, their charter being rescinded completely in January 1940. (26) Following suit the NLRB refused to have any dealings with Local 918 and it was disbanded early in 1940. (27)

This brief moment in the history of foremen's unionisation had revealed a number of trends which were to characterise subsequent, more vigorous attempts by foremen to bargain collectively. Firstly the refusal of the leadership of the major industrial unions to, as they saw it, jeopardise the progress of their own cause by actively supporting foremen in unions. When it appeared that the foremen could provide a bargaining counter the UAW leadership was all too ready to proffer friendship, but they were equally ready to withdraw support to further the aims of the UAW. The UAW leadership had no ambitions beyond what they saw as a clearly defined boundary between workers and management. Matters would be simpler if the foreman remained within the ambit of the latter. From the UAW point of view this line was drawn by a general definition that those who held power to hire and fire should be excluded from the union. Thus some materials handlers
or production planners might be eligible for membership but any rank of foreman would not.\(^{(28)}\) The readiness to jettison union minded foremen in order to preserve a responsible, non-predatory image for the UAW was to be a recurrent theme in later periods of industrial unrest.

The second trend to emerge was the greater amount of support among the rank and file members and local leadership of the UAW for foremen's unions, which contrasted with the lukewarm response displayed by the leadership of the international. Foremen's picket lines had been respected and a significant number of messages of encouragement had begun to appear in the local press and in leaflets circulated on the factory floor. 'Local 235 News' of October 1939 advised foremen, "Get wise you guys and organise," pointing to the growing insecurity in foremen's jobs.\(^{(29)}\) Local 662 at Delco-Remy issued a circular to foremen following the Chrysler strike noting that "some very definite understandings were arrived at" between foremen and UAW members during the dispute.\(^{(30)}\) In many ways this rift between the rank and file and the higher leadership of the UAW mirrored the general development which saw, even as early as 1937, the increasing imposition of control from above on the new union.\(^{(31)}\)

The third notable trend was the way in which employers reacted to the issue of foremen's unions. Although there had clearly been a shift in the structure of power on the shop floor with both technological and organisational change and the advent of workers unionisation, employers refused to concede that foremen had in any way ceased to be an integral and central part of management. They had also demonstrated, after taking account of the rhetorical content of public
statements, a real fear that unionisation would extend beyond the shop floor and into the hierarchy of management. They had shown a readiness to respond in no uncertain terms to threats to unionise foremen, believing more ardently than the UAW that a line had been drawn at the point of shop floor supervision, across which unionisation should not pass.

Finally, the brief and limited success of Local 918 had also demonstrated that there were significant numbers of foremen in the automobile industry of the late 1930s who were ready to embrace the idea of union representation. Nearly all the foremen at Kelsey Hayes had signed up following the granting of the CIO charter. Once the union was seemingly legitimate, given CIO credibility and the seemingly sympathetic support of the NLRB, foremen had demonstrated their need to protect their position via collective means.

Local 918 represented a short lived small scale precursor to what was to become the major event in the history of foremen's unionisation, an event which was to have a significant impact on the union movement in general, - the formation of the Foreman's Association of America (FAA). The FAA was formed at the end of 1941. Initially a social or "fellowship" club it became the FAA proper in November of that year and, at a meeting of 1200 foremen at Dearborn, near the Ford River Rouge complex, officers were elected and a constitution drafted. Robert H. Keys, a Ford foreman, was elected as the union's first president. By the end of 1941 the FAA had around 4000 members at the Ford complex. In February 1942 a second chapter was established at Briggs in Detroit, followed in the autumn of that year by chapters at Chrysler, Detroit Lubricator, Packard, Hudson, Gar
Wood Industries and US Rubber. By the time of the FAA annual convention in late 1942 the union had over 10,000 members. By the following year this number had risen to nearly 19,000 members in 68 chapters. Membership rose steadily through 25,000 in 1945, to 32,000 in 1945 by which time the union had over 300 chapters. By 1946 the FAA reached its zenith and was claiming a membership of over 50,000.

Primarily a Detroit based phenomenon the FAA had nominally spread over 28 states. The first 37 chapters had all been in the immediate Detroit region and all in automobile production or closely related industries. Subsequent recruitment further afield was also mostly through connected industries such as steel and rubber, or through plants in the same company network such as the chapter established in the Ford plant at Ontario in Canada.

Where chapters were set up recruitment density was often impressive, especially in the core chapters in Detroit. NLRB certification elections often returned over 80% in each plant in favour of the FAA as sole bargaining agent. At Chrysler in 1943 over 1700 of the 2200 foremen in the plant were FAA members. In the NLRB election at Packard in February 1943 only 2 out of nearly 700 foremen actually opposed the FAA, while in March 1943 651 out of 675 foremen at Hudson chose to join. The Ford chapter based at River Rouge alone was eventually to number over 9000 members.

The FAA achieved formal agreements at a number of major firms. The prize in this respect was the FAA - Ford agreement signed in May 1944. Hudson and Kaiser-Frazer also signed formal agreements. Overall though the FAA had limited success in securing official recognition
and by 1947 formal agreements were in operation at only 13 companies. (37) Nevertheless the union had a major presence in a significant number of large automobile plants, with only the larger GM factories proving impervious to recruitment.

Agreements at Ford laid down eligibility criteria for membership, set up a hierarchy of representation (in a note of status preservation the FAA spurned the usual titles of committeeman or shop steward in favour of the pretentious title of "building chairman"), and established facilities of the functioning of the union - offices, full time staff etc.. (38) Minimum wage rates were fixed in so far as a set differential was agreed i.e. that in a six stage hierarchy consisting of job foreman, division shift foreman, division foreman, assistant general foreman and general foreman, the job foreman at the bottom of the ladder was guaranteed 25c above the average wage of the top 25% of employees under him, and each subsequent step in the hierarchy then received fixed differentials in relation to the job foreman, varying between 30c and 60c. Overtime, call out pay, bonuses and vacations were also fixed. Seniority provisions were also laid down, although these were chiefly to be administered in the case of demotions to avoid "bumping" foremen lower down the scale. Seniority in promotion remained the prerogative of employers. The clause, "When ability is considered to be equal - seniority shall govern promotions and demotions" echoed the notorious merit clauses which had been a feature of the company union movement and in effect nullified any temporal consideration in making promotion decisions. (39)

In addition to limited employer sanction the FAA enjoyed a chequered career of legality. Vacillating state support for foremen's
unionisation was a feature of the period. The NLRB which, under the aegis of the Wagner Act had given legislative sanction to production workers to organise in collective bargaining units of their own choosing and compelled employer recognition, was called upon to determine whether the provisions of the act should extend to supervisors. Were they "employees" and thus, under the wording of the act, entitled to protection, or were they "employers" and deemed to be outside the act's provisions? Foremen were of course "employees" in that they were wage labour and did not own or control in any formal sense the means of production. The separation of ownership from control in the large corporation which now typified automobile production meant however that this argument could equally well be applied in varying degrees to practically all levels of management. Some form of ruling needed to be made in terms of a dividing line. In the event the NLRB fluctuated between extremes in attempts to interpret the vague terminology of the act. They ruled in favour of foremen's unionisation in the Skinner and Kennedy case in 1939, against in the Marshall Field and GM Sales cases of 1941, reversed this decision in Godchaux Sugar and Union Collieries cases of 1942 when foremen were deemed eligible to be members of unions affiliated to those of production workers, and reversed their ruling again in the Maryland Drydock case of 1943 when only those foremen in industries which had "traditionally" organised foremen were allowed to remain in unions. In the Soss and Republic Steel case, resolved in May 1944, the NLRB settled upon a particularly confused compromise maintaining that the law protected foremen against discriminatory employer practice but still withheld the right to organise i.e. hold certification elections.
or compel employers to bargain. Thus foremen were "employees" under sections 8(1) and 8(3) of the Wagner Act, but "employers" under section 9. In 1944 the NLRB passed jurisdiction of the problem over to the National War Labour Board (NWLB) who in turn made no firm recommendations despite extensive hearings and public inquiries. Finally, in the Packard case of March 1945 the NLRB gave the go ahead for foremen to organise under the protection of the act. This decision was only ratified by the supreme court a matter of months before the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 unequivocally excluded supervisors from any legal protection in pursuit of unionisation.

Allied to this erratic pattern of state activity the FAA also had to contend with concerted resistance from employers, organised into a powerful pressure group which published widespread anti-FAA propaganda, lobbied state representatives and generally harassed or attempted to divert the union. Indeed the architecture of the Taft-Hartley Act represented the final drafting of a whole series of less successful bills designed under the sponsorship of the automobile manufacturers.

Support from the production workers unions and their organisations also came at fluctuating levels, variously depending on leadership tactics, self interest or degrees of rank and file activism.

Despite these problems the FAA showed itself to be composed of a membership quite determined to push for recognition, even to the extent of strike activity. Perhaps more surprisingly, strikes were staged at the height of war production, in the face of a great deal of general hostility and at a time when production workers were operating
under wartime no-strike agreements.

In the event the union was to have short lived success despite its "meteoric" rise. Following the failure of a major strike at Ford after the company had refused to renew their agreement in 1947, and the coincidental passage of the disabling Taft-Hartley Act, the union went into a gradual, and eventually terminal decline. Membership loss was not overtly dramatic - the union could still number 20,000 members in 1953 - but 1947 represented the watershed at which numbers fell for the first time, important when set against the rate of growth of the years immediately preceding and the anticipated recruitment levels among the several million potential members employed in supervision in American industry.

Clearly the advent of a union such as the FAA among what had been few years previously a predominantly conservative and reactionary sector of the industrial workforce poses many interesting questions in terms of dynamics, aims, influence and so on. Many of the available historical accounts of the rise and fall of this union tend to revolve around a central causal framework dictated by the legal structures of the period. The FAA is seen to rise as a consequence of the actions of the NLRB, gaining in support with favourable decisions, and finally declining following the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act. While it is true that 1947 marks the beginnings of the decline of the union, an adequate explanation of this decline, and the preceding years of success, must go beyond the narrow strictures of this form of institutional explanation and examine a number of interconnected and complex factors, both immediate and long term, and at individual and organisational level, in order to fully understand the origins and

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fate of the FAA. In addition to the long term restructuring of the foreman's job outlined in previous chapters, the effects and influence of production workers unions, the precise constituency and appeal of the FAA to its members, its aims, the specific historical circumstances in which it came into being i.e. the period of wartime restructuring of production and labour markets, and consequent post-war reconstruction, and the range and influence of employer strategies must all be taken into account in addition to the role of the state in fostering or prohibiting supervisory unions.

The first field of enquiry is that of the influence of production workers unionisation on supervision in terms of the stimulation of foremen's unionisation. This is perhaps the most obvious area to start with since the FAA followed hot on the heels of the success of the UAW and general industrial union movement. Certainly it is difficult to imagine circumstances where supervision might unionise while those workers under them had not. At a general level an atmosphere amenable to unionism - the Wagner Act, newly pragmatic sectors of management, "responsible" union leadership and so on - might be seen to provide ample explanation. The establishment of unions such as the UAW created a complex set of influences and pressures on foremen which must also be examined however. Pay and conditions concessions won by the UAW both demonstrated the efficacy of collective action and created new strains on individual foremen in terms of the restructuring of power and the proceduralisation of shop floor control. UAW members began to move into supervision jobs in large numbers during the wartime expansion of production, bringing their expectations of union
representation with them. UAW leaders and rank and file members support for or opposition to the FAA must also be charted. These and other union movement related factors must be taken into account in order to unravel the means by which the appeal of unionisation spilled over to encompass the lower levels of the management hierarchy.

First, the general influence provided by the example of the UAW in gains for production workers. Foremen had seen only too well the power which could be wielded by workers representatives as they faced up to shop floor supervision or went directly to higher management, but what of the concrete gains won by the UAW. As a report of an early meeting of the FAA at Ford recorded, "...the foremen all agreed that they should secure the advantages which the rank and file had gotten."(43) What were these advantages?

Better pay and conditions are an obvious starting point, and it is necessary to map out accurately the components of the foremen's dissatisfaction with their position vis a vis their newly unionised workers in some detail. To begin with pay levels, foremen at Ford had observed production workers securing overall pay rises in the region of 28% after the first round of UAW bargaining. In contrast foremen claimed to have been neglected. Statistics on supervisory pay levels are notoriously difficult to obtain given the reluctance of firms to release information on what remained individually negotiated rates.(44) The claims and counter claims of the FAA-NWLB hearings provoked an unusual level of candidness however. Rates for supervision varied contingent on a number of factors in addition to the general chaos of individually determined scales. Skilled trades foremen in the tool room, electrical and maintenance departments at Packard for
example received between $278 and $383 per month compared with a $220 to $315 wage band for foremen in the production departments. Assistant foremen in the same departments received $252 to $335 and $236 to $278 respectively. Thus an assistant foreman in charge of skilled workers would usually earn more than a foreman in charge of semi-skilled or unskilled workers. (45) It can generally be said that pay fell in a band between $220 and $350 for foremen in the early 1940s, the majority of whom were now being paid on an hourly basis. (46)

Production workers' pay was equally complex, but good data is available on general differential levels between them and supervisors. This reveals that in terms of basic pay the foreman generally maintained his position relative to production workers during the run up to, and early phases of foremen's unionisation. Evidence does indicate an erosion of basic pay differentials in some companies to around 15% between 1942 and 1943. (47) Most companies retained a fixed formula however. GM for example held to a 125% plan throughout, i.e. that foremen should be paid 25% more than the average of the top five highest paid production workers in the highest class in the department under supervision. (48) Others were still more generous. In 1944, at the height of the FAA campaign, Hudson claimed an average differential of over 42%, with some foremen getting as much as 57%. Murray claimed 47% for section supervisors and 72% for department supervisors. Briggs' supervisory differential ranged between 44% and 66% and foremen at Packard were pegged at 26% above the highest individual hourly paid worker, resulting in an average of over 60% above all production workers. During this period Chrysler claimed average wage differentials of over 40%. (49) These findings are in line with surveys
of industry in general during this period which if anything show supervisors in the automobile industry, especially at the level of assistant foreman and foreman, to have slightly above average differential basic pay rates.\(^{50}\) In terms of general pay levels an NICB survey of foremen's pay rates in 1940 found an average increase of around 20% over the rates of pay of 1929 in real terms.\(^{51}\)

All the above differential computations are based on the basic working week however. A different picture emerges when examining actual earnings - after overtime and bonus payments have been calculated. Foremen had been traditionally excluded from any overtime payment. Before unionisation, production workers would have seen their own pay modified during periods of increased production by compensatory rate-cutting. With generally negotiated agreements however, periods of intense production, especially that which came with the beginnings of war production, saw dramatic increases in levels of production workers take-home pay. Differentials narrowed significantly and often became reversed. Stock chasers at Packard in 1942 for example averaged nearly $1000 per year more than their own foremen. A similar pattern emerges at Chrysler's DeSoto plant where real differentials of between $600 and $1000 per annum in favour of production workers were common.\(^{52}\) Harry Palmer, a foreman at one of the automobile plants was paid $1300 less than one production worker in his department in 1943, while everyone out-earned him to some degree, with the sole exception of the sweeper.\(^{53}\) A survey by the Automotive Council for War Production (ACWP) in 1944 quoted one of the major automobile companies where a 69% differential in favour of foremen over a standard 40 hour working week turned into a 22% deficit
over 60 hours, the normal length of time worked per week at that time.\(^{54}\) The case was usually at its worst where foremen were in charge of individual workers of a particular skill level such as a tool setter among a department of production workers. Antagonism which reflected the new levels of security of unionised production workers was never far below the surface, with workers only too ready to rub in their pecuniary superiority. Foremen saw their prestige eroded along with differentials. As one foreman put it, "Now, you know, we do not like to be over the men and to have them throw their pay check in our face...".\(^{55}\)

The problem for foremen was exacerbated by the regularity of long working weeks from 1941 onwards as the industry geared up to meet the needs of America's allies and subsequently its own military needs. Some foremen were expected to work from seven in the morning to one o'clock the following morning, receiving nothing beyond basic pay and a 60c lunch allowance in compensation.\(^{56}\) Some firms paid overtime up to two and a half hours per day, stating that a foreman was expected to remain unpaid after work and take part in production conferences or take care of paper work. As Packard management insisted, "These duties are considered as part of the job and never were paid extra for."\(^{57}\) Production workers meanwhile were paid for every hour in the plant, and at increased rates for overtime, thanks to their union membership.

Weekend working was a particularly sore point for many foremen. Where production workers would be universally earning double time for Sunday work for example, only a minority of foremen would be able to claim time and a half.\(^{58}\) In some cases foremen would be told to take a day off in lieu of weekend work. This merely created pressure on
weekly supervision when foremen were expected to supervise extra men. Also if foremen were absent due to illness this would cancel out their overtime, being counted as their time off.\(^{(59)}\) Sunday work in the war period was a normal occurrence. One foreman at Gar Wood worked 26 consecutive Sundays with no pay at all.\(^{(60)}\) Again the comparison with the treatment of UAW members was the element that rankled most. Foreman William Saunders, in reference to the practice of foremen simply receiving 75c lunch allowance for Sunday work, told the Senate inquiry of 1943, "I do not kick about my wages. I do kick about the fact that on Sunday when I go to work the company insults me by giving me 75c to buy my dinner...They give my job setter, if he works 10 hours which I have to work, they give him $27!"\(^{(61)}\)

Night shift premiums were also a point of contention. Murray Briggs and Hudson, all companies where the FAA had a strong constituency, did not pay any such premiums to their foremen. Other companies might pay 5\%.\(^{(62)}\) Of the 11 major automobile manufacturers surveyed by the ACWP five paid no night shift premium or bonus of any kind to foremen. Only two paid as much as 10\%, below the average for production workers at this time.\(^{(63)}\) Hudson justified their policy by insisting that foremen on nights held less responsibility than those on the day shift - a point which was lost on their foremen.\(^{(64)}\)

Some firms did push through better overtime arrangements for foremen, especially as the growing threat of the FAA became apparent, and to be fair, some employers had paid overtime or compensatory amounts as soon as the problem arose. Many employers were intransigent however. Those presenting evidence before the NWLB special inquiry in 1944 maintained, with the use of statistical data based on wage
payments, that foremen only averaged between 40 and 48 hours per week. Production workers might get more money but they had to work longer hours to get it. The FAA's answer was to point out that since foremen generally did not clock in or out or record their hours of unpaid overtime then these statistics were extremely unreliable. (65)

Another problem area for foremen was their exclusion from participation in bonus schemes. Where the UAW locals had agreed to the continuation of such schemes they usually followed the time honoured pattern of pertaining to production workers only. Foremen, as we have seen in chapter four were generally deemed to be best placed outside such schemes in view of the perceived dangers of linking foremen's pay too directly to quantity rather than quality of output, and the fact that foremen were expected to arbitrate over setting of rates. Also the calculation of bonuses for foremen, since they did not produce directly had to be on a complex or group basis and not reflective of individual effort. The ACWP survey of 1944 reported that in the automobile industry incentive payment plans for foremen were "the exception rather than the rule" having been able to find only one example. (66) This followed the general trend in industry. The NICB survey of 1939 of 2,700 companies had found only 18.3% with bonus plans for foremen. (67) Annual bonus payments for foremen were more popular although these tended to be calculated by management in an arbitrary fashion - usually a lump sum between $100 and $175 in the automobile industry - and foremen had little notion of how these were calculated. (68) Merit pay for foremen was a similar means of boosting wages although, like annual bonuses, there was no fixed scheme of operation and many foremen were excluded. At Murray Bodies for example.
only 6% of foremen received merit bonuses. Foremen were even disqualified from suggestion schemes, since it was "expected that the supervisory personnel will develop new labour-saving methods as a regular part of their jobs."

The phenomenon of wartime erosion of real pay differential supervisory pay rates was not unique to US industry. In Britain during the First World War a similar trend in the engineering and munitions sectors had preceded the formation of the National Foreman's Association (NFA) in 1919. British foremen had seen their own wages exceeded by unionised production workers, the majority of whom were unskilled. British employers, like their later American counterparts, were adamant that foremen should be paid an "upstanding wage" and not put on the same basis as production workers. There is a further interesting parallel worth noting between the experience of employers and the issue of foremen's pay in Britain during World War One and America in World War Two - that of the part played by government restrictions in exacerbating the problem. As such it is an interesting example of the way in which capitalist states can, in the short term at least, act in disconcert with the wishes of capital and promote activity which might promote unionisation. At the very least it is a demonstration of the bureaucratic inertia inherent in most state structures. Just as the government in Britain during World War One stepped in to put a blanket ban on overall wage rises, in an attempt to offset inflation and in line with a general policy of control of wages, prices and labour markets, so too the US government imposed a similar set of controls in World War Two.

The US Treasury's Salary Stabilisation Unit (SSU) pegged any
rises in pay to a rate in line with the frequency of such rises before 1942. In other words foremen who were paid on a salary basis could not have their rates of pay adjusted to match the sudden UAW negotiated increases in basic rates secured before 1942, or the increases achieved by UAW members due to the rise in overtime and shift working. (73) Where companies attempted to push through rises for foremen the SSU appeals procedure was notoriously slow in processing claims and often rejected them. Briggs, Hudson and Packard all had foremen's pay increase requests refused. Even requests to increase foremen's sick leave was refused. (74) 60% of the employers in the ACWP survey felt that the SSU's rules had made it impossible to maintain their usual supervisory differentials. (75) Being told that government intransigence was to blame did little to placate disgruntled foremen who saw the wages of their unionised production workers continue to rise.

Employers tried to get round the problem of foremen's claims of loss of status by pointing to the number of perks and hidden bonuses to which foremen were entitled. It was factors such as paid vacations, sick pay and retirement schemes that marked the foreman's job off from production jobs in managements opinion. Foremen usually received two full weeks holiday entitlement in this period whereas production workers could expect only one. (76) Sick leave for foremen was officially set around two weeks followed by longer periods at managerial discretion. Foremen at Hudson for example could get their sick leave extended by up to four months. (77) In some cases graduated increases went with length of service. At Packard for example a foreman with 10 years service was entitled to 48 days sick leave per
year. Government regulations again intervened in 1943 to restrict sick leave to two weeks however, besides many foremen claimed they were ignorant of any fixed entitlement.\(^{(78)}\) Company retirement plans for foremen were also widespread. The scheme at Chrysler, for which all foremen earning over $250 p.a. were eligible involved a payment of 20% by the employee, with the company making up the balance of contributions.\(^{(79)}\)

In general foremen, certainly those appearing before the NWLB panel in 1944, tended to disregard these perks as any kind of equitable redress for the growing imbalance of pay levels between them and production workers. The NWLB noted that "these advantages were criticised or even belittled by the foremen."\(^{(80)}\) who were far more interested in real incomes and restoring their advantage over UAW negotiated rates. Although the automobile industry paid well in terms of general wage levels prevailing in the Detroit area, most foremen chose to measure their income with those they supervised.\(^{(81)}\)

In addition to rates of pay the FAA also actively pursued some form of general structure of collective bargaining, again echoing the achievements of the UAW. Foremen in general were coming to see that the system of individual bargaining, which they themselves had administered not too long before, had the effect of dividing and controlling the workforce. This method was unequal to the task of correcting the their own earnings deficit and moreover the uniform pay and conditions structures, neutral seniority provisions and grievance procedures secured by the UAW seemed a demonstrably better system.

The irregular nature in which foremen's pay was determined had been a notable feature of the pre-war period but with the expansion of

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production and rapid promotion of many workers, added to the growing shortage of foremen in certain skilled sectors bidding up the price of their labour, a chaotic situation had developed where individual foremen's rates fluctuated widely. Of the 11 automobile companies in the ACWP survey four had no definite wage schedule for any given supervisory job description. The remaining seven had a variance of up to 45% for any given job. Only one company allowed their foremen access to these schedules. (82) In this situation many foremen found themselves alongside others doing similar jobs but earning markedly different pay. In one department at Briggs in 1944 for example two foremen received $260 per month, six received $250 and two received $225. (83) Another foreman complained of a variance between $285 and $400 per month for identical supervisory work. (84) Foremen involved in such disparities, especially those newly recruited, looked to the FAA to substitute some form of regularised pay structure.

The FAA response in demanding fixed payment scales also extended to women supervisors. It is a measure of the unions radical stance that it was to argue vigorously for equal pay for women supervisors deemed to be doing the same work as their male counterparts. Unequal treatment in this respect had long been a feature in the limited areas where women had attained supervisory jobs. Marie McCann for example, an assembly line forewoman at Briggs, complained of only receiving $260 per month whereas men in the same job were paid $289. Other forewomen in identical jobs were paid even less - one receiving only $147 per month. Forewoman McCann was frequently paid less than the new foremen see was called upon to train. (85)

In the war period, in a reverse of the previous situation, newly
promoted foremen often found themselves better off than those who had been in the job for a number of years. Shortages of supervisory labour were the result of an increasing reluctance on the part of production workers to step up to the foreman's job given that they could probably earn more in non-supervisory jobs, and that in so doing they would retain the security of union membership. Pay levels for newly promoted foremen were thus driven upwards. At the Chrysler Tank Arsenal plant for example the six new foremen promoted in 1942 were paid an average of $15 per month more than the eight foremen already working in the department.\(^{(86)}\) Foremen during this period would often find that their own assistants were in receipt of higher wages.\(^{(87)}\) The difficulty of government restrictions continued to apply to newly promoted foremen, creating yet another area of discontent. Often workers were promoted from production jobs or foremen were given greater responsibility with a promise of more pay, only to be seemingly forgotten. Foremen could often wait up to a year for rises to be ratified.\(^{(88)}\)

The employers' argument to explain the irregularities and fluctuations in foremen's pay was that in reality no two foremen's jobs were alike. Skill levels might vary, production and non-production jobs might carry differing levels of responsibility, some foremen might supervise more workers than other foremen - these were among the general diversity arguments put forward.\(^{(89)}\) There was some merit in this, although most foremen's jobs, as we have seen, had become more closely aligned with the general deskilling of production jobs in the industry. The real reason for employers' hostility to a regularisation of rates was however their determination to cling to an individual bargaining strategy, the 'open-door' system of securing
wage rises. The FAA was equally determined that collective bargaining should prevail, collective bargaining which would echo the success of the UAW contracts and introduce wage levels, hours and conditions of employment which applied equally to all foremen. Collective bargaining which would moreover mirror that of the UAW in exact terms. By 1946 the FAA negotiators at Ford, where the union had secured its most important agreement, were putting in wage claims exactly parallel with those demanded by the UAW in the same plants. (90)

Another demand of the FAA, again closely mirroring the gains of the UAW, was for a system of seniority to obtain in the event of lay-offs, transfers, promotions etc.. Seniority for foremen was a more complex issue however, especially since the FAA particularly wanted this to cover promotions and demotions - a traditional stronghold of management freedom of arbitrary choice. (91) The call for seniority by some form of fixed, negotiated criteria - basically longevity of service - had a wide appeal among most sectors of the supervisory workforce. Ironically in view of their previous record, many foremen put forward their fear of favouritism as a major reason for wanting regularisation. (92) Another specific, and perhaps more important reason was the knowledge that the reconversion to peacetime would mean many foremen being being laid off or returned to work on production, a fear compounded by the fact that many locals of the UAW had provisions that foremen, upon promotion, no longer accumulated seniority in standing with the union. (93) The fear was especially rife among older foremen who had a seen great many new and younger foremen promoted during the war years. Many of these younger men had proved more adaptable to new production methods introduced in armaments
manufacture, and had shown a greater willingness to take part in various wartime training programmes. For many younger foremen who would seemingly lose out, seniority was probably simply one facet of a general support for unionisation given their UAW backgrounds. This was certainly the view supported by the NWLB inquiry of 1944.

The FAA did not ask for total control of selection procedures or for selection rigidly by length of service alone. Rather they asked for a "voice" in the process and that, where possible, any vacancy arising should be filled by an FAA member. They proposed a joint management-union committee to agree appointments before implementation. At Ford, where such an agreement was secured, the system ran reasonably well. Demotions were likely to be the major problem area but in 1944 approximately five sixths of these were decided purely on seniority. Out of 1000 demotions between July and October of that year only 40 became the subject of grievance procedures.

Ford was the exception however and managements in general continued to oppose this particular section of FAA demands. Arguing that foremen could not readily be allocated promotions between departments on the basis of seniority since the jobs involved would require different skills, and, perhaps more forcefully, that "ability" - to be determined solely by management - must be the overriding consideration in the selection or rejection of the lower levels of the management hierarchy.

Other areas of negotiation proposed by the FAA which echoed the contracts secured by the UAW included demands for closed shop agreements and dues check offs (deduction of union contributions
direct from members paypackets). In these demands the FAA was largely unsuccessful, especially in the closed shop demand which employers saw as a means by which the union could exert indirect control over promotion etc. by threats of withdrawal of membership. (99) The best the FAA could hope for in this respect was exclusive bargaining rights to encompass members and non-members. The FAA also attempted to negotiate uniform work loads in the form of agreed ratios of foremen to workers, 1:30 in the case of Ford, although in practice these guidelines proved impractical given the size variations between departments. (100)

The FAA also mirrored the UAW in its demands for a formal machinery to be set up to deal with foremen's grievances. At Ford this was a five stage process. the second of which involved a newly set up foreman's personnel office, the third a joint committee of three members of the FAA and three members of Ford management, and terminated in the involvement of an impartial umpire. (101) Such a grievance process reflects that which is common to most union agreements although in the FAA's case the final stage, that of recourse to neutral umpire, was a particularly contentious issue. The NWLB panel reflected the feelings of most employers in rejecting the notion of external interference in disputes involving foremen. "When cases involve such intangible questions of personal judgement as the relative competence of several foremen...their relative promise of growth, the potentialities for higher positions, their reliability in emergencies, there is no good reason to require that the judgement of a more or less adequately informed outsider...be substituted for the judgement of manager who knows the foreman..." (102) In reality the
foreman had little faith in any existing complaints procedures or that management "knows the foreman". When challenged on exactly how foremen's grievances came to be known by management the Chrysler labour relations director insisted that they "filter up" or that "We had a feeling". Slichter called this process "some sort of dribbling up through the superintendents."(103) That foremen were only too willing to turn their backs on this type of system in favour of a formal grievance procedure is evidenced in the levels of support achieved by the FAA.

In summary we can see that the establishment of production workers unions, notably the UAW, had created a series of pressures and examples which contribute to the dynamic behind the formation of the FAA. In addition to the problems of marginalisation outlined in the previous chapter, in real terms the foreman had seen his rates of pay fall compared to unionised workers. That wartime conditions were partly responsible, especially in terms of overtime working and government restrictions, probably did not matter to many foremen who saw their immediate position of powerlessness under a system of individual bargaining in stark contrast to the new found security and increasing comparative wages of the UAW members. The rigidity of foremen's pay systems and their exclusion from overtime, bonus and similar adjuncts to hourly paid work, because of their supposed status as part of management bore no relation to the foreman's objective position as he now saw it. The UAW offered a model for foremen seeking a reestablishment of differentials and uniformity among wage rates, some form of equitable seniority procedure in lay-offs, promotions and transfers, and a formalised grievance procedure whereby foremen, who
by now had come to realise how far adrift they were from the formal management structure, could succeed in getting complaints heard and dealt with.

If the UAW had an indirect role in stimulating the formation of the FAA in terms of pressures created and examples set, how much direct influence did it have? This question can be broken down into two parts. Firstly at the level of membership, how many FAA members had, previous to being foremen, some experience of union membership in production workers unions? Secondly, how much support did production worker's unions like the UAW give to foremen in their efforts to unionise, either at the level of individual UAW members, or though local and national offices?

In order to answer the first question - the spilling over of union consciousness through promotions - it is important to take into account the changes in the labour market and structure of the workforce during wartime. The war and the switch to armaments production brought a great expansion of the automobile industry factory system in terms of sheer size of the workforce. Since the major producers were unionised in 1937 or, in the case of Ford, in 1941 then all foremen promoted during wartime - the period of the initial growth of the FAA - had some experience of union membership and representation.

Many factories went through a phase of massive expansion on existing sites. The Packard payroll for example rose from 8,200 peacetime workers to over 39,000 in 1944. Other factories were entirely new. The Ford Willow Run factory, built in 1941 and 1942 to manufacture B24 bombers, employed over 42,000 workers at the height of
production. Supervision of this vastly increased workforce created many problems in itself, about which more will be said below, but in numerical terms alone it called for large increases to the ranks of foremen. At Briggs the number of foremen rose from 715 in June 1941 to 1,410 in July 1944, at Chrysler's DeSoto-Wyoming plant the number rose from 35 in April 1938 to 225 in June 1944, at Murray from 137 in June 1940 to 562 in June 1944, and at Packard from 250 in 1938 to 900 in 1944. In addition to this absolute increase the number of older experienced foremen in individual plants became depleted as some joined the armed forces or moved to the new factories. Of the foremen at Packard who were in the job in 1940 for example, only 91 were still foremen there in 1944, representing only around 11% of the total supervisory workforce. At the Chrysler DeSoto plant only 27 (around 12%) of the 225 foremen had held the post continuously since 1940. Many foremen were promoted and then demoted again quite soon afterwards during this period as they proved unsuitable for the task. When this is taken into account the numbers of production workers with experience of supervisory roles is even greater. The peak years of supervisory recruitment were 1942 and 1943, well after the establishment of the UAW. At GM for example in 1944 over 50% of foremen had only 18 months experience of the job in plants which had been unionised for seven years.

Virtually all new foremen were recruited internally from the ranks of production workers. Between 1941 and 1944 at the Chrysler DeSoto plant for example all except four promotions came from the ranks of Chrysler production workers or from supervisors in other plants within the corporation, in 1943 77 out of 80 promotions came
solely from the shop floor. (109) In response to a question about the number of his fellow foremen taken from the ranks during wartime GM foreman W. Allen Nelson told a Senate inquiry, "All of us, all of us, I would say practically all of us." (110)

It is not surprising therefore that, given this preponderance, and in most cases majority, of foremen recruited since production workers unions achieved recognition, and the likelihood therefore that most would have been members of unions such as the UAW, that a great many of these new foremen were, in the words of one observer, "somewhat union minded." (111) The fact that a high percentage of foremen had at least been members of a union prior to their promotion is of course no guarantee that those foremen would be avidly pro-union, but it is fair to say that given the general response among workers to the unions such as the UAW - reflected in the level of votes achieved in certification elections, and general membership growth - and taking into account the concrete benefits obtained by unions for production workers, that a good many would be more likely to view unionisation in an advantageous light than otherwise.

The second aspect of the relationship between the growth of production workers unions and the rise of the FAA concerns the level of direct support provided both in terms of strategic organisational aid from the locals or internationals of production workers unions, and the level of tactical support provided as the FAA engaged in various political and economic struggles with employers and the state. In examining inter-union support at a number of levels it will be seen that responses to the FAA varied quite markedly between ordinary shop floor members of unions such as the UAW and their local and
international offices, and also that these responses varied considerably over time contingent upon a number of factors.

In beginning with reactions to the FAA among production workers, periods of industrial action are a useful starting point since strike activity provides moments at which allegiances and support become momentarily clarified. There were many occasions during FAA strikes when production workers refused to cross picket lines, thus halting production completely. In October 1943 90,000 workers at Republic Steel refused to violate FAA Chapter 34 picket lines, causing a three day total shutdown. (112) At Briggs in 1944 over 700 workers, including some UAW-CIO shop stewards, refused to cross FAA pickets causing the loss of two days production. In this case UAW stewards became actively involved in the picket. (113) Other unions, not directly concerned with automobile production also supported the FAA on occasion. The Teamsters for example were notoriously reluctant to cross FAA picket lines, even when most other production workers had done so. (114)

Respect for picket lines could fluctuate however and was not by any means universal. At Goodrich for example members of the United Rubber Workers union supported the FAA for 23 days, the longest strike in the company's history, but eventually forced the FAA to abandon the same strike by threatening to cross picket lines and work under any supervision - action dictated by a combination of economic pressure and the direction of local leadership. (115)

For their part the FAA members occasionally reciprocated and refused to cross production workers picket lines - the Young Spring and Wire strike in 1946 is an example of this - but such events were exceptions to the general pattern. (116) In the majority of cases FAA
members agreed to cross picket lines but to refrain from doing any production work. If pickets were adamant however the foremen often stayed outside. Official FAA policy was dictated by individual circumstance. Members were to, "go into shops and protect employers property and even perform certain work of the rank and file workers, temporarily in an emergency. However... we are not going to get our blocks knocked off doing it!"(117) Whether foremen crossed pickets with the approval of production workers often depended on the type of work involved. Ford foremen in the foundry for example were allowed into the plant to tap the furnaces and generally avert catastrophic damage through lack of maintenance.(118)

The general question of the unionised foreman's place during industrial disputes - the definition of his "neutrality" between employers on one hand and organised labour on the other - was to prove universally problematic since the foreman was held by employers to have an obligation to continue work, of whatever sort, as part of the managerial hierarchy. This problem also emerged in Britain, where the NFA settled upon a general principle that, in the event of strike, "such service (should be) rendered to an employer that would enable his business to be kept in such a condition that on a settlement of the dispute, a minimum loss would be entailed by employer and employed, so as to enable full earning capacity to be regained as soon as possible."(119) In the event, both for the FAA in America and the NFA in Britain, fixed definitions of neutrality were always rendered unworkable by the level of local pressure either from employers or production workers unions, about which more will be said below.

To return to the theme of levels of grass roots support from
production workers for the FAA, while it is probably the case that workers crossed FAA pickets more often than not, support for foremen's industrial action could take other forms. In many cases workers refused to cooperate with non-striking foremen. Such foremen were often given a rough ride if they crossed FAA picket lines. Those doing so at Chrysler in 1944 during an FAA dispute, "were boooed and jeered and it was made very difficult for them to stay in." Some foremen alleged that they were physically abused by production workers. Production workers also refused to take over any aspect of supervisory duties, even leading hands at Hudson in 1944 refused to carry on in this capacity and reverted to normal production work for the duration of the dispute. "Normal" production work while the FAA was on strike became a mixture of induced chaos, deliberate go-slows or unofficial complete stoppages. At Packard in 1944 for example it was reported that, "Workers sat around doing nothing - even singing or dancing during working hours...They hammered on benches, creating a general pandemonium, which (UAW) plant committeemen made no attempt to control." Loafing, playing cards and crap games, and general abuses of quality criteria were all alleged to have taken place. In one department at Chrysler drill fixtures were hidden and, since no-one was available to sign requisitions for replacements, no production took place. At Ford in 1947, despite nominal refusal of support for the FAA strike by UAW members, 150 were sent home from the pressed steel department for "slowdown" and "sabotage".

Production figures during FAA disputes are a good indicator of the level of support given by production workers, since, given the nature of the foreman's role in a rationalised mass production
factory, in the short term at least workers should be able to carry out production with minimal interruption without the presence of the foreman. Some account must be taken of the confusion which is bound to arise with the withdrawal of the residual coordinatory function of foremen, and the natural tendency of workers to take advantage of the situation to ease the pace of work. Even so, production shortfalls were often dramatic, suggesting a more deliberate strategy on behalf of unionised workers. The FAA strike at Chrysler in 1944 cost 400,000 man hours in lost production over 21 days. (127) Some departments at Briggs went down to only 35% production in the strike of the same period when over 216,000 man hours were lost. Ford Willow Run production fell below 50% in the 1942 FAA strikes, with some departments falling to only 10% of normal output levels. Both Packard and Hudson suffered eventual total shutdown in the 1944 strikes, Packard alone laying off 30,000 workers and losing 1,800,000 man hours. (128) When naval officials visited Briggs in 1944 to see the effects of the FAA strike they were so dismayed at the level of quality of production that they ordered an immediate complete shutdown of the entire plant. (129)

In addition to these general explicit or indirect levels of support for the FAA from production workers there are also indications that a significant degree of aid was forthcoming from local officials of the productions workers unions, in particular the UAW. Circulation of FAA information, copies of "The Supervisor" and membership forms was often carried out by UAW stewards. Evidence presented before the NLRB in 1944, consisting of 1200 items of FAA correspondence, indicated strong "collusion" between the FAA and UAW at the local

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level. (130) The president of UAW local 409 offered to organise educational meetings for foremen, another UAW local official wrote of having "close to 200 stewards in the plant...if you could send us about that many papers, we are certain of a good distribution of them - right on the foremens desks...Material can be left on the foreman's desk without anyone knowing who left it there." (131) The last phrase is indicative of the general caginess surrounding any disclosure of a close relationship between the two unions. Yet in many cases the UAW, at the local level at least was fairly open in its support. The local union press, as we saw in the previous chapter, had run a campaign designed to pillory particular foremen accused of driving production or harsh treatment, but had also been ready to praise those judged to be cooperative foremen. In a similar vein local UAW papers were equally willing to extol the virtues of a union for foremen. Several UAW local papers carried news of FAA events and dates of future meetings. (132) Some articles feigned a low level of knowledge. The 'Highland Park Herald' for example, referring to the FAA, noted, "This is not a CIO organisation but they deserve our support. We don't know much about them but if we did we couldn't say much for fear of putting someone on the spot." (133) The 'DeSoto Searchlight' was more forthright. "We hope that they few foremen who were taken in by the management's baloney will now snap out of the dope and realise that in the union there is strength...So join the FAA boys." (134) Others took on a confrontational posture. The GM Chevrolet local's 'Searchlight' asserted that pressure will be required to convince the more timid foremen that they will need protection in post war days...Better think

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it over any of you foremen who still nourish scabby ideas. In other words, "You better get in, before we begin"."(135)

Other union locals were prepared to elaborate a fairly radical overall schema of recruitment of which unions such as the FAA were to be only the first stage. The Mechanics Education Society of America's 'MESA Educator' of May 1944 for example contained an editorial destined to alarm employers. "Organisation of any part of industry management means that bargaining must eventually take place between those who work for a living, whether it be by hand or brain, and those who clip for a living. (A reference to shareholders "clipping" dividends) It draws the line not between one group of workers who work at machines and another group who direct them, but between all the workers and all those who live off their efforts..."(136) It was this style of comment, which went on to refer to supervisory unionism as a precursor to a "socialized economy", which was seized upon by employers in their own publicity campaigns against the FAA. The leadership of both the FAA and most production workers unions were acutely aware of how damaging such statements could be in providing ammunition to anti-union employers in their efforts, not only against the FAA but also against the production workers union movement in general.

The strongest line of objection that employers raised against the FAA in certification hearings before the NLRB was that foremen's union was bound to become enmeshed in the production workers union organisations and thus lose any independent control. Foremen at best would have dual loyalties and at worst would become hostile to employers. Employers arguments usually involved the FAA either
affiliating to the CIO or being absorbed by the UAW and losing independence entirely. The CIO or UAW would thus "sit on both sides of the bargaining table." Given a lack of formal evidence for such links employers often simply asserted that the presence of the FAA made foremen "union minded" and thus antipathetic to management or unwilling to carry out disciplinary functions involving fellow union members on the shop floor. Much of this line of argument was spurious of course and delivered through the medium of extremist rhetoric, nevertheless both the UAW and FAA leadership, broadly sympathetic to each other's ideals and aims as they might be, found it necessary to exercise extreme caution in their public activities in order to avoid giving substance to the above allegations. This must be borne in mind as we turn to an examination of the levels of support given by the leadership of the production workers unions and their organisations to the FAA.

The situation was made more difficult for the FAA and UAW by developments in the mining industry. In December 1940 a group of foremen in the Ford Collieries company formed the Mine Officials Union of America (MOUA). The NLRB granted certification to this union in June 1942. When faced with supreme court action by the mining companies the MOUA promptly applied for affiliation to John Lewis's Union of Mine Workers (UMW), itself a CIO affiliate. Formally affiliated in April 1943 the union changed its name to the United Clerical, Technical, and Supervisory Employees of District 50, U.M.W. (UCTSE). The union's membership rose to over 60,000 by 1945 aided by the fact that the UMW had closed shop agreements in many collieries. During 1944, in tandem with the activities of the
FAA, the UCTSE was engaged in strike activity in a number of collieries, with quite effective results. 200,000 workers were laid off at the mines of Jones and Laughlin Steel for example and 70 other pits were affected. In many cases ordinary UMW members refused to cross UCTSE picket lines. Such concerted activity, when added to the inclusion of the UCTSE in Lewis's general UMW bargaining strategy, seemed to confirm what employers had been saying all along - that a foremen's union could not remain independent for any length of time.(139) In the event Lewis was to abandon the foremen's union as part of a pay deal for UMW members and affiliation was withdrawn following the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947. These events formed the backdrop to the progress of the FAA and the image of the openly supportive relationship between production workers' and supervisors' unions in mining was to be constantly reinvoked by automobile industry employers as proof of the inevitability of ultimate control of the FAA by the UAW.

The overall stance of the major organisations of labour - the AFL and CIO - was openly supportive of foremen's rights to unionise under the provisions of existing laws i.e. freedom to bargain collectively through agents of their own choosing. William Green, president of the AFL called it "not only unfair but absurd to exclude supervisory employees from the benefits and protections of the Wagner Act."(140) The Michigan state CIO Councils annual convention of June 1943 passed a resolution "supporting the fight of the foremen to establish collective bargaining rights and other rights guaranteed by the Wagner Act."(141)

The CIO General Counsel, Lee Pressman, testifying before a Congressional committee, outlined the organisation's position when he
stated that only employees who did significant work at the tools should be eligible to join the CIO production workers affiliates, but that a separate organisation for foremen would be perfectly feasible, as was more than bargaining unit per plant. Thus the UAW and the FAA could, in the opinion of the CIO, coexist perfectly happily in the same plant. Pressman went on to deny any intention of the CIO to "take over" the FAA, and if the FAA did chose to affiliate to the CIO this would in no way mean control by the UAW simply because that union was also affiliated.\textsuperscript{(142)}

Beyond this rhetorical stance neither the CIO nor the AFL made any serious attempt to actively recruit foremen's unions. Instead they arrived at a tacit understanding that both organisations should stay clear of this strata of the workforce. The president of the CIO went on record to say that the CIO was content to do without foremen's unions, although he warned that if the AFL became overtly interested then the CIO would also "move in."\textsuperscript{(143)} In the event both organisations did make limited attempts to affiliate foremen's unions after the war, but on modest scale only, and to be abandoned in 1947.

The FAA was to maintain its formal independence throughout its history, although there were times as we shall see, when FAA leaders became less enthusiastic about its non-affiliation to the CIO, AFL or the production worker's unions. Other unions for foremen did affiliate, or become established as locals of union internationals. The UCTSE, as we have seen was one example of the latter as it became a UMW local. The MESA also organised some foremen into locals from 1944 onwards.\textsuperscript{(144)} By 1947 at least ten CIO and AFL affiliated unions were applying to the NLRB for certification to bargain for foremen.
These included the International Union of Operating Engineers (AFL), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL), the International Association of Machinists, the Textile Workers Union of America (CIO) and the United Electrical Workers (CIO). Several other unions exclusively for foremen also affiliated to the major organisations. The United Foremen of America became an affiliate of the CIO's United Steel Workers in 1946, the Supervisory Employees Federal Union set up county jurisdiction in Milwaukee under the AFL in 1946 as did the Foremen's Federal Labour Union in Granite City. Other foremen's unions followed the FAA pattern and remained independent. Examples of this include the Electric Utility Foreman's Association, the Wright Aircraft Supervisory Association, the American Smelting and Refining Foreman's Association and the Boeing Aircraft Foremen's Association.

Most of these unions were small by comparison to the FAA, and were to remain in its shadow, owing their existence at least partly to the FAA's efforts to secure the right for foremen to organise. Given that the FAA was by far the most prominent of supervisory unions, it is proposed, for economy of space, to limit analysis to the specific relationship of that union with the production workers organisations in the automobile industry, notably the UAW.

The official policy of the UAW towards foremen's unionisation was similar to that adopted by the CIO, at least at leadership level. Walter Reuther defended the FAA in broad terms; "If they want to organise they have that right of the American Citizen"(148) As far as the UAW was concerned though they were not interested in adding the foremen to their ranks. On this point Reuther was unequivocal; "We
could have had the foremen. We directly said we wouldn't take them because we know the kind of fuzzy problems you get into...I don't think you can represent labour and management at the same time." (149) This stance highlights the precise nature of UAW strategy at this time and its ambitions for the union movement at large i.e. Reuther's jettisoning of any broad socialist ideology with the UAW as a springboard and instead adopting a pragmatic nationally organised but essentially accommodationist policy which was to result in a domination by the leadership and the pattern bargaining/C.O.L.A. agreements of the post war period. (150) Richard Frankensteen, vice-president of the UAW was quite candid about keeping the foremen out of his union; "first of all I would not trust them to speak for the interests of the people I represent." (151) Frankensteen also used a different criteria for the definition of a supervisor from that used by the CIO. He emphasised the power of hire and fire as the crucial divide rather than work at the tools. He did not rule out the possibility that the FAA might affiliate to the CIO, but was emphatic in restressing Reuther's assertions that the UAW did not want them. (152)

In spite of such sentiments unions like the UAW were not above using the foremen's union and its disputes in their tactical campaigns against employers. There was greater picket line cooperation, readily sanctioned by the UAW leadership, during the 'reconversion' strikes of 1945 for example, when the UAW itself was pressing for new agreements, than in the 1944 FAA strike wave and more so in the 1947 FAA-Ford strike, when the UAW leadership proved reluctant to give more than token support. The rank and file of the UAW, as we have seen, was

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often more willing to give substance to pledges of support for the FAA and on numerous occasions the union leadership was forced to intervene to impose "discipline" and instruct their members to work normally. (153) In this posture the UAW was not alone. The Teamsters' leadership also stepped in at Ford in 1947 for example to instruct their drivers to refrain from honouring FAA picket lines. (154)

The UAW generally adhered their vague pledge of support for the foremen's right to some form of representative organisation and, during strike periods members were instructed to perform only their normal jobs and "not to assume the functions or performance of duties normally carried out by foremen." (155) Beyond this it was clear that the UAW had no strong commitment to aiding the FAA. Reuther had no ambitions to complicate what was becoming a clear line of demarcation between union and employer by recruiting or aiding intermediary ranks. There was little to gain in establishing close links with the FAA since the UAW already had a substantial power base by 1941, having organised all three of the major producers. Given the virulent employer and state reaction to the FAA, support for that union might easily mean more trouble than it was worth. This was especially true of the post-war period around 1947 when reaction to unionism in general was building and the extension of unionisation to foremen provided an easy target to those accusing the union movement of coveting a "socialised economy". Earlier reluctance on the part of the UAW leadership to give full support to the FAA might also be linked to the no-strike pledges of wartime production. Partly to aid the Soviet war effort and partly to demonstrate the responsibility and patriotism of unions like the UAW, these pledges were quite rigidly adhered to.
Thus the FAA's insistence on strike action, which precipitated some of the most costly stoppages during the war period, was unlikely to elicit much sympathy from leaders of the UAW. (156)

Many FAA members were no doubt glad of their independence. Unionisation itself involved a major rethink of their position without the added complexity of finding themselves embroiled in the same organisation as their subordinates. For some foremen close association with unions such as the UAW could diminish their status and prestige. As one foreman put it, "If we belonged to the same organisation as the men, I do not think that would be right because they are considered, you know, a little below us. We are foremen." (157) Many other FAA members, particularly those newly promoted and with experience of UAW membership, may have held a different opinion although the step to foremanship with its continued appeals to status should not be underestimated in its power to generate a desire to stay aloof from the organisations of the production workers.

Whether or not foremen of this period developed a general "union consciousness" or any sense of solidarity with a broad labour movement is a difficult question, since the definition of the concepts involved are problematic. There are many examples in the history of unionisation in Britain and the US where unions have shown themselves to be essentially divisive and as much about defending their position against each other as against employers - craft versus general or industrial unions, the jurisdictional disputes of the AFL and CIO and so on. At the level of ordinary membership some level of affinity is bound to exist, certainly in times of high union visibility such as in the automobile industry in the 1940s, but in general the ordinary
foreman's interest in unionisation extended only as far as an instrumental desire to preserve or enhance his position in terms of tangible economic or job related benefits.

The leadership of the FAA operated under a different set of imperatives. For them there were pragmatic considerations to be taken into account in assessing their relationship to the wider union movement. The union was still comparatively small in number, faced with a concerted employer campaign and wavering state support, and reliant to a large extent on the conduct of production workers to make any industrial action effective.

The FAA leadership continued to mirror that of the UAW in their official pronouncements, espousing a claim to their legal rights to organise but strongly protesting their desire to remain independent. President Robert Keys outlined the FAA strategy - "the (UAW) union men feel that they want to set up a unit to bargain for the workmen and in doing so exclude the foremen. Therefore we start our own organisation and just as they excluded us, we are going to exclude higher ups...We want the workers to have their unions and get for their people what they can...We ask them to allow us to do the same thing...We should be separate." Keys thought there would be "considerable danger" if foremen belonged to the same union as production workers or affiliated to the CIO. "We all want a square deal in this industrial picture, the men, the foremen and management. It would be pretty hard to maintain this balance if the rank and file were members of the same parent organisation as the foremen." It is interesting that Keys set up this tripartite distinction - men, foremen and management - in contrast to the simply dichotomy proposed
by employers, i.e. workers and management, with foremen in the latter category.

Beneath the outward appearance of a desire for independence, from either the union movement or the strictures of being bracketed as part of management, the FAA would probably have liked closer links with the UAW or CIO. Early on the FAA organisational director, Elmer Ross, had let it be known that in his opinion the CIO and AFL had left foremen "out on a limb" and they had been more or less forced to stay independent. (161)

At the formal level then the FAA maintained or was forced to maintain its independence. Both the NLRB and NWLB failed to find any direct links between the FAA and the UAW. The NWLB's Slichter panel, though holding some misgivings about developments in the coal industry and the absorption of the UCTSE by the UMW, were nevertheless convinced that such an outcome in the automobile industry was unlikely given no concrete indication that the FAA and UAW were working in accord. (162) The NLRB echoed these findings despite the evidence of subpoenaed FAA correspondence and proclaimed, "There is not a scintilla of evidence in the record to suggest that the CIO or any other labour organisation has any voice in the politics or control over the actions of the Association." The board chose only to note "a common purpose". (163)

Despite these findings and public assurances by the FAA leadership of a continued desire to remain independent, there were intermittent appeals for support. Keys went to Cleveland in May 1943 to negotiate with UAW president Thomas. The result - what employers were to call the "Thomas - Keys peace pact" - was simply a re-
stressing of "support in principle but not in practice" and repeated assurances that UAW members would not engage in supervisory tasks. (164) There was some interchange of information between the FAA and UAW connected with mutual aid in setting up wage claims etc.. The UAW used FAA research on job learning times to further claims before the NWLB over rates in 1944 for example. (165) Aid in the form of concerted official industrial action was not a feature of the relationship however, in spite of the periodic appeals by the FAA.

The strongest of these appeals were to come in 1947 when the FAA was faced with the newly confrontational Ford management and the impending disabling legislation of Taft-Hartley. A victory in the strike at Ford at that time would have given the FAA an important boost. Keys sent out an official plea to the UAW's Walter Reuther asking him to instruct UAW members not to cross FAA picket lines at Ford, and also sent telegrams urging a national labour boycott of Ford products. Towards the end of the strike Keys sent appeals to the UAW for financial assistance and urged them to set up a strike fund to aid the FAA. The UAW international executive response was limited to offering to mediate in the dispute by acting as a go-between. (166) Workers crossed the FAA picket lines, and in spite of falling production levels the strike was terminated by the FAA after 72 days representing a comprehensive defeat for the union. (167)

On a number of occasions it was within the UAW's power to give substantial aid to, and possibly to save the FAA from defeat at Ford and from eventual collapse. In common with Reuther's remarks that the UAW "could have had the foremen" if they had chosen so to do, the attitude of the UAW leadership was a mixture of political expediency.
in the face of gathering employer hostility and the result of a strictly limited set of jurisdictional goals for the union movement. In the long term without the official support of the UAW or the wider union movement the failure of the FAA was hastened. There were other major elements involved in the decline, which will be explored in subsequent chapters, but the independence of the FAA, forced or otherwise, left it unprotected in the face of employers' countermeasures which were eventually to prevail.

In summary, this chapter has briefly outlined the history of foremen's unionisation in industry in general and in the automobile industry in particular. The early attempts to unionise foremen at Chrysler in UAW Local 918 in 1938 can be seen as a important precursor to the emergence of the FAA, which went on to become the most important 20th century attempt to unionise supervision in American industry. The Chrysler experience was to highlight the foreman's proclivity to organise in modern industry given the right environment, the virulence of employer opposition to such organisation, and also the eventual reluctance of the union movement in general, and the UAW in particular, to provide support at anything more than token levels.

The foundation of the FAA in 1941 was based on a number of factors and explanations concentrating on a central dynamic located in the sphere of state and legislative support need to be modified accordingly. The influence of production workers unions had an important effect at a number of levels. The securing of real wage rises and fixed, uniform, pay structures, albeit greatly enhanced by the immediate circumstances of war production, led to the consequent
erosion and obliteration of foremen's pay differentials. Government pay restrictions only perpetuated this growing disparity, as did an ideological stance on the part of many employers which ruled out the inclusion of foremen in overtime, bonus or similar cash based incentives. Management chose instead to emphasise the prestige aspects of the foremen's job. Many foremen, overworked in the turmoil and intensity of war production, not surprisingly rejected this supposed status as adequate recompense, turning instead to the FAA for redress.

Beyond purely financial gains foremen saw, in the systems of collective bargaining operated by unions such as the UAW, the advantages to be gained in conditions of work and security of employment. The need for seniority provisions had a wide appeal for many foremen who sought job protection in the envisaged return to depression production levels with the cessation of armaments manufacture. The manifest failure and inadequacy of the "open door" system of individual representation also saw many foremen wishing to emulate the fixed grievance procedures which seemed to work so effectively for their workers.

At a more direct level the influence of production workers' unions can be seen to operate at two levels. In terms of the general membership it has been seen that, with the increased output of wartime, large numbers of production workers, most with many years of experience of union representation, were promoted to the ranks of foreman. Receptivity to the notion of a union for foremen was thus bound to high among these workers. Rank and file members of the production workers unions and their local officials can also be seen to display support for the FAA in terms of overt support such as

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respecting picket lines, distributing FAA promotional literature and so on, or tacit support in the form of ensuring the maximum disruption of production during FAA disputes.

In terms of the leadership of the production workers union movement, both the CIO and AFL and individual internationals like the UAW were to espouse the rights of foremen to protection under the tenets of the Wagner Act but to refrain from advocating any formal links. Officially the FAA was to keep its independence from the general union movement, a difficult enough task given managerial proclivity for outlining unionisation in black and white terms, and the resulting elusiveness of a working definition of "neutrality" for unionised foremen. For employers, as we shall see in more detail below, foremen were either with management or against them. Wary of this attitude and the outcome of foremen's attempts to unionise in the coal industry which had resulted in the ultimate lapse into formal domination of the UCTSE by the Lewis's UMW, both the UAW and FAA leadership were at pains to stress that they were not acting in concert or affiliated to any common organisation. The UAW leadership was undoubtedly more fastidious in adherence to this principle and it was eventually their reluctance to afford the FAA the protection and resources of the wider union movement which hastened the decline of the foremen's union movement. Support for foremen's unionisation can be seen as a good example of the growing contrast between the perceived pragmatism of the UAW leadership and the more radical aspirations of local officers and rank and file members. (168)

There were other important influences behind the formation of the FAA beyond the pressures, examples and indirect support of the
production workers movement. In order to fully understand these it is necessary to examine the FAA in more detail - its membership profile and the general aims and ideology of both its members and leadership. The next chapter will do this and in addition look more closely at the specific phase of wartime restructuring of the labour market and methods of production and control from which the union emerged.
Footnotes Chapter Six

   National War Labour Board, Report on Findings of a Panel of the National War Labour Board in Certain Disputes Involving Supervisors, Washington, Jan 1945, pp. 52-3;

2. US Department of Labour, Union Membership and Collective Bargaining by Foremen, Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS), Bulletin No. 745, Washington 1943, p. 4;
   Chamberlain, op. cit., p. 315.

   US Department of Labour, op.cit., p. 4;
   Leiter, op.cit., pp. 62-69;
   Business Week, Nov 23 1940, pp. 53-54.


5. Harry Burr, the man in question had recently been promoted to assistant foreman. The union membership were happy for him to continue as their president. Flint AC Spark Plug, UAW/AFL Local 18444 Minutes, Sept 5 1933, H.Kraus Coll. box 8, WRALUA.

Foremen in Britain during the 1920s had been able to continue as A.E.U. members after promotion by paying dues to a central headquarters, being careful to stay clear of local branch meetings.


These workers were usually on specified general pay scales, 5c or 10c above the prevailing rate.


Workers in the Society of Designing Engineers who took supervisory jobs "while in good standing" with the union, received a "Gold Card" to signify continued honorary membership. Bernard Hoffman, Diaries, WRALUA, Oct 8 1941.

Workers in the Society of Designing Engineers who took supervisory jobs "while in good standing" with the union, received a "Gold Card" to signify continued honorary membership. Bernard Hoffman, Diaries, WRALUA, Oct 8 1941.
13. Clarence Bolds, the president of Local 918, who had worked at Kelsey Hayes for ten years, had a brother who was an official in the ITU printing union which included foremen as members.

   'New Allies in Guise of Foremen Keep Rallying to CIO Banner', Kelsey-Hayes Picket, Vol. 3, No. 6, June 6 1939;
   Slichter Panel Report, p. 117.

15. UAW-CIO Editorial, Apr 29 1939, J. Brown Coll. box 10, WRALUA.
   Bolds, op. cit., passim.

   Cross, op. cit., pp. 281-3;

17. Under the provisions of the Wagner Act unions could hold elections under the aegis of the three-man National Labour Relations Board to determine sole bargaining agents. Henry Pelling, American Labour, Chicago 1965, p. 61;

18. Cross, op. cit., pp. 281-3;
   Detroit News, Nov 22 1939, p. 3.


22. Detroit News, Nov 23 1939, p. 3.


24. Detroit Free Press, Nov 23 1939, p. 4

   'CIO-UAW and Foremen's Union Work Together', Detroit Free Press, Nov 24 1939, p. 24, alleges that various CIO officials, including Maurice Sugar and Adolph Germer, work for Local 918.

26. Philip Murray, CIO President, signed a contract officially banning the foremen's local from any part in UAW-Chrysler negotiations on November 29th 1939. Detroit Times, Nov 29 1939, p. 1;

27. The CIO was still receiving enquiries well into 1940. It tended to ignore these however. See for example UAW-Chrysler Local 7, Grievance Reports, May 13 1940, in Digaetano Coll., WRALUA.

28. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 176-80;

29. Local 235 News, Oct 9 1939, p. 1;
   See also, 'Foremen and Supervisors Attention: Don't Let GM Fool You Any Longer', leaflet in W.Reuther Coll. box 26:15, WRALUA.

30. UAW Local 662, Union Shop Drives - Education Material, in J.Roeder Coll. box 2, WRALUA.
31. Restriction of the use of sit-down strike tactics is a notable example of the UAW leadership's concern to limit the spread of radicalism among rank and file members. In the official UAW Union Handbook of April 1937 for example Richard Frankensteen was already warning against "those who, through 'slow-downs' and 'sit-downs' and spreading of rumours, break down confidence in our union...".

'Review of Association History', The Supervisor, Vol.4, No.1, Jan 1945;
David Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, unpub. PhD, Wisconsin, 1948;
General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, pp. 2-3.

33. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, Ex.B, append.;
Larrowe, op.cit., p. 271;


35. Ibid;
US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, p. 1245.

36. US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, pp. 501,506;
General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, p. 17;
Larrowe, op.cit., p. 275fn.

38. FAA-Ford Motor Company Agreement, May 9 1944, pp. 1-19, in 
   Wisconsin State Historical Society collection.


40. In contrast to the Wagner Act which used the term "employees", 
   the Railway Labour Act of 1917 specifically referred to "supervisors" 
   to avoid any interpretational disputes.


42. Ibid., passim; 
   General Motors Corporation, *History of the Movement to Organise 
   Foremen*; 
   E. Dale, 'The American Foreman Unionises', *Journal of Business, 
   University of Chicago*, Vol.XIX, No.1, Jan 1946; 
   Levinson, op.cit.; 
   H. R. Northrup, 'The Foreman's Association of America', *Harvard 
   V. A. Seitz, 'Legal, Legislative and Managerial Responses to the 
   Organisation of Supervisory Employees in the 1940s', *American Journal 

42. R. A. Winters, Memo to Slichter Panel, July 22 1944, p. 2, copy 
   in NWLB Coll., Littauer.

43. Ibid., passim; 
   See also US Department of Labour, Bureau of Labour Statistics, 
   'Wage Structure of the Motor Vehicle Industry', Report No.706, 1942, 
   p16, which notes that the earnings of 80-90% of the industry's 
   employees had "risen sharply" since unionisation.


46. NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, pp. 336,2263-4; NWLB, *Slichter Panel Report*, pp. 81,104,143-5; NICB, op.cit., Section (iv), 'Methods of Paying Foremen'. The survey found only 13 out of 46 companies to be paying foremen on a salaried basis in 1941.

47. Chrysler Corporation, Brief before the NWLB, Case no.111-4747-D, prepared by Rathbone, Perry, Kelley and Drye, NY, June 1944, pp. 21-3.


50. Cf. 'Foremen's Compensation', *Personnel*, Vol.22, No.1, July 1945, which reported a survey of 50 large employers finding an average of 15% differential between foremen and workers; See also 'Differentials in Supervisory Pay', in NICB, *Foremen Compensation*, p. 7.

51. NICB, *Foremen Compensation*, passim.


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53. Winters R.A., Memo to NWLB Slichter Panel, June 10 1944, p. 6, Littauer NWLB Coll..


56. Ibid., pp. 41-2.

57. R. A. Winters, memo to NWLB Slichter Panel, undated 1944, p. 6 NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 37,186; NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 89.


59. US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p. 343; NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 43.

60. Winters, Memo to NWLB Slichter Panel, June 10 1944.


64. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, pp. 104-5; NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3511.


66. ACWP, Manpower Division, Foreman's Incentive Plans, Study Series No.3, Detroit 1944, p. 1; ACWP, Manpower Division, Incentives, Study Series No.12, Detroit 1944, Section 1.

67. NICB, Foremen Compensation, Table 2, 'Foremen's Bonus'.

68. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 91; NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 163,1771-79.


70. NICB, op.cit., 'Suggestion Awards', passim.


72. Ibid.

73. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 2251-52.

74. Ibid., pp. 450,3125-32,3525-6,3539; General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 38; NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, pp. 130-132; Levinson, Unionisation of Foremen, p. 70.

75. ACWP, Foremen's Compensation Policies, p. 3; Presidential Executive Order 9240 also blocked attempts to increase overtime rates for weekend work. The order was designed to

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stop workers taking days off in the week and then working at the advantageous weekend rates. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3115-6.


77. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 485-91; General Motors Corporation, op. cit., p. 41.

78. Packard Motor Car Co., loc. cit..


80. NWLB, memo, undated, in Littauer NWLB Coll..


82. ACWP, op. cit., 'Rate Schedules'.

83. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 344-5, 416, 441; NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 81.

84. US Congress, op. cit., p. 359.

85. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 375-6, 379, 2283-4.


87. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 440-2.


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89. Ibid., pp. 338, 544, 391, 408-9, 416, 2100, 2254-6, 2264, 2287, 3008-9, 3189.

90. By 1946 at Ford the FAA negotiations had come to mirror, almost exactly, those of the UAW with the foremen putting in parallel wage claims of 30%. Detroit Times Jan 8 1946.

91. General Motors Corporation, *History of the Movement to Organise Foremen*, p. 45;
    NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, pp. 23, 201;

    R. A. Winters, memo to NWLB, July 21 1944, p. 5, Littauer NWLB Coll.;
    US Congress, *Full Utilisation of Manpower*, p. 359;
    NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, p. 413.

93. Ibid., pp. 468-71.

94. Ibid., pp. 2161-64.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid., pp. 1356, 3068;

97. Winters R.A., memo to NWLB, Oct 7 1944, pp. 2-3, in Littauer NWLB Coll..


100. Winters, op. cit., passim.

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101. FAA-Ford Motor Company Agreement, May 9 1944, passim; Winters to NWLB, July 22 1944, passim; NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3068.


103. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1908-13,3216.

104. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 128.


108. Northrup, The Foreman's Association of America, p. 188; See NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3431-46 for similar figures at Hudson.

109. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 88; NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, Chrysler Company Exhibit No.4; and pp. 1750-3.


111. Winters to Detroit Regional Board XI, passim.

112. General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen; NWLB memo, Littauer NWLB coll., undated.

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13. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3036;  
NWL, Slichter Panel Report, p. 29;  
General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 27.

*Detroit Free Press*, May 28 1947;  
Ford Motor Company, News Release, May 22 1947, Ford Archive,  
xox 97, acc.536, reported a 75% drop in the number of trucks entering  
the River Rouge plant during the 1947 FAA strike.

15. US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, p. 1244;  
Chrysler Corporation, NWLB brief, Case No.111-4747-D, pp. 54-56.


18. Ibid., p. 54.


20. General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 27;  
NWL, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 190;  
*Detroit News*, June 9 1947;  

21. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 191-3,2203-4;  
US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, pp. 136-8,163-9;  
US Senate, Investigation of the National Defence Programme,  
Pt.28, Manpower Problems in Detroit, 79th Congress, 1st Session,  

22. General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 27.

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123. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3561; General Motors Corporation, op.cit., pp. 24-5; Chrysler-NWLB, op.cit., pp. 40-41.

124. Packard- NLRB brief, Case No.7-R-1884, pp. 64-5,67.

125. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 2204-6.


127. US Senate, Manpower Problems in Detroit, p. 13604.

128. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 2203-4; For production shortfalls in 1947 see report in Detroit Free Press, June 10 1947. Ford body production fell by over 65% in the space of one week.

129. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 2206.


132. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1893-4.

133. Chrysler Corp., op.cit., p. 42.

134. Ibid., pp. 42-3.

135. General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, p. 6.

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136. MESA Educator, May 1944.

Larrowe, A Meteor on the Industrial Relations Horizon, p. 273;

138. Seitz, Legal, Legislative and Managerial Responses, p. 211;
Chamber of Commerce of the USA, The Unionisation of Supervisory Employees, Apr 28 1943, p. 3.
Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, p. 165.

139. Chicago Journal of Commerce, June 3 1946, p. 1;
Levinson, op.cit., p. 189;

140. US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, p. 1042.

141. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 176-80,1645;
US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, p. 41;
General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, p. 67;

142. Ibid., pp. 299-327. One bargaining unit per plant was seen in this case to extend to production and maintenance workers only.

143. General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 18.


145. US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, p. 1236;

146. US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, pp1228,1236;
Milwaukee Journal, Apr 21 1946;

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AFL Strikes and Agreements, Series 7, box 72, Locals 23833,23967, WSHS.

National Foremen's Institute, Executive Labour News, June 25 1946.

147. Business Week, Sept 16 1944, pp. 105-6;
    New York Times, Oct 3 1944;

148. US Senate, Manpower Problems in Detroit, p. 13768.

149. Reuther to Senate Mead Committee, Mar 10 1945. Quoted in General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen, App.H, pp. 2-3, see also pp. 4-5.

    Harry C. Katz, Shifting Gears: Changing Labour Relations in the US Automobile Industry, MIT 1985, Ch.1;


152. Ibid., pp. 448-475.

153. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 2206-11;
    NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 29;
    US Senate, Labour Relations Programme, p. 1244;
154. Ibid.;
   Detroit News, May 30 1947;


156. Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, 237-40;


158. Ibid., pp. 366,502;
   NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 1246;

159. US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, pp. 686-7; see also pp. 340-1.

   Business Week Nov 24 1945;
   Article 4 of the FAA Constitution actually forbade affiliation to any other labour organisation. US Senate, Labour Disputes Act, p. 221.


162. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 169;
   General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 53.

163. NLRB Case No.61,NLRB,4, 1945, quoted in Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, p. 16;
   General Motors Corporation, op.cit., p. 67.

164. Ibid., p. 18.

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    UAW Research Department, Series 1, Subseries 1a, box 13:11, July
    13 1945, corresp., WRALUA.


    Nelson Lichtenstein, 'Auto Worker Militancy and the Structure of
    pp. 335-353.
Chapter Seven: FAA - Aims and Environment

Having established some of the influences and pressures upon foremanship which production workers unionisation had generated, this chapter will turn to an examination of two further aspects of the morphology of the FAA. Firstly it will examine the precise constituency of the union - to which sectors of supervision did it appeal. What profiles, if any, can be said to typify the leaders or ordinary membership? Secondly, what were the union's aims and general ideology, and how can the surprising degrees of radicalism exhibited by the FAA be explained in terms of short and long term objectives? Thirdly, to what extent did changes in the immediate environment of production - particularly during wartime - create an atmosphere conducive to, or indeed forcing foremen's collective action.

To whom did the FAA appeal? In terms of formal eligibility the union generally limited membership to those involved in direct supervision on the shop floor. Definitional criteria did often vary from firm to firm however, dependent upon the peculiar complexities of individual supervisory jobs or simple inconsistency in titles. At the lower end of the scale the FAA had this definitional problem solved for them by the production workers unions' which had established their own working membership qualifications and usually excluded workers who did not spend a given percentage of their time at work directly on production. Thus leading hands, utility men and relief men might be considered as eligible by the UAW for example, but anyone of the rank of assistant foreman or above was out of bounds in terms of
The upper limit of eligibility was to cause the FAA most problems. The union itself chose a broad distinction between those who were "administrative management" and those defined as "policy formulating management", the latter to be excluded. Not surprisingly employers refused to recognise such a distinction, insisting instead that all foremen had some role in formulating policy. Other definitions were also promulgated by the FAA including even more subjective limits e.g. "those whose duties require the supervision of other employees or who direct work". In the event each company or plant had to be negotiated individually in this respect. At Packard for example assistant foremen, foremen and general foremen were eligible, division managers were not. At Ford, agreements excluded assistant superintendents, superintendents, building superintendents and "administrative supervisors". The latter definition was taken to mean non-shop floor based supervision.

Disputes around the issue of eligibility were common, particularly around the upper limit. Titles often meant different things to different companies. Ford for example protested that their general foremen's job content would lead them to be classified as departmental superintendents in other companies. Similarly one general foreman at Hudson was in charge of nearly 400 workers, the company arguing that many superintendents in other plants would carry less responsibility. The definitional problem was compounded by the use by many employers of the tactic of artificially upgrading workers explicitly to place them beyond the reach of the FAA. This happened at Briggs in 1944 for example when many foremen were promoted to
assistant superintendent and superintendent. The FAA response in this case was to extend its definitional criteria to encompass both these ranks. The NLRB response when called upon to arbitrate in such cases was to hold two separate certification elections, one exclusively for superintendents. The FAA often overreached its appeal in attempting to encompass this latter group. This was clearly illustrated at Hudson in 1946 when superintendents rejected the FAA as a bargaining agent by a ratio of ten to one whereas the rest of supervision were in favour of the union by a margin of 294 to 4. (6)

Jurisdictional definitions for the purposes of formal agreements are perhaps of less interest here than the attempt to outline which sector of foremanship, defined by age, background, ideology and so on, the FAA appealed most strongly to. A division of foremen into two basic groupings - conservative, traditional, reactionary etc. on one hand and ambitious, radical, responsive to innovation etc. on the other - has formed the basis of a number of more recent arguments. Nichols and Beynon for example distinguished between "traditional foremen" and "management men" in their study of a large British chemical plant. The latter group was more receptive to change, ready to assimilate rather than resist knowledge of new technology and new methods and identified itself with managerial prerogatives. (7) Fletcher's study highlighted similar general divisions, this time with a third, intermediary strata. Conservatives - older, with lower levels of formal education and longer serving - and revolutionaries - young, better educated, more recently promoted and critical of managerial inertia were separated by a third category of radical foremen. (8) Other studies have noted the resistance by older, more established
foremen to change in the form of rationalisation of the labour process. Littler's study of the Bedaux system showed that older foremen were regarded as a "major source of resistance" to the system's implementation. Similarly Henry Gantt, designer of a popular group incentive system, observed that resistance among older foremen was "perhaps the hardest obstacle to overcome" in the entire process of installation. Mass Observation's 1942 survey of British industry noted the wide variety of types of foremen but again drew attention to the distinct divide between younger foremen and their older, "strongly conservative" counterparts. The University of Michigan Studebaker study carried out in 1943 also found older foremen to be more conservative and less willing to undertake or adopt new training methods.

The importance of these studies and observations is their refutation of the notion of a monolithic group of foremen generally represented as "men in the middle". Foremen can more accurately seen to occupy a broad band in the hierarchy of the workforce, their position relating to managerial ideology being overdetermined by a composite of factors intrinsic and extrinsic to the factory - ethnicity, gender, education, training, and in particular, age and experience. The importance of these factors are in turn shaped by the levels of change of markets, production methods etc. in any specific period.

Accepting these complexities and resultant inadequacy of too rigid a categorisation of foremen into fixed groups we can nevertheless see that during the early 1940s, with the introduction of new, highly unstable wartime production methods, and the influx of a
great many new foremen, a broad cleavage might be proposed between older, more established foremen, versed in the now traditional methods of production established from the 1920s onwards on one hand, and a newly promoted, union conscious, younger group, keen for advancement and ready to embrace the wealth of wartime training opportunities and unorthodox production methods, on the other.

It seems probable that supervisory unionisation along the lines proposed by the FAA should appeal most strongly to the younger, more recently promoted group of foremen. As we have seen they came from a background of unionisation, could be reasonably expected to embrace change in working practices more readily and, given their more tenuous position on the promotional ladder, have more to gain from formalised union negotiations concerning manning levels etc. in the expected post-war contraction of production. Against this it must be noted that younger men, following Nichols' and Beynon's typology, might align themselves more closely with innovative aspects of management. They may also have not been totally compliant with membership of the production workers union, their acceptance of promotion itself marking them off from the aspirations of the union colleagues. This may be particularly true in the case of promoted union officials - a frequent occurrence throughout this and subsequent periods. Generally however, after taking these caveats into account, it seems not unreasonable to assume that the foregoing group of essentially younger foremen might still stand in contrast to their older, more established counterparts, given the latter's widespread participation in anti-union activity during the 1930s, and their role in working methods now viewed as traditional. The evidence presents a different picture however.
It is clear from the percentages of foremen voting in FAA certification elections that the union had a wide appeal across all sectors of foremen. Pro-FAA votes often exceeded 90% of all foremen in the automobile industry plants where the union experienced its period of rapid growth from 1941 onwards. At Packard in 1943 631 out of a total of 675 foremen turned out to vote at a hired booth outside company premises. Many lost pay to queue in driving rain for over 30 minutes, only two voting against the FAA.\(^{(12)}\) In the Hudson election of 1946 only four foremen rejected the FAA as bargaining agent.\(^{(13)}\)

The FAA clearly had a strong appeal across a range of ages and experiences. Many foremen with over 40 years service with the company had joined the FAA at Packard.\(^{(14)}\) Contrast for example FAA member J.R. Wilkins, over 60 years of age and a foreman at Packard for 33 years, with fellow FAA member Julius Smith, a foreman for several months only in 1943.\(^{(15)}\)

More surprising perhaps is the profile of those actively involved in the organisation of the FAA. Under normal circumstances it would seem that an accumulation of experience would be little impediment to union involvement, indeed this may be considered an attribute to the leadership of workers organisations. These factors in terms of foremanship should, given the notions of the correlation age and conservatism outlined above, work in reverse however. Again this is not the case and evidence points to a high level of involvement on the part of older foremen in FAA activity. At Gar Wood for example, 18 foremen sacked for in 1947 for union activity averaged over 18 years service each with the company. Of the foremen sacked at Ford for alleged "violence and terrorism" in the FAA strike of the same year
over one third had been with the company for over 20 years, some for over 30. (16)

Older foremen also proliferated in the leadership of the union, even if they did attempt an air of respectability which denied their radical stance and continued to display a posture of respectability. One observer at the FAA conference in 1944 gave an apt description of FAA officialdom. "(They) looked like businessmen rather than labour representatives...The delegates were middle aged men for the most part in contrast to the youngsters who predominate in the CIO gatherings...". (17) The average age of the FAA executive board was 45. (18) Mike Quatro, president of the Briggs chapter had been a foreman since 1932. William Elliot Ford chapter president had over 26 years service with the company. William Stafford, Timken Detroit Axle chapter president had 22 years service. Carl Brown worked at Ford for 24 years before taking over the Ford FAA chapter presidency. (19) Some of these older foremen did have a history of union activity in the years preceding the FAA. Walter McNally, an organiser of the FAA at Murray, had been a committee member of the short lived UAW-CIO Local 918 foremen's union at Chrysler in 1938 and had subsequently become president of the Murray-Ecorse Supervisors Association which was later to merge with the FAA. (20) Omar Martineau, sacked in 1938 for union activity, was later to become president of one of the Ford FAA chapters. (21) Other FAA leaders had a longer history of union activity. W.M. Nelson, a foremen at Ford for over 20 years and prominent in the FAA leadership, had been a miner and active member of the UMWA in his early life. (22)

The leadership of the FAA was by no means the sole preserve of
older or more experienced foremen. Robert Keys, the first president of the FAA in 1941 was only 29 at the time. A product of the Ford Trade School he had moved rapidly from machine operator in 1935 to divisional foreman by 1940. (23) (It is interesting to note that Keys father had been a foreman at Ford for many years. (24)) Joseph Hornet, Hudson chapter president in 1944, and Frank Elliot, president of the Chrysler chapter at the same time, had been foremen for only four years each. Kenneth Diller, president of the GM Diesel Engine chapter in 1943 had taken up the post after being a foreman for less than one year. (25)

It is clear that no typical profile of FAA members or leadership emerges in terms of either age or length of service in the foreman's job. Older foremen were active alongside their younger, more recently promoted colleagues at all levels of the union. This is somewhat surprising given the traditional image of reaction and conservatism among the former group - more so given the nature of FAA activity and the degree of radicalism exhibited by the union.

Assessments of the evidence of radicalism must be tempered with the recognition that much propaganda of an alarmist nature was promulgated by employers during the FAA's lifetime. Accusations of the FAA being part of a grand conspiracy to socialise the American economy were rife throughout the period. These statements were of a calculated rhetorical nature designed to intimidate the FAA and were in keeping with the building anti-communist movement of the post war period. There was little or no substance in most of these accusations. Great play was made of the fact that Walter Nelson, the FAA's attorney, had once been a professed marxist and had acted as one of the Soviet
Union's US attorneys while Lenin was in power for example, although in reality Nelson had mellowed considerably by the 1940s. (26) Employers did have one tangible piece of evidence available for use in trying to prove the extremism of the FAA, that of the union's strike record. Indeed when we examine the FAA's proclivity to undertake direct industrial action of this nature it does seem that the union did exhibit an extraordinary degree of radicalism.

Strike statistics are normally subject to certain reservations as an indicator of radicalism and no simple correlation can be necessarily put forward. (27) They are useful in the case of the FAA however in demonstrating the unusual lengths to which organised foremen were prepared to go to achieve recognition, especially so when viewed in the context of the wider union movement. During the war period for example the wave of FAA strikes which hit armaments production marked participating foremen off from production workers whose unions were prepared to pledge themselves to no-strike guarantees.

FAA strikes came in identifiable waves which clearly indicate strategic patterns orchestrated by the union's leadership. These fall roughly into four phases or categories. Firstly 'establishment' strikes such as those at Ford in 1942 in response to Ford management moves to oust FAA leaders. (28) Similar employer-provoked strikes took place at Chrysler, Murray, Republic Steel, Packard and Briggs throughout 1942 and 1943. All resulted in some form of government intervention - usually through the agency of the War Labour Board - and all were resolved in favour of the union, although inconclusively in terms of permanent recognition. (29)
The second phase of strike activity comprised the wave of 'showdown' strikes, centred around 1944. These strikes were ostensibly called for minor infractions - such as the refusal by foremen at Briggs in April 1944 to speed up production, which eventually resulted in a walk out by 1300 foremen. There were in reality part of a wider, coordinated campaign to force recognition of the FAA by the War Labour Board, to whom the NLRB had passed jurisdiction. By May 1944 Briggs, Hudson, Murray, Packard, Gar Wood and Aeronautical Products were all involved in the strike wave and some plants, notably Packard, were shut down completely. (30)

The third phase of strikes - the 'reconversion' strikes of 1945 - coincided with the scaling down of war production. These were principally aimed at consolidating FAA-company agreements to ensure the guarantee of clauses on demotion, transfer, discharges, pay reductions and other factors which might affect foremen directly in the ensuing transfer from armaments to peacetime production. Foremen were understandably worried that the resulting contraction in output would cause serious depletion in their ranks. Few observers at the time foresaw anything but a return to the depression levels of production which had characterised the pre-war period. These fears were fuelled further by management statements on the uncertainty of returning to automobile production at all.

The final major phase of strike activity called by the FAA involved the Ford River Rouge complex in 1947. This strike, involving over 3,800 foremen, came at a time when Ford had over a million car orders to fill, when the management there was emerging from the chaotic leadership of Henry Ford and Harry Bennett to the new regime.
headed by Henry Ford II, and when government anti-FAA legislation in the form of the Taft-Hartley Act was imminent.\(^{(31)}\)

In all four phases of strike activity the hand of the leadership of the FAA can clearly be seen. Indeed the leaders of the union were quite candid about their promotion of strike activity for strategic purposes. As the Hudson FAA president admitted during the 'showdown' strikes, "We always felt that recognition was a fight between us and the NLRB, not between us and the company."\(^{(32)}\) Certainly the companies involved were convinced that many of the strikes in their plants were part of a wider concerted campaign and the minor incidents which usually sparked them off were merely used as pretexts by the FAA leadership.\(^{(33)}\) This readiness on the part of the leadership of the FAA to use the strike weapon in order to gain recognition must be viewed in the context of the impact of such decisions. It is difficult to underestimate the seriousness of the strikes called during the war period for example. Between July 1943 and November 1944 there were over 20 FAA strikes, resulting over 660,000 man days of lost production.\(^{(34)}\) Aero engine production was particularly badly hit during the 1944 strikes which General Arnold was to refer to as "one of the most serious setbacks that the army airforce programme has had since its inception". Production of over 250 planes was lost.\(^{(35)}\) Press reaction, scarcely in favour of the union movement at the best of times, was particularly hostile over the FAA's wartime strikes. The Detroit Free Press of April 5th 1944 for example carried a leader entitled "Betraying our soldiers for "rights"" which went on to recommend that striking foremen's names be "writ large on the scroll of national infamy." FAA leaders were to repeatedly protest their
patriotism in response to such charges, nevertheless these strikes were genuinely unpopular and promotion of them must be seen as indicative of the conviction of the FAA leadership to pursue the establishment of the union with a degree of radicalism which at times marked them off from the mainstream of the union movement.

This radicalism or determination should not be viewed as solely leadership driven. The FAA was a popular union among foremen in the core of automobile plants which formed its organisational base, as reflected in membership density figures. While it is largely the case that strikes were called at the behest of the union's central leadership, the levels of participation and the conduct of those involved reveals a surprising degree of militancy.

FAA strikes were characterised by well supported picket lines. Violent confrontation, whether direct or indirect, was also a regular feature, and seems to have been aimed not at production workers, who, as we have seen often informally aided the cause of the foremen, but rather at members of supervision, especially higher supervision, whose refusal to support the FAA could be most damaging. During the Briggs FAA strike of 1944 for example police were called in to stop fighting on the picket lines among striking and non-striking foremen. Some superintendents were beaten or molested and prevented from entering the plant. Others superintendents chose to stay in the plant, day and night, for up to ten days rather than run the gauntlet of the 24 hour FAA picket. In the end the company applied to the courts to serve injunctions restraining foremen from interfering with superintendents, although it seems these had little effect.\(^{36}\) Attempts to coerce superintendents extended in some cases to kidnapping, damage to homes

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and threats to family members. (37) At another plant non striking foremen's cars were pelted with bricks, and groups of striking foremen intercepted non-striking foremen and superintendents, on their way to work or at home, with threats of beatings. (38) At Aeronautical Products FAA members chased the company president who had been filming their picket line, smashing his car windows and his camera. (39)

Similar scenes occurred at Ford in 1947. In this major confrontational strike less than 100 of the 1,800 foremen on the first shift stayed at work. The rest formed a mass picket at the main gate or helped to block the railway tracks into the plant. (40) Again reports of beatings and damage to property were widely reported as were accounts of foremen forming themselves into "goon squads" armed with clubs, knives and guns. (41) Ford management made an issue of this conduct when sacking 32 alleged ringleaders after the strike for acts of "violence and terrorism". (42)

Violent confrontation, although a feature of many FAA strikes, was not the dominant means of protest. More peaceful methods were used by striking FAA foremen. At Ford 50 car convoys were organised to move slowly round the plant disrupting traffic. Some older foremen took to riding wheelchairs around the main gate area, carrying placards protesting about Ford's poor pension provisions. (43) Photographic records of the FAA pickets show a generally well turned out set of men, reluctant to abandon the ubiquitous suit, tie and trilby for the rigours of the picket line. (44)

In spite of the generally peaceful nature of FAA strikes there was a significant level of violent confrontation, and levels of support in general indicate the general willingness of FAA members to
take the militant step, for supervision, of engaging in direct action against the company. This militancy is also reflected in the fact that many FAA strikes were of considerable duration, some lasting many months. The FAA strike at Bohn Aluminium and Brass in 1946 lasted 190 days and was, at that time, the longest running strike in Michigan's history. (45)

This readiness of the FAA leadership and members to engage in strike activity did not have any adverse effect on membership. Recruiting levels usually showed a net increase during stoppages. There were foremen who rejected the use of the strike weapon and withdrew from FAA membership because of this, but these were more than counterbalanced by the numbers joining in response to the higher profile attained by the union during strike periods. During the Briggs strike of 1944, nearly 200 new members were recruited at the company's plants. (46)

Having established that the FAA appealed to a wide spectrum of foremen and that the general membership were prepared to follow their leadership in engaging in direct confrontations with both employers and non-FAA colleagues, we now turn to an examination of the general aims of the union. What was it that foremen were seeking in engaging in such activity? Beyond the immediate concern of building up membership and establishing legal sanction and company recognition, what were the ambitions, and what general demands were characteristic of the FAA? Where did the leadership see their union fitting into the industrial relations landscape and what did ordinary foremen think was in it for them when they signed up with the FAA?

In institutional terms the FAA had both limited and wide
ambitions. Aims to expand or establish links either upward into the managerial hierarchy or downward into the ranks of production workers were limited and not central to FAA leaders' aspirations. As far as expansion downwards through the ranks of production workers or affiliation with unions and organisations such as the UAW or CIO, this had been rejected as a strategy as much by the production workers organisations as the FAA, although as we have seen above there were occasions when the FAA would have liked closer links. With regard to expansion upwards through the ranks of superintendents, this had been largely rejected by workers at that level when given opportunity to vote, and is reflected in low recruitment levels among higher strata of supervision. (47) In contrast to these limited ambitions, whether the result of pragmatic or ideological considerations, the leadership of the FAA saw great opportunities in terms of horizontal expansion. Union president Robert Keys estimated that there were over two million foremen eligible for FAA membership in the 1940s. Extensive plans were laid to broaden the appeal of the union via education programmes and radio broadcasts. Regional offices were set up in the drive to move beyond the automobile related industries clustered around the Detroit area. (48) The FAA also had ambitions towards other extant foremen's organisations. Independents such as the Hudson Foreman's Association, the Supervisors Association of the Murray Corporation and the Studebaker Salaried Employees Association were all absorbed as chapters of the FAA. The Union also took over several foremen's social clubs initially set up by employers. (49)

In the long term the union leadership envisaged itself as a major constituent in the formation of a responsible third party in
industrial relations. Behind a cultivated image of respectability and status which ranged from the commissioning of lavish country clubs to the use of the title of "building chairman" or "chapel chairman" for its minor officials, the FAA idealised a world of industrial cooperation with itself in the centre of a tripartite system. (50) Although part of this vision was undoubtedly a rhetorical defence designed to counter employer claims that the FAA was a device to deliver up American management to total union control, the FAA's general aspiration was the formation of a permanent intermediary organisation reshaping industrial relations in the USA.

At a more practical level, and of more immediate concern to the ordinary foreman who signed up, were the specific, short term aims of the FAA as revealed in bargaining issues. Demands presented to companies by chapters of the FAA address a range of concerns. Recognition and bargaining rights are obvious inclusions, and pay levels, overtime and shift working arrangements, and general welfare related issues were given a high priority. The FAA often went beyond this to demand a "voice" in promotion, transfer and demotion, and perhaps most important the establishment of some form of seniority provision. (51) Some FAA chapters also demanded that foremen's representatives should be allowed to negotiate on any company policy which might affect foremen and also that FAA representatives take an active part in negotiations between employers and production workers unions. (52)

Pay and related issues were bound to be important for most FAA members, especially in the light of the erosion of differentials brought about by the establishment of production workers unions and
the exigencies of war production. Nevertheless contemporary commentators noted the equal if not greater stress placed by many foremen on the need for security of employment to be enhanced through fixed grievance procedures and seniority provisions. Indeed by 1947 when the list of demands at Ford was drawn up pay related issues were largely in the background having been eclipsed by promotion, classification and demotion related issues. (53) The origins of this trend lie in the periods of war production and the growing uncertainty of reconversion.

The NWLB panel found that by 1944, "(t)he greatest fear of foremen today is that they will be laid off or denoted when cutbacks and cancellations of any war orders occur." (54) Numbers of foremen had been rapidly inflated as the war had progressed and contractions to employment levels characteristic of the late 1930s would therefore bring mass reductions in the levels of supervisory staff. Events seemed to provide a foundation for these fears. Ford for example was set to shed over 50% of foremen's by the end of the war. In 1944 alone over 2500 foremen were demoted at Willow Run - 900 in a single month. (55) For some companies reconversion to peacetime production meant that whole sectors of production might be replaced. Foremen at Chrysler's Wyoming plant - a pre-war body stamping plant - had been promoted and trained in machining parts for Bofors gun production. After the war, with the return to body production, these jobs and the particular skills involved were to disappear entirely. Briggs management threatened to go one stage further and insisted that they might not even return to bodymaking at their plants, but seek instead other, new lines of production. (56) Some companies did offer a form of
security to demoted foremen. Briggs for example promised to put foremen on an "indispensable" list for twelve months and guarantee them a production job. (57) Many foremen's anxieties were unallayed. They remained convinced that they had burned their bridges upon acceptance of promotion. As one foreman put it, "(t)he talk around the shop was that the foreman had only two moves to make, that is, either up or out. If a man did not make out as a foreman he was not taken back and put on the job - he was fired." (58) In some cases the route back to the ranks of production work was blocked by union agreements, and seniority rankings had been forfeited on promotion. (59) Some unions had suggested secondary seniority lists for demoted supervisors. Others had agreements whereby seniority for promoted workers was retained. In general however demotion to the ranks was viewed as an alarming prospect by a great many foremen. This was especially true in the case of foremen deemed to be over-zealous in their duties. The UAW actually amended its constitution to allow charges to be levelled at members for "conduct unbecoming union members" while holding supervisory positions, even though at the time of their alleged misconduct their membership of the UAW was suspended through the issuance of withdrawal cards. (60)

Fear of the consequences of reconversion and resultant insecurity had thus put seniority provisions and negotiated demotion levels high on the agenda for many FAA members, and clearly the FAA leadership retained an interest in keeping supervisory staffing levels high in order to maintain their base of support. There are other aspects in addition to the foregoing and directly relating to war production which may hold a further key to understanding the appeal of the FAA.

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We have already seen how expanded production brought a large increase in numbers of foremen, many of them with backgrounds of union membership, and how wartime pressures on pay levels had adversely affected supervisory jobs. Wartime created another set of pressures on foremanship in the form of changing the job content and working environment of supervision, pressures which may have found a release in the demand for collective action. Unacclimatised and untrained workers, higher supervision ratios and new work patterns and products are among the wartime problems which faced both experienced and newly promoted foremen.

The rapid wartime expansion of production in existing and newly constructed plants brought with it a massive increase in the demand for factory labour. This problem was exacerbated by the loss to the armed forces of many experienced factory workers. The demography of the workforce underwent rapid change in the early period of the war and by 1943 one out every two workers was new to the industry.\(^{(61)}\) Women workers posed a particular problem for the predominantly male supervisory workforce as the number of women in the automobile industry rose from around 46,000 in 1939 to over 200,000 by 1943.\(^{(62)}\) Many of these women workers experienced problems fitting in to factory life, and foremen often bemoaned their new role in supervising the adjustment. As one foreman, referring to women workers, complained, "It isn't like the good old automobile days when you hired people...and they knew how a tool crib was and where to go for this and that."\(^{(63)}\) Other foremen complained of a lack of discipline among the newer women employees, especially with regard to timekeeping.\(^{(64)}\) Lack of skill in certain aspects of production did put addition
pressure on foremen, although it must be noted that the majority of women workers went to jobs requiring short training periods. (65)

Prejudicial treatment of women workers by foremen needs to be placed in the context of a general chauvinism in the factory. Women workers often had to contend with both foremen and union representatives to ensure their rights at work. The UAW officials for example reflected many of the attitudes of its predominantly male membership in refusing seniority provisions for women, granting instead only temporary wartime status, and that on separate lists from the men. (66)

In addition to being effectively ghettoised into low skill sectors of the workplace women continued to be effectively excluded from the majority of supervisory posts. Employers were partly aware of the animosity of male workers towards supervision by women, but also undoubtedly adhered to the belief, widely disseminated in management literature of the period, that women were temperamentally unsuited to this kind of responsibility. Where women did become supervisors, it continued to be in those areas where the workforce was almost exclusively composed of other women. These women supervisors continued as before to get less pay than their male counterparts. (67)

Where women were employed in departments which had previously had a mainly male workforce men continued to dominate supervision. A problem of attitudes frequently arose in this situation which reflected a paradoxical view held by many foremen. Women were seen on one hand as new workers, with unequal rights to established workers or to new male workers, and thus open to abuse. On the other hand women workers were seen as somehow weaker, less robust than their male
counterparts and in need of delicate treatment. Training literature for foremen often stressed the different way in which women were to be treated. Glen Gardiner, the period's most popular writer of manuals and tracts on shop floor supervision, frequently advised on the correct way for foremen to deal with women workers. In one chapter entitled, 'Starting a Woman on her First Job: Why New Women Workers Need Special Consideration', Gardiner elaborated a full range of popular gender stereotyping including, "She is more emotional, she has less self confidence, she is more susceptible to praise, she dislikes responsibility, she is better suited to repetitive work." He closed by advising foremen, "In your dealings with women workers always remember that they are women and must not be given the same matter of fact treatment you afford to men employees." (68) Many foremen did feel constrained to moderate their language in front of women workers. (69) Many others probably did not. In one incident at Chrysler in 1944 for example a conflict emerged over one foreman's brusque treatment of the women workers in his department who objected to being told to "get back to your god-damn benches and get the damn work out." The women on this occasion, in contrast to Gardiner's image, responded by threatening to punch the foreman on the nose. (70)

The problems in adjusting to supervision of women workers which American foremen perceived were in many ways similar to those experienced by their British counterparts during this period. Women factory workers responded to the discomfiture of foremen in a variety of ways. Those interviewed by Mass Observation during the war railed against the "silly, semi-military" discipline adopted by some foremen. Others tried a tactical approach. Mrs. W. Burgess, working at Morris,
recalled that the foreman would always help out - if the women workers did not bully him. (71) Evidence in a report compiled by the Medical Research Council suggests that many foremen simply allowed women workers considerable autonomy, withdrawing to become a remote figure on the shop floor. (72)

The response to the influx of women workers in both countries obviously varied dependent on individual foremen and ratios of new workers involved, but it seems clear that a new dimension of pressure was brought to bear on many foremen by this new sector of the workforce. The post-war remarks of the Ford Labour Relations Director are illuminating on this point. "From foremen all over the place...there was a sigh of relief when they could let women go...The general expression was "Thank god that's over! And we'll pray that it never has to happen again."" (73) Foremen had been trapped between the twin pressures of their own hostile response to the idea of women performing on a par with men, especially in the areas of skilled work reintroduced by armaments production (74), and their unease with the persistent method of pushing out production by robust verbal encouragement which women, from a traditional male point of view, were too delicate to be subjected to.

Another major demographic change in the structure of the workforce during the war years was the migration of many rural workers to industrial areas like Detroit. Black workers from the south arrived in the area in unprecedented numbers. Many factories were compelled to end their informal discriminatory hiring policies during this period. Chrysler for example had no black employees in 1941. By 1944 they employed over 4,000, forced into a change of policy by interventionary

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recruitment by the Government Employment Agency. Inside the factory the discriminatory processes of the pre-war period continued unabated. Black workers were still primarily confined to the jobs considered to be unsuitable for white labour. The Ford foundries, much expanded by 1943, were still comprised of over 95% black workers. Black women found it difficult to secure any work at all - even Ford proving reluctant to hire them.

Racial tensions among the workforce were heightened by an accompanying influx of southern white workers. Where labour shortages made it inevitable that black workers moved into previously all white departments a number of "hate strikes" among white workers occurred. Hudson, Packard and Ford all experienced this phenomenon as a precursor to the city-wide race riots in Detroit which erupted in 1943.

Foremen were often accused of fostering racist or discriminatory attitudes towards the expanding black workforce. The personnel department at Ford, in attempting to shift these attitudes, complained of the inertia of foremen at Willow run, and their reluctance to tackle either their own or their workers' prejudices. At Chrysler foremen were known to keep seniority lists with a letter 'c' next to the names of black workers and there were frequent complaints that penalties for minor infractions were comparatively more harsh for black workers. Promotions were also regulated much as before the war and despite the increase in the number of foremen, proportionally fewer black workers were promoted. Movement to better jobs or even minor supervisory posts were still arbitrarily decided upon, often to the exclusion of more competent or longer serving black employees.

In addition to generating an atmosphere of unrest on the shop
floor, albeit fuelled by the racism of many foremen, the influx of rural workers, black and white, created the same kind of pressures on foremanship that women workers had, i.e. they were unaccustomed both to the rhythms and pace of factory life and specifically untrained for most jobs. That it was the foreman’s job to oversee training programmes only added to the increased burden of his wartime task.

Older workers were also kept on in the workforce as the war progressed. An industry that had been typified as a young man’s environment, where only the fittest could stand the pace, became one where the over-40s no longer feared imminent dismissal. This was partly due to union agreements and partly due to the need to shorten expanding vacancy lists. By 1943 at Willow Run the median age of employees was 37, 21% of men employed being over 50, 44% over 40. Foremen who were expected to push production along were thus confronted by a workforce unable to respond, even if they felt inclined to, at the levels of the more easily intimidated "suitcase brigade" of predominantly younger workers of the pre-war years. In addition many of the remaining skilled jobs in the factory were increasingly filled by dilutees or "upgraders" - workers trained in limited aspects only of skilled work, again creating training and supervision difficulties for foremen.

If the above problems generated by demographic change in the workforce - the introduction of a new wave of women, blacks and rural workers, the aging of the workforce, diluted skill levels etc. - created new pressures on foremanship in terms of supervision of production and training and generated tensions in the social atmosphere of the shop floor, then the situation was exacerbated by
the inexperience of many of the wartime foremen. The same trends which forced the introduction of new groups of unacclimatised workers also forced the rapid promotion and training of many new foremen. Many experienced foremen had joined the armed forces at the onset of war, deferred draft status being tardily imposed. This left the already depleted ranks of experienced supervision to be spread even thinner among the expanded or new factories. Thus foremen in established plants such as those at the Ford River Rouge complex lost many of their colleagues to the new Willow Run bomber plant, while those who were transferred were often overwhelmed by the size of their new task. (82) We noted in the previous chapter the high ratio of newly promoted foremen during the war period. A further indication of the level of new recruitment is given by statistics from the Chrysler DeSoto plant where 198 out of a total of 225 foremen in 1946 had been promoted since the outbreak of war. (83)

Even figures as high as those above mask the true rates of promotion as a large percentage of new supervisory recruits failed to make the grade, pushing up turnover rates among foremen. At the Willow Run plant in the winter of 1943 demotions were running at the rate of 200 per month despite high production levels. (84) As one contemporary noted, "...most of those individuals were crackerjack workmen or they never would have been picked in the first place, but they were not supervisors." (85) In many ways the new foremen were given little chance to succeed. Expected to cope with the training and supervision of new, inexperienced workers in an atmosphere of intense production expectations, where everything was urgent and quality expected to be exemplary, the new foreman himself received little or no formal
Even with the increased numbers of foremen, untrained as many of them were, they still failed to keep pace with the growth in the size of the general workforce. Foreman-worker ratios widened throughout the war years. At Packard for example each foreman averaged 26 workers in a workforce of over 8,200. By 1944 the average had risen to 32 workers each in a workforce of 39,000. Similarly at Ford the ratio of foremen and leading hands to production workers increased from 10:1 to 18:1 between early 1943 and 1944.

In summary, the factory of the war years was typified by a large contingent of new, unacclimatised and often unskilled workers supervised by experienced foremen who found their depleted numbers spread progressively thinner. The urgency of production schedules and long hours of work compounded these problems. Newly promoted foremen faced identical pressures, made worse by their general lack of training and experience. All these trends took place against a background of reorganisation of the labour process, brought about by the shift from automobile to armaments production, which was to add yet another dimension to the difficulties of the foreman's position.

We have already touched upon the increased size of many of the existing automobile factories and the establishment of many new ones. Older factories generally modified and expanded existing plant and machinery to build a new product range, some of which was radically different from previous output. Ford began to build torpedo boats at the River Rouge plant. Hudson switched to the production of B29 bomber parts. Chrysler became involved in the manufacture of a diverse range
of products including 40mm. anti-aircraft guns, ammunition, gyroscopic compasses and wings and engines for the B29. Packard began to produce Rolls Royce designed aero and marine engines.\(^{(88)}\) To facilitate the increased capacity manufacturers expanded into new, purpose built factories such as Ford's Willow Run, or alternatively took over and converted existing premises. Packard for example expanded into the Bundy Tubing and Hupp Motors plants to accommodate a workforce which more than quadrupled in size during the war period.\(^{(89)}\)

Setting up new production lines created huge logistical problems and the shortening of product evolution and obsolescence cycles brought on by the exigencies of war meant that in many cases production methods could not be rationalised for any length of time.\(^{(90)}\) New design imperatives, revealed by the field application of armaments, constantly intruded on shop floor production. The fact that almost all production was on government cost-plus contracts which guaranteed manufacturers a fixed profit over actual costs incurred meant that employers had little incentive to avoid normally costly interruptions as machinery was retooled.

Armaments manufacture also brought a significant amount of reskilling to the workforce. Many parts now needed to be machined to much closer tolerances for example. Tank transmission gears required greater precision in filing and gauging than automobile gears. Grinding operations on the Bofors gun involved tolerances accurate to within one two-thousandth of an inch, twice the degree of accuracy required in automobile production.\(^{(91)}\) Assembly work also became more complex in terms of coordination and dexterity. Whereas the average automobile comprised around 4,000 parts, a tank averaged around

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11,000, aircraft sections as many as 25,000. (92) Many new materials were also introduced, particularly alloys used in aircraft production, posing new problems of fabrication and assembly. (93)

Many established methods of working had to be abandoned to facilitate the new products and materials. In particular many of the machine-paced production lines typical of automobile manufacture had to be dismantled. Aircraft and aircraft sections were generally assembled at fixed stations being larger and more complex. The bigger and more intricate aero engines, such as the Pratt and Whitneys at Ford, also needed to be assembled in a stationary position. (94) There also occurred a shift in the balance of occupations from assembly to machining. Whereas in automobile production the majority of workers were involved in assembly of some kind, in armaments production, particularly tanks and guns, the majority were involved in machining parts. (95)

Both the restructuring of skill levels and the changing balance of jobs introduced problems of retraining both for supervisors and workers. (96) Older foremen, in addition to their younger colleagues, experienced dislocations in the continuity of their job. Some were taken from departments which had completely disappeared for the duration, such as the trim shop (appointments for military equipment being primarily of a utilitarian nature) or the paint shops, and expected to undergo retraining in completely different fields. (97) Harry Harms for example, foreman at Hudson for 16 years by 1944, was taken off sheet metal work to train on delicate soldering work on mine production. He was rapidly placed on production, in charge of a group of women workers, themselves with little training. Harms struggled to
keep up production but was eventually fired. (98) As Fay Taylor, personnel manager at Briggs summed up the situation, "We had no trimming. We had very little painting. We had very little metal finishing. The business we were in was of a mechanical nature, where it required considerable mechanical knowledge, a business where micrometers, callipers and verniers are used, and a number of foremen...in the automobile days didn't know what micrometers were. They didn't have to know. They dealt in inches not thousandths." (99) Equipment was often damaged or written off by inept operation. As new and unfamiliar machinery was introduced to established shops foremen were often as ignorant as their workers on how to operate it. (100)

The above changes in the labour process meant that the job of supervision, even for experienced foremen, underwent commensurate fundamental change. As we have seen in earlier chapters the rationalisation of work through paced or routinised work flows caused the role of supervision to become at least partially embedded within the labour process itself as the way in which tasks were performed imposed inherent limits on levels of worker discretion. As the formalised automobile production lines were broken down to be replaced by more fluid processes and product developments, staffed by a high percentage of new workers, the job of foreman reverted in part to a pre-Fordist conception. The foreman, whose job had been to push production along as an adjunct to the highly rationalised processes of the 1930s and who was chosen with an emphasis on the ability to coerce or cajole, was now faced with a new type of worker, often engaged in work with which the foreman himself was unfamiliar and, with the devolution of machine pacing in many areas, was to be regulated by a

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means which older foremen had long forgotten and newer ones never known. To be sure, organised appeals to patriotism counted for a great deal in stimulating workers to produce at optimum levels. In spite of this the pressures of wartime production targets and the constant urgency of many products, and the problems of controlling a workforce, now largely unionised and protected by government interventions in the labour market, and generally unwilling to respond to established confrontational supervisory methods, placed great stress on many foremen.

Bernard Hoffman's diaries paint a picture of the resultant general confusion of the period with a slow degeneration of the foremen's spirit, and supervision "desperate and trying anything that comes to anyone's mind". (101) The pressures were compounded by the expectation that foremen should put in long hours as six or seven day working weeks became the norm in most factories. Chrysler for example adopted a six day week as standard, Briggs worked seven day weeks from 1942 onward and at Packard a 63 hour minimum week was established following Pearl Harbour. (102) The situation was at its worst where urgent or "hot parts" were prevalent. In the Packard connecting rod and crank case departments for example foremen usually put in a 77 hour week with little relief from production pressures. (103) Many foremen had the added burden of attendance at after-work conferences to discuss production. (104) We have already noted the dissatisfaction this extended working created among foremen in terms of inadequate wage levels and erosion of differentials as a major stimulus to the seeking of formal representation. The obvious fatigue induced by working under such conditions must also have added another dimension

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to the general unrest and resentment felt by many foremen during this period.

Wartime also brought an increase in the bureaucratic constrictions placed on the role of foreman. State regulation of the labour market for example imposed a new framework of strictures further affecting the now limited power of the foreman to control labour mobility. Just as in the First World War in Britain "leaving certificates" had been introduced in order to ensure that workers could not move around freely and take advantage of the general shortage of labour, so too in the US in World War Two wage and labour stabilisation orders, issued by the government, meant that foremen, in addition to the restrictions already imposed by union procedures, had to contend with official documentation before hiring, transferring or attempting to dismiss workers. The Walsh-Healey Act for example laid down exacting conditions of employment covering hiring, dismissal, wage levels and working conditions for all employees working on government contracts, and insisted on full and accurate records of employment being kept for each worker. (105) This situation led in part to an expanded role for personnel and labour relations departments to handle extra documentation, but also to an increased burden on shop floor supervision and a reluctance on the part of many foremen to exercise whatever limited authority they had left. (106)

There was also a degree of direct intrusion on the factory floor by government officials. Stringent government quality inspection standards had already put extra pressure on foremen, who now found themselves under the scrutiny of external inspectors. One foreman at Packard for example was sacked for incorrectly marking the weight of a
FBI investigators were frequently called into the factory to investigate a wide range of issues. These usually pertained to allegations of sabotage or hiring irregularities but investigations were often made into the conduct of foremen, especially where sidelines such as "foreigners" or "kick-backs" might be in operation.

In certain circumstances government regulation worked in the foreman's favour. Workers at Chrysler for example complained that whenever there was a dispute over rate classification or wages the foremen's rejoinder was "why don't you quit?", knowing full well that in order to secure alternative employment workers had to remain out of work for at least 60 days unless a release form had been issued.

This was against the general trend however, and foremen overall found themselves increasingly constrained by new regulations and expected to devote more and more of their time to administrative tasks. Hudson's industrial relations director summarised the position. "The foremen had to be retrained; there were war manpower directives, new War Labour Boards, all the other regulations, edicts and directives and governmental situations from the top, and union pressure from below... We have to tell (the foremen) how your uncle Sam wants it done and how Mr. Union wants it done."

As far as pressure from "Mr. Union" the foreman in the US war industries was spared the extra intrusion of joint production initiatives. Constraints on the foreman in the US from the shop floor continued in the form of procedures imposed through union agreements rather than the extra dimension of control presented through structures like the Joint Industrial Committees and Joint Production
Committees which had emerged in Britain during the two wars. These had had the effect of partially excluding foremen on matters concerning production. (111) There were attempts to introduce such cooperative structures in the US, such as that outlined in Walter Reuther's "500 Planes a Day" plan where by production controls would be strongly influenced by a committee composed of skilled shop floor workers. The scheme, which GM president C.E. Wilson typified as a "Russian style" of management, was rejected along with similar initiatives, as control of production in the formal sense was left in the hands of American management. (112) For the shop floor foreman to be spared the extra intrusion of such joint initiatives was only a partial relief. He remained under the increased administrative and regulatory pressure which governmental controls added to the already restricting union procedures.

In summary, this chapter has explored aspects of the appeal and aims of foremen's unionisation through an examination of the profile of those involved and an understanding of the changing environment, particularly during wartime, in which the FAA took root.

The leadership of the FAA, faced with rejection and hostility from supervision of the rank of superintendent and above, and the established jurisdiction of the production workers below the rank of assistant foreman, had nevertheless been confident of a high level of nationwide recruitment in the broad strata encompassing those with supervisory roles based on the shop floor. Definitional difficulties apart, this broad band comprised variations not only in formal job description but, perhaps more importantly in age, experience and
attitudes. Several typologies have outlined distinct groupings or dichotomies within supervision from reactionary to radical, management oriented to insular etc. and, through an examination of enrolment figures and activist profiles, the above notions were tested to see if any specific group of foremen, as defined by age, experience or background, was prevalent in the FAA. In fact the union seemed to have an appeal to a wide range of foremen, as revealed in the high percentages in favour of certification in the NLRB elections in the central organised areas of Detroit. The leadership of the FAA comprised a mixture of older, more experienced foremen in addition to their more recently promoted colleagues.

The union adopted a fairly militant stance. This was surprising given the background of conservatism and traditionalism associated with this group of workers, at least partly reflected in the status imagery of the FAA with its "building chairman" representatives and country clubs. The union leadership, with popular support from its members, was prepared to embark on a series of strategic and tactical strikes, some undertaken at the height of war production and in the face of widespread hostility from employers, government and the media. The aim of such militancy was both to secure individual agreements and elicit government support in terms of legislative definition.

In the long term, leaders of the FAA claimed a desire to secure a position as some form of third, intermediary party in industrial relations, although at a more pragmatic level the union bargained on a range of issues of immediate concern to members. Prominent among these, and in addition to expected issues of recognition, pay and conditions, were provisions relating to security of employment. Calls
for protection against lay offs and demotion, and for formal seniority criteria were a reflection of the widespread concern among foremen of the period that the post-war reconversion to automobile production would bring about the wholesale demotion or dismissal of many of their number. Older more conservative foremen saw their position under threat from younger, more adaptive recruits, while those more recently promoted were conscious of the difficulties in returning to the ranks of the production workers.

The aims and appeal of the FAA can only be adequately understood when examined against the background of upheavals in the labour market and changes in production methods which characterise the years of its formation and growth. The massive increase in production during the war years brought with it a major influx of new recruits including many women and rural workers, most from a non-industrial background, unacclimatised to factory life and with little formal training. As the ranks of experienced foremen were depleted, those remaining, along with their newly promoted counterparts, found themselves in charge of these new workers, expected to undertake training programmes and achieve production levels dictated by the urgent imperatives of war. This was to be achieved against a background of fundamental change in both the type of goods being manufactured and the methods of production. More complex and intricate parts were called for, reintroducing higher skill levels to certain manufacturing and assembly jobs, and many of the processes and work flows typical of automobile manufacture were replaced by fixed, group oriented production, or systems more responsive to the rapid innovations necessary in wartime production. Many foremen found themselves in
strange departments or unable to practice the now established methods of foremanship of the inter-war period. Unable to push production along through the mechanism of the paced line, or verbal admonishment there seemed to many foremen to be no available alternative to control the workforce - a workforce now comprised of the confidence of union representation or the recalcitrance of being unaccustomed to established work methods. In this atmosphere foremen were expected to work long and onerous shifts, with the added insult of relatively poor pay, and operate under an increasing administrative burden, brought about by the bureaucracy of increased government intervention.

Thus we can see that the immediate environment in which the foreman of the early 1940s was expected to operate contributed, in the short term, to the stimulus towards unionisation. Older foremen felt the need for support, some means of easing their burden as well as guaranteeing their security with the switch to peacetime production. Younger foremen for their part experienced the same job pressures as older foremen, and although seniority provisions would be less in their favour, the security of union representation over manning levels and conditions of employment, allied to their background of union membership, meant that they completed the full spectrum of foremen to which the FAA appealed.

In ideological terms, although the union leadership may have formulated a general vision of the FAA as a member of a tripartite industrial order, for the ordinary member and local official the overriding attraction of the FAA was essentially of an instrumental nature. The pressures created by unionisation of production workers and the exigencies of wartime production, and the demonstration and
influence carried over by example or promotion of workers with a union background, marked collective action out as the route by which foremen, newly recruited or experienced, could redress their fading differentials and protect their position in the turmoil of wartime production and reconversion. Thus in spite of a lukewarm or negative reaction from the institutions of organised labour, but with some degree of informal support from the rank and file of workers' unions, the membership of the FAA was prepared to support their leadership in embarking on a vigorous campaign for recognition.

The following chapter will examine reactions to that campaign by employers and the state, and in doing so will further elaborate the contours of the growth of the FAA and, ultimately, its decline.
Chapter Seven Footnotes


   FAA - Ford Motor Co., Agreement, May 9 1944;
   See also D. Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, pp. 11-13.


5. Ibid., pp. 2055, 3184.


8. C. Fletcher, 'Men in the Middle', Sociological Review, (n.s.), Vol.17, 1969, passim.;

   The Development of the Labour Process in
Capitalist Societies, Heinemann 1982, p. 181;


11. University of Michigan, Current Information and Council for Foremen, Ann Arbor, Nov. 8 1943, passim.


17. Business Week, Sept. 30 1944, pp. 101-2;
   See also Fortune Magazine, Sept 1945, p. 1.

18 Business Week, loc. cit..

19. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 330;
   The Supervisor, July 1947, p. 3; Sept. 1947, p. 1;


23. Business Week, Sept. 30 1944, p. 102;  
General Motors Corporation, History of the Movement To Organise  
Foremen in the Automotive Industry, Michigan 1945, p. 3.


25. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 30,437-8;  

26. Fortune Magazine, loc. cit..

27. James Cronin, Industrial Conflict in Modern Britain, Croom Helm,  
1979;  

28. The 28 Ford foremen were dismissed for posting leaflets,  
provoking a mass walkout by 2,700 foremen in protest. After four days,  
with the strike spreading to other Ford plants and after government  
intervention, the foremen were reinstated.


30. NWLB, Report on Findings of a Panel of the National War Labour  
Board in Certain Disputes Involving Supervisors, (Slichter Panel  
Report), Washington, Jan. 1945, pp. 24-5;  
General Motors Corp., op. cit., p. 26;  

New York Times, July 4,6 1947;  

32. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 480, also p1991;  
See also Robert Keys comments in Detroit News, May 19 1944.

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33. General Motors Corp., *History of Movement to Organise Foremen*, pp. 66, 70-1;

   Chrysler Corp., *Pattern For Strikes: How the Movement to Organise Foremen Fits Into the Background of Organisation Strikes in the Automobile Industry*, Detroit 1944, p. 27.

34. General Motors Corp., op. cit., passim.

35. NWLB, *Report of a Public Hearing with Republic Steel, Ford, Chrysler, Packard, Murray and Briggs representatives, held in Detroit, Jan. 6 1944, transcript pp. 20-22*;

   See also *Detroit Free Press, May 19 1944, p. 6*.


37. Ibid., pp. 2210-1, 3169-81.


39. General Motors Corp., *History of Movement to Organise Foremen*, p. 27.


41. *Pittsburg Courier*, June 28 1947;


42. *New York Times*, July 15, 1947;

   *Milwaukee Journal*, July 19, 1947;


   It is likely that these 32, who were mostly all prominent in the local FAA leadership, were victimised to a certain extent. They were

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eventually to receive compensation for their dismissal, but were never reinstated.

43. Detroit Free Press, June 10, 1947;

44. Photographs in Ford, Acc. 533, box 97.


46. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 422.
    For the proportion leaving the FAA in rejection of strike action see Detroit Free Press, May 17, 1947.

47. Business Week, May 18, 1946, pp. 95-8;
    Ford plant management and superintendents meeting, minutes, May 13, 1947, Ford Acc. 536, box 97.

48. Washington Post, June 18, 1944, p. 3;
    Business Week, Sept 30, 1944, pp. 101-2;
    Wall St. Journal, Mar 18, 1947;
    General Motors Corp., History of Movement to Organise Foremen, p. 2.

49. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 442, 510-1;
    Robert A. Winters, Memo to NWLB Slichter Panel, July 26, 1944.

    Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, p. 341;
    NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1692-3;

52. Ibid., pp. 1354-6,3069.


54. General Motors Corp., *History of Movement to Organise Foremen*, p. 42; 
   See also Larrowe, op. cit., pp. 207-1; 

55. Levinson, op. cit., p. 283; 
   Winters, memo to NWLB Slichter Panel, July 21, 1944.


59. Ibid., p. 360; 

60. United Automobile Workers - CIO, Annual Convention 1947, report; 

61. Ibid..


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63. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3448.

64. Ibid., p. 424.

65. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 108;
   NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3447-8.

66. UAW-CIO War Policy Division, Seniority in the Automobile Industry, Detroit 1943, pp. 2-3;
   Gabin, op. cit., pp. 40, 125;
   For an account of the unofficial and official exclusionist policies practised by a typical male dominated trade union see Cynthia Cockburn, Brothers: Male Dominance and Technological Change, Pluto, 1983, passim.

67. Milkman, op. cit., pp. 358, 370 fn47;
   NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 81.


70. UAW-Chrysler Local 7 Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No. 1645, Aug. 1944, in Digaetano, box 2, Acc. 23, WRALUA.

71. Mass Observation, People in Production, p. 109;
   W. Burgess, interview, 'Making Cars' archive, Oxford public lib.;

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74. Women in engineering in Britain had, when allowed to, shown ability to work on a par with men. Katherine Norris has shown how women in the First World War shattered the mystique surrounding work involving fine tolerances in the engineering factories of the North East for example. Norris K., *The Role of Women in Engineering 1914-18*, unpubl. paper presented at the History Workshop Conference, Newcastle, Nov. 1987, passim.


76. US Congress, *Full Utilisation of Manpower*; Neeley, op. cit., p. 2; Shelton Tappes, WSU oral history, p. 80.


79. UAW-Chrysler Local 7 Shop Steward Grievance Reports, Plant Shop Ctee. Meeting June 26, 1945;
Letter from Inter-racial Committee UAW-CIO, June 24, 1942, and brief from UAW Local 490, Dept. 25, Grievance No. 40, 1942, in UAW-Chrysler Dept., Local 490, WRALUA.


81. UAW-CIO War Policy Division, op. cit., p. 3; William Genske, WSU oral history, pp. 28-29; US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p. 337.

82. Ibid., p. 496.

83. Herman W. Weckler, Do Not Let the Minority Rule, Chrysler Corp., Sept. 6, 1946.

84. US Congress, loc. cit.; see also A. Nevins and F. E. Hill, op. cit., p. 180.

85. US Congress, loc. cit..

86. University of Michigan, Current Information and Counsel for Foremen, passim.


88. Chrysler Corporation, Brief before the NWLB, Case no. 111-4747-D, prepared by Rathbone, Kelley, Perry and Drye, NY, June 1944, p. 16; Pattern For Strikes, pp. 36-50; Packard Motor Car Corporation, Brief before the NLRB, Case no. 7-
R-1884, prepared by Bodman, Longley, Bogle and Middleton, Detroit 1944, p. 3;

89. Chrysler, NWLB Case no. 111-4747-D, op. cit., pp. 2-4;

90. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 1396;
   Carl Haessler, WSU oral history, p. 78.

91. R. H. Berndt, WSU oral history, p. 18;
   UAW Chrysler Dept., Local 3 Grievances, Nos. 127, 136, 175, 202, WRALUA.

92. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1381-95.

93. Ibid., pp. 1438-9.

94. H. D. Beebe, Reminiscences (Ford oral history coll.), pp. 44-48;

95. Chrysler, Pattern For Strikes, pp. 56-7.

96. Ibid..

97. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, p. 84;
   Chrysler, op. cit., p. 47.

98. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 459-467.

99. Ibid., p. 2259.

100. Hoffman, Diaries, July 12, 1942.
101. Ibid., July 12, 1942; Nov. 1, 1943.


103. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3279.

104. Ibid., p. 39.

105. Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act, Public Law No. 846, 74th Congress.


107. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 325.

108. Hoffman, Diaries, Nov. 1, 1943, para. 54; et passim.

109. UAW-Chrysler Local 7 Shop Steward Grievance Reports, No. 1588, March 1944.

110. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3578.

111. By late 1942 in Britain there were 2,000 Joint Production Committees in place, affecting over two million workers, most of which were in engineering. Moxon, op. cit., pp. 11-3.

Report of joint press conference held by Wilson and Reuther, 1942, transcript in Ed Levinson, Acc.85, box 1, WRALUA.
Chapter Eight: Foreman's Unionisation - Resistance and Decline

This chapter will examine the growth and ultimate decline of unionisation among foremen from two further aspects. Firstly from the perspective of the actions and attitudes of employers. In what ways were they aware of the problems which had generated the call for union representation among foremen? What was their general reaction to unionisation of this strata of the workforce, and what action did they take either to modify the position of foremen, adjust to a unionised supervision or resist and frustrate the efforts of the FAA? In examining employer's reactions to the FAA we will also confront the definitional problems posed by foremanship in mass production industries when outlining arguments over the delineation of the foreman's "managerial" role. The second aspect to be focussed upon has many close links to the activity of employers. The response of the state to foremen's unionisation, through the legislative and judicial process, in many ways reflects the employers increasing definitional problems in terms of supervision. More important perhaps is the fact that the state becomes an arena, or at least an agency through which employers come to pursue what becomes the major focus of their anti-FAA activity - the quest for unequivocal withdrawal of legal protection for the foreman's right to organise.

In looking at these two factors - the activity of employers and the state - in respect of this single issue, and in doing so revealing the complex and often contradictory relationship which exists between the two, some light may be shed on the wider debate surrounding the
precise nature of the interaction between state and capital in industrial societies.

Employer Responses

Employers were virtually unanimous in their opposition to the idea of unions for foremen. This opposition was articulated at two levels. Firstly employers argued against the need for unions per se. They maintained that unions were unnecessary for ordinary workers or members of supervision. Individualism - the "open door" policy - was always the route through which grievances or inquiries could be processed, especially in the case of lower management, of which foremen were deemed to be a part. No collective activity was therefore necessary. As a second line of defence employers, when faced with the reality of a union presence following the success of the CIO and AFL organising drives of the mid and late 1930s, argued that although unions for production workers might be acceptable, albeit grudgingly in many cases, the foreman stood beyond a line which marked off those workers who were to be excluded from organisation. The foreman's job was quantifiably different. He was part of management and as such ineligible for union membership of any sort.

Employers were to conduct their anti-FAA campaign in a number of fields. At the level of individual foremen some attempts were to be made restructure the role of foremen with a view to enhancing status and prestige and thus reintroducing or widening the perceived differences between foremen and 'workers'. A second, broader campaign, often involving the concerted activity of a number of employers, was
designed to weaken the appeal of the FAA by direct attacks on the union or its activists in what might be termed the standard anti-union practices of discrimination and intimidation. The third level of opposition formed around the legislative system. Employers, faced with the imprecision of the law as it existed after the passage of the Wagner Act, attacked the FAA on the basis of interpretation of that law. To do this they sought to demonstrate that the foreman was not an employee but rather an employer by virtue of his range of powers and was therefore placed beyond the provisions of the existing laws which specifically protected "employees" rights to organise. In the long term employers sought to modify the law itself to specifically delineate the limits of union protection to the exclusion of supervisors, clearly defined.

The depth of employers antipathy to the unionisation of foremen in the American automobile industry is perhaps surprising, even after taking account of the hostility to unionisation in general which typified this sector. Management spokesmen were not reticent in expressing fears that this latest phase of unionisation marked a new intensity in their struggle to stave off union control. GM management described the foremen's unionisation movement as "a problem which many responsible people in industry believe to be the gravest threat to the entire structure of industrial management that industry has yet faced", and "...American industry's number one problem."(1) Neil Chamberlain confirmed the breadth of these sentiments deeming it "impossible to overstate the concern with which most company officials view these organising efforts and their prevalent fear that managerial authority is being undermined...by the union's technique of "raiding"
their rank for members."(2)

The problem here is to gauge correctly how much the outpourings of management on the topic of the FAA reflect real fears and attitudes and how much they are constructed of rhetoric designed to influence public opinion or the legislature. Opinions differ in this respect. Seitz for example, in his examination of the conflict surrounding legislation relating to supervisory unionisation, identifies "a chasm between discourse and reality."(3) Harris on the other hand, in his study of US managerial strategy in the 1940s, takes many employers' statements at face value, indicative of the way "flesh and blood" managers reacted at that time. (4)

There is no doubt that some employers' statements were issued in order to elicit maximum propaganda effect and bore scant if any resemblance to reality. The "sovietization of industry" was one such frequently recurring theme; "This communist crowd are here to wreck American industry...the way they get control of production is to get control of your foreman." The FAA's goal was "the socialisation of industry all the way through to the top of management", it was "thought up in Moscow" and so on. (5) From a populist standpoint such statements could have a significant impact in the proto-McCarthyist USA of the later 1940s.

These extreme postures, easily dismissed as cynical publicity measures, should not disguise the fact that many managers were genuinely concerned that unions such as the FAA, if allowed to prosper, might mark the beginning of a trend which would make significant inroads into the lower echelons of management, spreading outwards from the shop floor to encompass all white collar sectors.
Employers in the early 1940s had suffered a string of reversals in their efforts to remain union free and the rolling effect of union growth to encompass lower levels of supervision, despite the protestations of formal independence by the FAA, must have looked at the time like a distinct possibility. We have already examined the contours of cooperation and non-cooperation between the FAA and the wider union movement and seen how tenuous employer allegations of complicity were. Public statements alleging collusion continued to be widely disseminated however and various government hearings and enquiries such as those held by the Congress Military Affairs Committee and the Mead Committee on manpower problems in Detroit were regaled with lengthy testimony from individual management representatives or employers' organisations such as the Automotive Council for War Production (ACWP) to the effect that the FAA was purely a stepping stone to the further spread of unionisation to all strata of American industry. (6) The precedents set by the absorption of UCTSE supervisors union in the mining industry, and the affiliation of independents like the United Plant Protection Workers, United Office and Professional Workers of America and branches of the Federation of Architects, Engineers and Technicians by the UAW-CIO were readily invoked to point to the inevitable consolidation and spread of concerted unionisation. (7)

Formal affiliation between union organisations did not matter to many employer spokesmen. Unionisation bought with it a communality of organisational structure and goals. Chrysler's Vice President Herman Weckler held views typical of many managers of the time. Although the FAA claimed to be independent, what was important was that it was "a
labour union, that its policies and principles are those of other labour unions, that its members are brothers of the rank and file in the union movement. "(8) The FAA was bound to imbue its membership with a degree of "union consciousness" or "collective philosophy" which would place the foreman in a compromised position with regard to carrying out his supervisory duties. (9) Predicated on the underlying assumption that managerial shop floor control and the interests of union members were irreconcilable, employers insisted that foremen "could not serve two masters". (10) Military metaphors were frequently used, underlining their basic assumption of bipolarity between the union movement and employers. "Production battles" could not be won if supervisors were "required to obey the commands of their union as well as the commands of management." (11) GM President C.E.Wilson, very much in the vanguard of the anti-FAA movement, referred to foremen as "first-line officers" and went on to tell a congressional committee that in the event of unionisation, "management cannot continue to give them such authority any more than the army can risk granting a commission to a man who holds partial allegiance to another country." (12)

Ironically perhaps, in view of such provocative and defamatory statements with regard to unions, i.e. that they represented the "enemy", employer spokesmen went on to assert that unions were divisive in that they constantly promoted a negative image of management, and foremen would be, upon joining the FAA, subject to extensive anti-company propaganda. Chrysler's Herman Weckler for example maintained that, "the first objective of union leaders is to engender and foster in the employees a feeling of unavoidable
hostility against the employer" by "slandering, vilifying and abusing the company". (13)

Employers went on to elaborate a range of specific consequences, as they saw them, of the foreman's new "allegiance" to the union movement. Foremen could no longer be trusted with "confidential" information concerning company business. They would be bound to agree with virtually all grievances at the first stage of the grievance procedure. They would at best do little to stop strike activity, becoming "strike minded" themselves. Union members would get preferential consideration in any aspect of hiring, transfer, promotion, or lay-off over which the foreman had control. (14) Finally, workplace discipline would irretrievably break down. Loafing, smoking in the washrooms, poor timekeeping etc. would result as unionised foremen found themselves "victims of a creeping paralysis" or unwilling to be seen as a "company stooge" by their fellow union members. (15)

Implicit in the general stance against the unionisation of foremen was the notion of individualism taking precedence over collectivism of any form. The collective negotiations covering rates of pay, conditions of work and seniority and grievance procedures which unionisation of production workers had ushered in took on a new dimension when applied to supervision. Promotion for example from the lowest level of the managerial hierarchy would, employers feared, become regulated by seniority provisions. Progress up the management ladder would thus be controlled by procedure rather than by arbitrary management decisions. Employers preferred to define their own criteria, usually enshrined in subjective measures of merit or
ability, relying upon fixed indicators such as length of service only
in the final instance and if all other factors were considered to be
equal - a situation seldom likely to occur. Hudson's Director of
Industrial Relations was in no doubt as to who would be in favour of
seniority as the deciding factor in promotions. "There is one
particular foreman that would like it, a great big fat fellow...but I
notice the young fellows with a lot of zip and pep, they probably
wouldn't want seniority."(16) In fact many younger foremen in the FAA
were clearly in favour of promotion by seniority.(17) Managements
preferred to ignore this however and continued to elaborate
alternative qualifications. Briggs' Fay Taylor outlined criteria
including initiative, ability to plan, decision making ability,
responsibility, personality, leadership qualities, positive
disposition, self control and only finally, experience in the work to
be supervised, to be taken into account in promotion decisions.(18)
Union proposals based purely on temporal considerations could not
possibly measure up to this exacting set of standards.(19)

Some foremen, especially those who had made sufficient progress,
were evidently persuaded by management tenets concerning individual
merit. Otis Prendergast for example, foreman in one of the GM assembly
departments, where he had worked since he was 17 and had been a
foreman for 14 years, spoke out against the FAA; "I believe the system
under which I have worked is the American way. If you have initiative,
the will to do, the know how...There is no limit as to how far you can
go."(20) Ford after all boasted two company vice-presidents who had
come via the shop floor foreman's job.(21) The majority of foremen
however probably knew only too well that they could only hope to scale

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the bottom one or two rungs of the managerial ladder. Very few could hope to bridge the gulf between shop floor supervision and management proper. There was also a persistent and widespread belief among foremen themselves, ironic perhaps in view of their own past record, that merit and ability in reality was often overridden by favouritism of some sort.\(^{(22)}\) FAA enrolment figures alone indicate a widespread rejection by foremen of the notion that the concept of individual representation would best serve their interests.

Employers maintained that the "open door" policy also gave the foreman direct access to higher management in regard to grievances over pay or conditions thus eliminating the need for union representation. If not satisfied with the initial response foremen could, in theory, pursue any enquiry to a higher office in the managerial hierarchy.\(^{(23)}\) The employers' argument on this issue was simple and straightforward. If a foreman was unable or reluctant to stick up for himself or needed the representation of an outside agency then he was clearly not fit to be in a position of authority. Chrysler's Director of Industrial Relations, Robert Conder, summed up this attitude; "We expect our foremen to be articulate...they really aren't the kind of people we want for foremen unless they have the ability to speak for themselves and state what their complaints are."\(^{(24)}\) In reality the "open door" was seldom if ever more than slightly ajar. Foremen presenting evidence before the various committees of inquiry into the FAA continually stressed the futility of attempting to pursue grievances on an individual basis.\(^{(25)}\)

The concepts of individualism put forward by employers were no doubt strongly held beliefs but they were seldom articulated beyond a
continual recital of basic axioms - individualism, merit, 'the American way' and so on. That there now existed inherent contradictions between the potential for individual action and the structure of large scale organisation was not seen to be problematic. These contradictions would often be implicit in managerial statements themselves. Briggs Personnel Director, Fay Taylor, could talk of the company as "made up of individuals...individualists all of them" but go on to liken the firm to a cooperative. Perhaps the best summation of the employers' position is revealed in the candid remarks of Chrysler's Robert Conder; "The Foreman's Association, I am convinced, would ask us to do what was best for the majority rather than what was best for the individual."(27)

While employers were to a large extent forced to tolerate unions for production workers, a major plank of their argument against the FAA was based on the fact that foremen were a distinct and different class of worker. They were at pains to demonstrate that foremen were management, firmly located within the controlling structure of the firm, part of the administration and fully integrated into the decision making process. "Is the foreman part of management?" became the central question in the debate surrounding the legitimacy of the FAA. GM presented the most elaborate and perhaps most persuasive argument in this respect. In line with their stated commitment to restress the status and responsibilities of shop floor supervision, a programme initiated in the 1930s(28), GM posited a managerial hierarchy based upon a two way flow of information and response in which the foreman was an integral, policy making figure. Indeed in GM's schematic representation the factory foreman had the largest
Figure 1

(Source: US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p234)
"area of responsibility and authority requiring flexibility of treatment and individual judgement". GM maintained that foremen held a pivotal role, being "alone in a position to convey up the line to his superior, his intimate understanding of the personal and human considerations involved in the field of industrial relations thus influencing the formulation of policy." GM's attitude towards, and treatment of foremen must be seen in many ways to dovetail with the general ethos of 'Sloanism' in terms of decentralisation and delegation of managerial authority initiated during the inter-war period. Although to a large extent such initiatives were confined to general company policy at a higher managerial level, real efforts had been made throughout the 1930s and early 1940s to reincorporate or rebuild the foreman's position through the work of GM's Director, Albert Sobey and Vice-president, William Knudsen via a series of ambitious training schemes, enhanced responsibilities and more effective pay differential schemes. The initial rationale behind GM's attempts to restress the role of shop floor foremen had been driven by the corporation's tough stance on the spread of unionisation amongst production workers. In the event GM had been among the first to succumb to the UAW, but had insisted on tighter shop floor restrictions on union representatives, not allowing the autonomy to shop stewards which featured in many other companies' agreements. This action was later to stand the company in good stead in its programme of resistance to the FAA.

As early as 1934 Knudsen had issued a directive urging "A complete rebuilding of the foreman organisation within the divisions...It is important that quality and quantity of both work and 

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working force is put squarely back to the foreman where it belongs... The foreman should be called into frequent meetings with the department head... He should be given to understand that Clause 7a has not in any way impaired his authority or his rights to hire and fire..."(33) While it must be noted that, in common with other manufacturers, the rationalised production processes and extended division of labour described throughout this thesis, had made this at best only a partially achievable goal, nevertheless it is significant that GM, alone among the major manufacturers, proved to be a very difficult recruitment area for the FAA.

Contrast the GM initiatives with those of Ford, where the FAA was to experience its greatest successes, Ford becoming the epicentre of foremen's unionisation in this period. Ford management, as we have seen in chapter two above, ignored ideas of enhancing the role of production foremen choosing instead an essentially repressive strategy of shop floor personnel control centred around the servicemen's regime - often as intimidatory to foremen as to workers in general. When it came to assessments of the foreman's part in the management structure Ford spokesmen seemed to accept that there were only tenuous connections. Ford Director, John Bugas rated such ideas "just a big fat zero... We could like to think that they are (part of management), but if they don't and they want a union contract, OK."(34)

The majority of employers, unlike Ford, continued to expound arguments stressing that foremen were an integral part of management, and therefore beyond the bounds of unionisation. These were to be well aired in the forums of government enquiry surrounding the legal rights of the foremen to unionise. The image portrayed, in spite of such
initiatives as those undertaken at GM, was often wildly inaccurate. As Seitz comments, "the language employed is devoid of reference to the social, economic and political reality of the foreman's position at that time. Instead an abstract picture of an ideal foreman is legislated, adjudicated and manipulated into existence..."(35) (See Appendix A for Packard's description) Formal job descriptions were invoked as evidence for the foreman's daily routines and responsibilities. In addition the various written forms which foremen had to deal with were put forward as indicators that they were both part of the factory bureaucracy, standing across the divide marked off by involvement in "paper work" which separated worker and management, and also that they exercised the authority implicit in such forms. Two broad divisions were drawn in this line of argument, between personnel and production functions.

In terms of personnel functions companies attempted to maintain that foremen retained control of hiring, firing, training, absenteeism and discipline. Chrysler for example regularly produced examples of foremen's reports concerning poor timekeeping, workers being caught sleeping, "loafing", gambling, leaving the job early, absenteeism, lateness, drunkenness and unsatisfactory work.(36) Requests for transfer, reclassification or promotion were also produced. In one case Chrysler produced 27 pages of foremen's reports and went on to insist that, "The language of these reports, "I discharged him", "I decided", "I am letting him go", "I told him he was fired"..."I changed his job", "I am giving her leave of absence", permit no doubt that in dealing with their employees, Chrysler's foremen have authority, that they have the latitude in which to
exercise it and that they do exercise it."(37)

In terms of production or routine administration a further batch of forms was produced by employers to bolster their case. Tool release forms, requisition of stocks, materials and labour, production and inspection reports, gate passes, first aid slips, temporary rate increases, time study sheets, and miscellaneous "departmental communications" were among the many classes of paperwork processed initially by the foreman. Hudson listed 29 different forms of this type which the foreman had to fill in as part of their job description.(38) In addition there were wartime reports which were the responsibility of foremen such as those dealing with aliens' suitability for employment based on the foreman's judgment of their patriotism or loyalty.(39) Foremen also had to file periodic reports on the progress of probationary employees or those undergoing training.(40)

Many qualifications need to be put upon this general line of argument that an immersion in paperwork effectively marked off foremen as part of management. At a simple level it was noted that most of the forms mentioned needed countersignature by superintendents, personnel or labour relations offices or, during wartime, the labour control office.(41) Night shift foremen may have had greater autonomy in this respect although they would, in common with their day shift counterparts, have also had to seek approval and countersignature to the many disciplinary forms, from union representatives. As far as discretionary content was concerned many forms dealt with preordained actions. Many disciplinary actions were, since the establishment of union procedures, governed by fixed codes leaving little room for
adjudication by foremen. Packard had a series of fixed punishments for "standard" offences. Being caught gambling for example meant three days suspension for the first offence, six days for the second and the sack if caught a third time.\(^{(42)}\) Foremen did retain discretion over whether to submit such official notifications, but in the mechanism of their submission he now represented a far from independent figure.

This case presented by employers can also be turned against them in that such a volume of reports and forms could be seen to represent a constriction of foremen's discretion. By laying down fixed parameters of action as defined in the forms themselves a reduction in the scope of autonomous, non accountable activity by supervision is effected. Disciplinary action was on a fixed scale as noted. Production related forms - requisitions etc. - represent merely the continual servicing of a labour process determined through increasingly remote design and control systems as noted in chapter two. As one foreman complained in 1943; "No, I am not management. If I want to change a tool on a machine I must first put in what we call an S.P.C. and ask for permission. If I want to change the position of a reamer on a turret lathe, I first must ask the permission of the tool designer. All my work is laid out."\(^{(43)}\) Employer arguments had little to say about the informal changes to work practices which foremen undertook or acquiesced in to ease workloads or facilitate production, since such activities seldom came to the attention of higher management.

In reality the foremen's day typically involved liaison with progress and stock chasers, and, in attempting to keep production at target levels, they would be particularly concerned with maintenance,
breakdowns or bottlenecks in production, avoiding "serious shortages" or speeding through "hot parts" - urgent jobs due to production planning alterations or unforeseen problems. To facilitate this the foreman had to distribute labour as production patterns dictated, and ensure relief workers were available.\(^{(44)}\) Foremen worked with limited "managerial" horizons. While they worked to production schedules prepared by specialist departments on a monthly, weekly or daily basis, their contribution to these schedules was likely to effect only immediate revision. Such schedules were far more likely to be affected by external considerations originating in marketing patterns, purchasing factors and so on.\(^{(45)}\) For most foremen, when production was running smoothly their job became one of assigning labour, dishing out gloves and aprons etc. and presiding over overtime allocation.\(^{(46)}\) This meant a major portion of the day left over to petty shop discipline. Provision of relief for workers on the line was often part of an ongoing conflict around the amount of time workers could expect free of the pace of production. Frequent accusations of foremen "hanging round" washrooms or timing workers absence from production are to be found in union grievances. Washing up times at the end of the shift were also "policed" by foremen and became the subject of sporadic crackdowns in what became an incessant battle around the last few minutes of the day.\(^{(47)}\)

Such activity - troubleshooting production through immediate crises, simple allocation of labour and equipment and the enforcement of petty discipline - is clearly at variance with accounts promulgated by employers and do not match the concepts of "management" on the scales laid out in the idealised job descriptions which employers put.
forward as proof of foremen's responsibilities. (For an example of the structure of responsibilities outlined by employers see Appendix 1) Such accounts made slight reference to the ways in which rationalisation of production had affected the scope for foremen to exercise real discretion. Employers also had little to say about the way in which unionisation of production workers had proceduralised many aspects of discipline and job allocation, and as noted in chapter four, proscribed much of the foreman's independence of action. In general employers were reluctant to admit their neglect of the foreman's position, preferring instead to stress aspects of power which their foreman may have held in previous periods, when higher management had been content to abdicate responsibility in the labour market and on the shop floor, but which bore little relevance to the rationalised and unionised factory. At a time when foremen were increasingly caricatured as at best "men in the middle", claims that foremen were "part of management" were increasingly seen by FAA members as hollow rhetoric. As Robert Keys insisted, "They have little if any prestige, they are fearful of insecurity, and almost all dignity has been detached from their job...In reality they are puppets in the industrial bureaucracy..."(48)

If this general line of argument was not persuasive on the shop floor employers were not too concerned. It was after all primarily designed to influence legislators and a wider public. Employers had a series of further concrete strategies in their campaign against the FAA, and at a tactical level they employed a range of specific anti-union measures designed to dislodge the union or hamper its organising efforts.

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The most straightforward of these tactics was to fire or demote foremen who were thought to be active in membership recruitment. Briggs for example demoted all their foremen FAA members in 1941.\(^{(49)}\) Such provocative activity was likely to provoke a hostile and costly response however and often more subtle tactics were employed. Supervision at Bohn Aluminium were expected to sign a statement, reminiscent of the notorious "yellow dog" contracts of the 1920s and 1930s, whereby they accepted that employment could be terminated without notice if their services were not "in every respect satisfactory" to the company. Bohn's foremen recognised this to mean non-membership of the FAA and eventually struck over the issue.\(^{(50)}\)

An alternative company anti-FAA manoeuvre involved manipulating classifications of workers to exploit ineligibilities for membership. Employers had used the strategy of 'promoting' leading hands and similar workers to supervisory status in order to disqualify these workers from voting in NLRB elections or joining production workers unions.\(^{(51)}\) Similarly when the FAA secured the right to hold elections, companies such as Ford and Briggs reclassified many of their foremen as "chief inspectors" or "superintendents" without any commensurate change in duties but simply to place them outside the ambit of the FAA.\(^{(52)}\) In a variant of this tactic Packard tried to pack one of the FAA elections by 'promoting' salesmen and fieldmen to the rank of foreman, issuing instructions that they should vote against certification of the union.\(^{(53)}\) Ford also switched their recruitment patterns to introduce foremen from outside the plants rather than continue internal promotion patterns which seemed to be generating so many FAA members.\(^{(54)}\)
In a similar set of tactics involving classification employers threatened that if foremen's unionisation became established they would restructure their managerial hierarchies to withdraw many areas of responsibility from shop floor supervision. Foremen would in effect be reduced to "straw boss" or charge hand status. They would for example be removed from involvement in the first step of production unions' grievance procedure and no longer allowed to issue passes or write discipline reports. Employers claimed they could not have confidence in unionised foremen and would cease to communicate directly with them - an ironic threat in view of the popular complaint made by FAA members that they were largely ignored by higher management anyway. Nevertheless this plan "to degrade the foreman, and put his management duties at a higher level", effectively redrawing the nominal boundary between worker and manager, was viewed as a viable or necessary strategy by a large number of employers. A survey carried out in 1946 for example found 71% of firms responding that some such action seemed necessary, ranging from the creation of a new non-unionised strata of "super-foremen" or "master foremen" to the external recruitment of graduate engineers and the withdrawal of all personnel functions from the shop floor. In reality such action was seldom taken. The most vociferous advocate of this type of response was GM where the FAA was least successful in recruitment and thus employers resolve in this matter was never fully tested. In the event other strategies were to prove more effective and the threat posed by the FAA receded, nevertheless the restructuring of supervision was a popular theme among anti-FAA lobbies at the time.

Employers often acted collectively in their opposition to the FAA
through the agency of a number of associations. The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) for example lobbied congress constantly to put pressure on the NLRB and to revise the law to exclude foremen from unionisation rights.  

The NAM also formed a pressure group to persuade the government's Salary Stabilisation Unit to withdraw limits on foremen's pay rises, thus eliminating one of the foremen's major complaints. The Automotive Council for War Production (ACWP) based in Detroit and composed of companies employing a total of over 1,200,000 workers in the arms industry - mostly in the major automobile firms - also conducted a vigorous anti-FAA campaign, coordinating employers' activity and issuing publicity. The Chamber of Commerce of the USA also collaborated with the NAM in efforts to change labour laws as did the Automobile Manufacturers Association (AMA) which, through the leadership of GM president C.E.Wilson, also orchestrated an extensive propaganda campaign against the FAA.

The press campaign against the FAA often took the form of full page statements issued by GM or the ACWP stressing how the FAA was "bad for industry, bad for labour, bad for America" and asking such questions as "Where is unionisation going to stop?" Notaries such as Leo Wolman, one-time chairman of the Automobile Labour Board set up by Roosevelt in 1934, were called upon to write features stressing "...how demoralising to management such a change in the position of the foreman would be...with the foreman organised...American industry will have become a closed-shop industry." Editorial in pro-AMA papers, from the local Detroit News to the Wall Street Journal, were also frequently published urging Congress to act and ban the FAA.
Wilson at GM represented the major figure in the concerted campaign against the FAA. He was responsible for setting up four congressional committees to inquire into the "problem" and constantly petitioned or sent telegrams to various government departments demanding legislative action. Building on the base, which GM had established, of resistance to the FAA, at least partially achieved through restressing the status of foremen in the 1930s and aided by the greater stability, when compared to other automobile plants, of GM's labour relations in general by the outbreak of war, Wilson worked, through the AMA, towards a united opposition to the FAA. This was not always an easy task. Packard for example, a member of the AMA, was at times willing to reach agreement with the foremen's union. The lower levels of Packard management had been unofficially negotiating with FAA representatives and settling various grievances up until 1944. Their Industrial Relations Director had stated that he considered the FAA a lesser evil than losing the foremen to one of the CIO unions. With pressure exerted by the AMA and in particular by GM, a major parts supplier to Packard, the firm was held to a line of resistance to the FAA however, sustaining a series of costly strikes and legal battles in the process.

If firms such as Packard could be coerced or coopted into the anti-FAA movement one other major manufacturer was notable by its steadfast refusal to join in any of the activities of the employers associations. Ford had a long legacy of remaining aloof from organisations like the NAM or the AMA. This had its origins in the early years of the industry with Henry Ford's refusal to join the patent associations. Ford was generally regarded as some form of
renegade employer when it came to industrial relations. Having held out against the UAW until 1941 for example, only acceding to union organisation under the threat of government sanctions, Ford then offered the union the most generous terms in the entire industry, including some concessions even the union felt bound to reject as going to far in giving them control of the shop floor.\(^{(70)}\) Similarly with the FAA, Ford signed what was to be the union's most prestigious agreement, much to the chagrin of AMA members. Some employers, seeing the hand of the notorious Harry Bennett in these proceedings, went so far as to suggest that the FAA was being actively fostered by Ford in order to disrupt industrial relations at other companies.\(^{(71)}\)

Ford had certainly given a boost to the FAA's organising activities by virtue of signing agreements early on, without any real resistance from Ford management or appeal to the NLRB. The situation at Ford was in many ways different to other manufacturers. The size and strength of the FAA chapter at Ford's River Rouge plant was considerable and key organisers such as Keys and Bonaventura were based there. Foremen at Ford had also been put under greater pressure during the inter-war period with the additional burden of the servicemen's regime which controlled much of factory floor activity. When contrasted against the early interest which GM had shown in fostering better industrial relations with their foremen, Ford's seeming abandonment of shop floor supervisors, beyond the proviso that they drive production, certainly fuelled the general discontent manifested in FAA recruitment levels. When added to the often quixotic nature of Ford's industrial relations strategy, and their recalcitrance in involvement with employers associations, the result
was by far the most important boost to the FAA when it was formally recognised.

Ford's cooperation with the FAA was destined to change however. Higher management at the company underwent radical restructuring with the accession to power of Henry Ford II in late 1945 and the resultant ousting of Bennett. The new regime began almost immediately to focus significant attention on the foreman "problem". The decision to withdraw from the FAA agreement probably soon followed although favourable conditions in which to do so did not emerge until 1947. By then initiatives designed to strengthen the foremen's status were well under way and automobile production was approaching full capacity, thus eliminating many remaining foremen's fears of demotion. The previous years post-war contractions had eroded membership of the FAA at the Rouge to a low of 3,800. With the prospect of the successful passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in the coming months Ford management felt confident of victory and consequently announced its intention not to renew the FAA agreement in April 1947. For its part the FAA saw this as the occasion to demonstrate to legislators involved in the impending act the consequences of withdrawal of foremen's organising rights.

Ford at last came fully into line with the other Automobile manufacturers issuing widespread denouncements of the consequences of unions for foremen. These were all the more damning given Ford's experience of over three years of operating under FAA agreements. Ford were to publish statements claiming that they were "disappointed and disillusioned" and that foremen's unionisation had been an "unhappy and unfortunate experience." The FAA was held to have been anti-
management and counter productive in terms of labour relations resulting in a widespread erosion of discipline on the shop floor.\(^{(76)}\)

Some measure of the new spirit of cooperation between Ford and the other major manufacturers, or at least their now common belief in the suppression of foremen's unionisation, is indicated by the fact that when Ford set up its new Management Relations Department to deal with supervisory personnel problems during the 1947 FAA strike, it was staffed with General Motors supervisory personnel specialists. Richard E. Roberts for example, who was in charge of the new Ford department, was recruited from GM to head a team specialising in the restructuring of the foreman's role at the Ford factories along lines pursued at the GM plants.\(^{(77)}\)

The general level of concerted action among American employers in attempting to offset the unionisation of their foremen in some ways reflected the activities of employers in Britain. Although the foremen's unionisation movement came at an earlier period in Britain - around the end of the First World War - it was stimulated by similar developments. The onset of armaments manufacture producing changes in the labour process and demography of the workforce, the expanded role of the state regulating labour, pay and conditions, the resultant erosion of pay differentials and increased workloads, rapid promotion of inexperienced foremen, and restrictions placed on foremen from an expanse in the union presence on most shop floors, all paralleled developments in the USA. Of the several foremen's unions which emerged around 1918 the National Foremens Association (NFA) was the most prominent and was eventually to form the basis for the successful supervisory union movement led by the ASSET, later to become the
 Employers fought against the NFA on an individual basis although the major effort to eliminate the NFA came through the offices of the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF). Arguably a more cohesive organisation than its American counterparts, the EEF was able, through centrally directed policies and threats of sanctions, to enforce a rigid code of conduct among member firms concerning foremen's unions or recruitment of foremen by production workers' unions. The latter, having at the time shown more willingness to recruit foremen than their later American counterparts were to do, were decisively beaten following the defeat of the Electrical Trades Union at Penistone in 1920 over the eligibility of foremen for membership in production workers unions. The campaign against the NFA, although failing to eliminate the union, certainly helped to stem the growth in its recruitment levels until the Second World War.

Employers in Britain were unable to pursue activity against unionisation in the same arena as their American counterparts given the absence of a formally defined legislative framework. There was no equivalent to the National Labour Relations Act or NLRB for them seek to amend or lobby. They did have one major strategy however which American employers were later to emulate in close detail – the setting up of alternative organisations for foremen, under the control of employers and more closely adhering to managerial ideologies. In effect these represented company unions for foremen.

British engineering employers had set up the Foremen's Mutual Benefit Society (FMBS) in 1899 in an attempt to woo foremen away from the craft union recruitment initiatives of the time. Foremen, defined as workmen "in a position of trust", had fees partially paid and
received various benefits including sickness benefits, pensions, insurance and unemployment provisions in addition to organised social activities. In return foremen were expected to rescind their membership of any trade union. Held up as a model for similar societies in other industries, the FMBS experienced moderate success, reaching a peak of recruitment in the early 1920s following the initial successful years of the NFA.\(^{(80)}\) Other factors in addition to the predations of the FMBS led to the stalling of the NFA in the inter-war years, notably the end of war production, economic downturns and reverses in the union movement in general, but the employers in the USA saw such a strategy as a useful and integral part of their fight against foremen's unionisation and were to foster similar organisations to the FMBS in the 1940s.

The most prominent American organisation of this type was the National Association of Foremen (NAF). Accounts vary as to the exact date of its foundation. Sometime between 1918 and 1925 the NAF was formed out of a federation of foremen's clubs in Dayton, Ohio. Initially sponsorship came from YMCA organisations and "enlightened" personnel and managerial sponsors such as Glen Gardiner and factory owner L. Ruthenberg.\(^{(81)}\) Like the FMBS in Britain the NAF initially grew in response not to foremen's unions per se but rather in response to the perceived threat from the spread of unionisation among production workers. The NAF experienced steady growth throughout the 1920s, particularly in Ohio, forming city-wide associations of existing plant foremen's clubs across a range of industries. In the early 1930s membership dropped somewhat but picked up with the revival of interest by employers following the unionisation of production
workers and carried on expanding at a steady rate from the mid 1930s on into the 1940s. (82) With the formation of the FAA the NAF was the subject of renewed recruitment efforts and between 1945 and 1947 membership rose from around 20,000 in 135 clubs to over 30,000 in 200 clubs spread across 42 states. (83) There were strong links between the NAF and the automobile firms. Chrysler for example hosted the 1937 NAF conference and GM Director of Education, Albert Sobey, was one of the movement's leading advocates. (84)

In addition to membership fees the NAF was supported by extensive corporation funding. Whereas in Britain the FMBS member foremen had to pay 50% of their subscription personally, the NAF foreman was entirely company sponsored. This led to accusations by the FAA that many foremen were in fact unaware of or indifferent to their membership of the NAF and thus total membership claimed in no way reflected active participation levels. (85) Membership was open to all grades of management and the organisation included many personnel department and training staff. The majority of members were ordinary shop floor foremen however. Conferences, while attended by personnel staff primarily interested in observation, were reported to be dominated by ordinary foreman members. (86)

The aims of organisations such as the FMBS and NAF were as similar as they were transparent. Those founding and supporting them were quite candid in their assertions that these were bodies primarily designed to offset unionisation proper. "Checkmating the influence of the new (union) movement" as the FMBS literature put it. (87) Collective bargaining was firmly rejected and any associated club found to be engaging in such activity was to be expelled. As the
Foremen's Club of Columbus put it, "Human nature responds to legitimate motives of self interest." Individualism, not collectivism, should predominate. Arguments put forward by NAF affiliates echoed those of employers on this issue. "A foreman member of a collective bargaining unit has an interest antagonistic to that of his employer, and his value and worth as a "PART OF MANAGEMENT" is destroyed."(88)

Seniority of any sort was also rejected, or as the NAF held, to be relied upon only as the last resort, when "knowledge, training, ability, skill and efficiency, physical fitness, family status and number of dependants" were equal. In other words, never.(89)

Organisations like the NAF were oriented towards leadership by higher executives - in effect a replication of the factory hierarchy. Seen as a medium of education and a means of "raising the quality of foremanship" they were also to embody a meeting of foremen and higher management in a "cooperative spirit of loyalty to the company."(90) To this end the NAF organised monthly meetings with guest speakers, trips to factories or civic institutions, social evenings and training courses. The latter were strongly oriented towards human relations management styles as well as attempting to broaden foremen's understanding of the general functioning of the firm.(91) In this the NAF's trajectory can be seen to be closely linked to that of organisations like the National Foreman's Institute (NFI), the Foreman's League for Education and Association and the YMCA sponsored National Council of Foremen's Clubs, all of which promoted educational programmes aimed at enhancing foremen's education and training as a means of rebuilding the prestige and reclaiming the allegiance of the shop floor foreman.(92) "Management" was the key word to be found in

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the literature of all these organisations, reinforcing the message in employers arguments concerning the status and hierarchical position of the shop floor foreman. This was also reflected in titles such as that given to the Gar Wood NAF affiliate in Detroit - the "Management Club", or area clubs such as the "Management Club of Chicago". There was an attempt in 1947 to rename the NAF itself the "Management Men of America". (93)

There was no attempt to hide the allegiance of organisations like the NAF. Its members lined up beside employers to give testimony against the FAA at congressional hearings for example and generally it took every available opportunity to promote the demise of the FAA. (94) For their part the FAA saw these employer sponsored organisations as little more than "social clubs" and made strenuous attempts to expose their true purpose.

The overall success of initiatives like the NAF in offsetting foremen's unionisation were probably marginal. Although membership figures grew these are a poor indication of the response of foremen themselves since fees were paid by employers for their total supervisory workforce and did not reflect any decision or commitment on behalf of individual foremen. They are best viewed as agencies for the dissemination of anti-FAA information. Organisations such as the NFI concentrated almost exclusively on such activity. Through its monthly reports - the 'Collective Bargaining Bulletin' and 'Executive Labour Letter' it sought to give constant warnings of the consequences of ignoring foremen's unionisation - "the number one problem facing American employers" - and offered advice varying from how to sack unionised foremen without transgressing the NLRA to "guidelists"

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advising ways in which to foster good foreman-employer relations. (95)

Other factors were more important in the decline of the FAA, and other strategies open to American employers were to prove, in the end, more potent in hastening that decline.

Prominent among these was the attempt to obtain legal sanction against the FAA - to place the union beyond the protection of the Wagner Act.

Supervisory Unionism and the State

The history of the foremen's unionisation with regard to legislative developments and intrusions of state institutions into industrial relations has been extensively studied. Excellent and detailed accounts are available which chart the fortunes of the FAA and focus intensively on the role of government in alternatively fostering or withdrawing support from the union. (96) While it is the contention of this thesis that a range of other factors need to be taken into account in understanding the determinants of supervisory unionisation and primacy should not be afforded to the formal legal atmosphere of the period, this is not to say that such an account should ignore what is clearly one of several major factors.

The New Deal period following the accession to power of F.D.Roosevelt is, certainly in peacetime, one of the most visible and controversial examples of the expansion of state power into the economy of an advanced capitalist nation. The American state of the early 1930s intervened in industry in ways far overshadowing previous initiatives such as factory inspection or workers compensation.
laws. (97) Debates around the exact nature, motivation and impact of this intervention continue. The range of interpretations spans accounts which point to the pro-capitalist, regulatory nature of the New Deal state, managing a capitalist crisis, through accounts stressing the proto-Keynesian liberal-welfarist project originating in the progressive era, to those, contemporary (such as Coughlin and Townsend) and current which see the Roosevelt initiates as of a corporatist nature, carrying overtones of the European Fascist states of the period. (98) Such debates confront the relationship between the state and civil society. A rekindling of interest in the work of Gramsci and neo-Marxist interpretations has produced more recent interpretations ranging from the "Fordist" or "neo-Fordist" state as the structurally determined guarantor of capitalist relations of production, through a more loosely connected "relatively autonomous" state as outlined by Poulantzas, to the state as a politically determined arena of pluralistic struggle favoured by Skocpol. (99) Study of a specific issue, such as the state intrusion into the question of foremen's unionisation can illuminate, at the very least by empirical reference - singularly absent from some accounts (100) - this debate, showing the precise contours of state intervention and assessing their impact in terms of capital and labour.

The New Deal itself comprised a range of governmental initiatives designed to pull the US economy out of the burgeoning depression of the early 1930s. There were a variety of direct interventions in the labour market as work projects were set in train ranging from major programmes like the TVA to the localised initiatives of the CCC. Federally organised welfare initiatives were established through the
Social Security Act and attempts were made to control wages and prices through the offices of the NRA. The National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) (and subsequent amendments through the Wagner Act) established workers rights to bargain collectively through agents of their own choosing and was to be administered by the National Labour Relations Board. With regard to industrial supervision we have already noted the impact of some of these developments - the relatively limited effect of the NRA codes on the actions of employers or foremen in the automobile industry, the impact of industrial unionisation - at least partially stimulated by state support - on the role of the foreman and so on. What of the direct impact on the unionisation of foremen. How far can the actions of the state be seen to stimulate or retard the growth of the FAA?

In the formal sense the NIRA made no specific mention of "foremen" in its drafting of workers rights. Arguments pursued by employers and the FAA were to reflect the central definitional dilemma surrounding the categorisation of shop floor supervision within the changes which had occurred in the structures and hierarchies of mass production industry. The NIRA had laid down provisions for the protection of "employees" rights to organise and thus the argument devolved to one basic question - were foremen "employees" or "employers"?

The NLRB went through a series of interpretations of the law as they seemingly responded to alternatively to pressure from employers and the FAA. In the earliest pre-FAA decisions the board took it for granted that foremen were "employees" under the provisions of the act for unions wishing to include foremen amongst their membership. (101)
In 1941 in a case brought by GM a ruling was made that certain classes of supervisory engineers were excluded from the legal protection. This was to be a short lived decision as in 1942, in the Union Collieries case foremen were deemed by the board to be under the full protection of the Wagner Act. Thus the UMW gained the right to organise assistant mine foremen, fire and weigh bosses and coal inspectors into separate locals. More importantly, because of the closed shop agreements held by the UMW foremen would be compelled to join the affiliated UCTSE. The Godchaux Sugars case of the same year confirmed this decision and extended it to condone supervisory workers' membership of unions containing production workers. The following year, 1943, in the Maryland Drydock case the NLRB reversed this position entirely, now ruling that supervisory workers should not be included in any bargaining unit. Only in the case of traditionally organised supervisory workers, notably in the print and maritime industries, was organisation among this group of workers allowed to continue. This decision was confirmed later the same year in the GM Detroit Diesel Engine case.

Following a series of strikes and intervention by the National War Labour Board, the NLRB switched its position again in May 1944 in the Soss and Republic Steel cases to give an ambiguous ruling that while foremen were "employees" under sections 8(1) and 8(3) of the Wagner Act and therefore were protected against unfair labour practices, they were not entitled to hold union certification elections as guaranteed under section 8(5) and 9. Thus foremen were in the odd position of being free to organise and collect dues etc. without employer interference, but were unable to use the law to force recognition of their union. In March 1945 in the Packard case the
board finally resolved this anomalous situation by deciding in favour of supervisors being able to organise but not in a union affiliated in any way to those of the production workers. (105) The Young Spring and Wire case of 1946 confirmed this position but the Jones and Laughlin Steel case of the same year again extended the rights of most supervisors to belong to affiliated unions. The reversal became complete with the California Packing Corporation Case, again in 1946, which gave foremen the right to form their own unions or freely join those of the production workers. (106)

Success for the foremen's union movement was short lived however. In July 1947, despite a veto attempt by President Truman, the Taft-Hartley Labour-Management Relations Act became law and, while it did not withdraw the right of individual supervisors to join unions, it unequivocally withdrew legal protection or support for those who did. The NLRB promptly dropped all certification appeals on behalf of foremen which, at the time numbered around 50, including those at Briggs, Chrysler, Hudson and Firestone. (107) The court of appeals, in setting aside the Young Spring and Wire decision of the previous year in September 1947 marked the end of formal state support for foremen's unionisation. Judge Wilbur K. Miller stated that it was "unmistakably clear...that the 80th Congress intended to deny, and has denied the benefits of the (National Labour Relations) Act to "supervisors"." (108)

What had led to the considerable vacillation by the NLRB in the intervening years and what pressures had finally resulted in a defeat for the foreman's unionisation movement over legal sanction?

Definitional arguments had been fairly consistent throughout the
1940s. Employers had argued that the provisions of the NIRA had applied to "employees" rights and as such foremen, by the nature of their responsibilities and duties were technically "employers". Previous legislation such as the Railway Labour Act had specifically included foremen and "subordinate officials" and employers maintained that if the NIRA had meant to include foremen it would likewise have specified them. (On this point the FAA argued that the Act did define groups of workers to be excluded i.e. agricultural labourers, domestic servants etc., so if foremen were meant to be excluded they should have been mentioned along with these other groups of workers.) Employers pointed to the historical circumstances surrounding the implementation of the NIRA in the early 1930s when no labour unrest among foremen was evident - clearly by this token the act was aimed at placating the production worker not the foreman. (109) Indeed the foreman was responsible under the NIRA for seeing the law was carried out i.e. that no unfair labour practices or discrimination took place against union members - the NLRB itself had issued circulars advising foremen of their responsibilities under the act. (110) As GM Vice-president Bayard D. Kankle asserted, "Due to the authority and responsibilities vested in the foremen in GM...it is impossible for the foreman to be in the dual position of an 'employee' and 'employer'...the corporation is held legally responsible for the foreman's conduct." (111)

The NIRA itself had defined an employer as "...any person acting in the interest of an employer, directly or indirectly." Company spokesmen argued that this must mean the foremen, especially when it came to discrimination on the shop floor. Conversely however the term
"employee" as defined in the Act could be applied to virtually all personnel including vice presidents and directors. (112) Such non-specificity exasperated company spokesmen who saw a common sense division. As Packard's lawyers argued, "There is a clear and distinct line of cleavage between the foreman as the lower level of management and the workers. Unless the line is drawn at this point, where will it be drawn? Surely Congress did not intend the president of the company to be an "employee"." (113) The whole argument revolved around semantics. Clearly, with the divorce of ownership and control engendered in most large, joint-stock corporations, most, if not all of the managerial hierarchy were in essence "employees". Yet there was merit in the argument that the NIRA was not intended to refer to all strata of workers. The resolution of the argument could only come about if the law included clear distinctions based on definitions of executive prerogatives. In the absence of such clarity company spokesmen were to proffer a multitude of their own definitions to distinguish foremen from "employees" - "part of the managerial force", "agent for the employer", "instrumentality of management", "exercising the authority of management", and so on. (114)

The interpretation of the law remained entirely at the discretion of the NLRB panel members however, a tripartite board composed of representatives from labour and employers, and a government appointed neutral. In the event, as we have seen, the imprecision of the NIRA led to the pattern of irregular and frequently quixotic decisions over foremen's rights. As one contemporary commentator noted, "In consequence of the spare legislative yardstick provided to measure their application of the Act the board members often indulged in well-
meaning but inconsistent expressions of current policy."(115) Although Senator Wagner, responsible for amending the legislation in 1935, went on record in support of foremen's unionisation(116) the board continued to alternate between notions of the foreman as responsible for production, "correlation" of workers and maintenance and discipline, to assertions that he was merely the "traffic cop" of industry, "more managed than managing, more and more the executor of other mens' decisions less and less a maker of decisions himself." The board also noted the marginalisation which had occurred with the advent of union procedures.(117)

With such wide discretion in interpreting the limits of the law the actual make up of the board was at times crucial. For example at the time of the Union Collieries case in 1942, the outcome of which favoured the FAA, the board was composed of Harry Millis and William Leiserson, both more or less sympathetic to labour's demands, with Gerard Reilly the sole voice of dissent.(118) The Maryland Drydock decision of 1943, which went against the FAA was arrived at when Leiserson had been replaced on the board by J.M.Houston. Houston had been appointed when Roosevelt was under pressure to shift the NLRB away from its pro-union balance. The result was that Millis was now in the minority in supporting the FAA.(119) With the Packard decision of 1944 however Houston had in fact changed his mind and came out in favour of the FAA, perhaps because of the impact of the wave of strikes undertaken by the FAA. In the event Reilly was again left in a minority of one. Finally in 1944 both Reilly and Houston were replaced by J.J.Reynolds and Paul Herzog, both pro-FAA, leaving the way clear for a string of subsequent decisions in favour of collective
bargaining for foremen. (120)

Thus we can see that the composition of the NLRB, largely determined in the political sphere, strongly influenced the changing contours of legislative sanction for supervisory unionisation. Reilly for example was never likely to be influenced by even the most persuasive advocacy of the foremen's cause. Constantly issuing dissenting statements when he found himself in the minority, his strength of feeling on the issue is reflected in the recommendations he made on retirement from the board, the foremost of which was that the Wagner Act be amended to exclude supervisory workers. (121)

Other members of the board were less intransigent however and there was some space available for persuasive argument. This argument was not necessarily confined to the board's meetings however. Strike activity could be used as a means of indirect persuasion, as in the case of Houston's volte face in the Packard case. In 1944, following the unfavourable Maryland Drydock decision and while the Packard case was still pending, the FAA had launched a series of "showdown" strikes at thirteen major Detroit plants including Briggs, Hudson, Packard and Murray specifically aimed at putting pressure on the NLRB, and clearly with some success. (122) As Leo Wolman commented at the time, echoing the thoughts of the automobile company management, "The new foreman's unions have learned...what older unions have known all the time; that what they may be denied by law they stand a good chance of getting by threats and strikes and what they are unable to wrest from one board they may the more easily wring from another." (123)

The latter part of Wolman's statement referred to the FAA's attempts, when unsuccessful with the NLRB to shift jurisdiction of the
issue to the National War Labour Board (NWLB) in the hope of a more favourable set of decisions. In the event the NLRB was glad to hand over its problems to the NWLB which, acting under the provisions of the War Labour Disputes Act, became involved in the foreman "question" in 1944. After convening a series of public meetings on the subject of foremen's unionisation the NWLB took full jurisdiction over the issue in May of that year. (124) Despite protestations from employers that this was beyond the NWLB's brief, that the board itself was bound by the provisions of the Wagner Act and had no powers to arbitrate on issues relating to collective bargaining, it eventually undertook to hold a series of investigations into the case of supervisory unions on condition that the wave of strikes, then under way, were called off. (125) Two panels were set up, one to preside over the question of supervisors in the mining industry, the other to examine the problems of the FAA in Detroit. The latter was chaired by Sumner H. Slichter, a Harvard economics professor. The two other members of what became known as the Slichter Panel were Robert Calkins, Dean of Columbia University, and Madison attorney William H. Spohn. (126) At a series of hearings the panel heard testimony from FAA members, company spokesmen and foremen from thirteen companies, mostly based in Detroit and including Murray, Hudson, Chrysler, and Packard. (127)

The panel issued a report of its findings in January 1945, an essentially contradictory document which did little to clear up current problems. (128) Internal memos reveal that the panel and its advisors took the FAA to be an inevitable and ultimately successful movement. As Robert A. Winters, one of the panel's chief advisors informed them, "We are faced by an accomplished fact at the present
moment; so I can see no particular good purpose in trying to break down the foremen's organisations. It could be more constructive to guide them to socially valuable channels."\(^{(129)}\) The panel attempted to take a sympathetic line in relation to the foremen's problems in the face of hostile and intransigent employers. Recognising that the FAA was not being unreasonable in many of its demands the panel conceded that changes had taken place in industry which had changed the structure of the foreman's role and concurred with the "forgotten man" view of the foreman brought about by the advent of production workers unionisation.\(^{(130)}\) The panel placed greatest stress on the uncertainty and insecurity which many foremen felt about the prospects of a return to normal working in the post war period.\(^{(131)}\) Having said this they went on to reject specific hours of work and rate of pay complaints as not centrally important.\(^{(132)}\) The panel also rejected claims by the FAA for seniority in promotion, demotion or lay-offs and, while agreeing that existing grievance procedures were largely inadequate and that the "open door" method was not working, they also emphatically rejected any grievance machinery which had ultimate reference to a neutral arbitrator.\(^{(133)}\) Instead the panel put forward vague recommendations for a "freer interchange of viewpoints with managements" and more rigorous and effective communications systems.\(^{(134)}\)

Thus despite the recognition that the development of mass production had pushed the foreman down towards a position of greater homogeneity with the production worker, the Slichter panel clung to the idea that foremen were none the less still a separate and strategically important managerial strata. "Because of the key

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position they hold in the organisation, and because higher management
is so dependent upon them for the execution of company plans and
policies, higher management must exercise greater discretion and care
in the selection, advancement, retention in service, and discipline of
foremen than (that of) rank and file employees."(135) On balance the
report had something for both parties although the FAA had more cause
to be critical than the employers.(136) The panels recommendations,
such as they were, were not implemented as they were rapidly overtaken
by events. With the pro-FAA NLRB decision in the Packard case
certification disputes were withdrawn from the NWLB and resubmitted to
the NLRB thus withdrawing jurisdiction from the NWLB before the
special panel reports were issued.(137)

The NWLB deliberations had shown that, despite the fact that the
end result in no way favoured the foremen, unions like the FAA had
sufficient room to manoeuvre within and between bodies like this and
the NLRB, and were constantly able to put their case, get it heard by
a wider audience, and generally obtain publicity in support of their
movement. Eventually it seemed that if the FAA were persistent enough,
and continued their strategy of selective strikes and legislative
appeals, the union would ultimately secure the consistent legal
support which would provide a springboard to organisation on a large
scale. Employers saw that their victories at the NLRB and in the
courts were only transient, were vulnerable to reversal dependent on
judgements by a politically shifting board and were based on the
imprecise legal definitions as they now stood. Thus they embarked on a
more serious and long term strategy, parallel to that of the
interpretational guerrilla war at the NLRB. They worked to get the law
itself amended.

There were to be several attempts to achieve a redrawing of industrial relations law to specifically exclude supervision from protection. In 1943 GM's president Charles Wilson was vigorously lobbying several congressional committees and was a major driving force behind the bill sponsored by Howard W. Smith. This bill sought to amend the Selective Service Act to prohibit the unionisation of foremen in industries supplying the government. Since most of the major automobile firms were now almost exclusively occupied in military production this would have in effect meant a ban on the FAA, the majority of whose members were concentrated in these firms.\(^\text{138}\) The proposed bill included the proviso that any foreman found in violation of this law would have his reserved occupation status rescinded. Wilson appeared personally on behalf of GM and the AMA at hearings on the bill but it ultimately foundered.

The Case bill fared somewhat better. In the same vein as the Smith bill it sought to exclude foremen, clearly defined, from the protection of the NLRA and was passed by Congress in February of 1946. On this occasion however the President, Harry Truman, stepped in to veto the bill in June of the same year. Mindful of the mid-war strike waves staged by the FAA, Truman argued that foremen would react in a similar way to the implementation of such law.\(^\text{139}\) Employer lobbyists finally succeeded when they secured the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947. Truman's veto was on this occasion overridden.\(^\text{140}\) Employers now had the legislation they wanted.

The Taft-Hartley Act incorporated a range of measures aimed at restricting the power of the whole union movement. Secondary boycotts,
jurisdiction strikes, strikes among federal employees, maintenance of membership clauses, union shops and closed shops were all banned. Compulsory cooling off periods, possible damage claims for breach of contract and government intervention in strikes deemed to be a threat to national health and safety were also incorporated into the new law. 

On the issue of supervision, seen by some commentators as the most important aspect of the new law, the drafting was as unambiguous as the previous law had been lax; "Nothing herein shall prohibit any individual employed as a supervisor from becoming or remaining a member of a labour organisation, but no employer subject to this Act shall be compelled to deem individuals defined herein as supervisors as employees for the purpose of the law, either national or local, relating to collective bargaining." Definitional criteria were clearly laid out in terms leaving no room for argument; "The term "supervisor" means any individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or responsibility to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing the exercise of such authority is not of a merely routine or clerical nature but requires the use of independent judgement." The FAA might have attempted to pursue its line that many foremen did not in fact carry these responsibilities, in particular those calling for "independent judgement", but the chances of success for such an approach were now extremely slim. Instead the FAA chose to concentrate its efforts on attempts to show that the new law was a violation of foremen's constitutional rights under the first and fifth amendments.
In this they had no success. The Supreme Court overruled the FAA interpretation, deciding that the new law allowed foremen to organise, but not under legal protection, and also that the new act was not at variance with existing labour legislation which excluded other groups of workers, specifically those involved in agriculture or domestic labour. (144)

The effect of the Taft-Hartley Act was almost immediate. Some sectors of the labour movement did not even wait for the law to be confirmed through the courts. The UMW negotiated a new contract with mine owners which resulted in the dissolution of the supervisory affiliate, the UCTSE, within a month of the act's passing. In this respect the FAA were perhaps fortunate to have retained their independence. As it was their own legal battles through the NLRB were abruptly curtailed as the board ceased processing all the appeals currently under way. Somewhat ironically many employers saw in the Taft-Hartley Act's delineation of the bounds of union protection an opportunity to promote various production workers beyond the scope of unionisation and numbers of foremen were increased following its passage. (145)

To what extent did state activity, as defined by the legislative framework and its interpretation, support or hinder the growth of supervisory unions such as the FAA? Certainly bodies such as the NLRB provided a forum for debate over the various definitions of supervision and the nature of the problems facing foremen. Employers frequently complained that the intervention of the board had greatly aided the FAA. (146) In support of this contention it can be seen that there were periodic upsurges in membership following favourable
decisions for the union. The period following the Packard decision in support of the FAA for example saw a wave of relatively easy victories for the union in certification elections, which greatly aided recruitment. The contours of FAA growth do not fit too closely to the pattern of NLRB sanctions however.

Several factors are important in understanding the ramifications of the boards decisions. Approval by the board often proved to be merely the start of a lengthy process. When cases were decided in favour of the FAA most employers continued their refusal to recognise the union - even where elections had been held and foremen had voted their support for representation by a specific union. At Chrysler in 1946 for example, the company issued a letter to all foremen following its unsuccessful anti-FAA campaign, stating that it would continue to refuse to recognise the union, in spite of election victories for the FAA in four out of five Chrysler plants, and outlining its intention to campaign through the successive courts to reverse the NLRB's ruling. This kind of stalling tactic only added to the already substantial delays in getting the NLRB to process complaints. At one point in 1945 there were over 100 cases outstanding. The Packard decision of 1945, decisive in restoring foremen's legal protection in organisation, was only finally ratified by the Supreme Court in 1947, some three months before the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act.

The overall connection between supportive legislation and union recruitment levels is further complicated by the fact that no significant efforts to organise foremen were attempted when the NIRA was first passed in 1933 or later when decisively amended by the Wagner Act. This is easily explained in terms of the lack of an
institutional agency such as the FAA for foremen to organise within, but patterns of recruitment still do not coincide too closely with legal sanction even after the union was well established. Company agreements successfully secured, such as that at Ford in 1941 - seemingly unconnected to any specific state intervention beyond the final compulsion of accepting production workers unions - and successful strike campaigns while unsupported by the NLRB, seem equally if not more important in determining the immediate boosts in membership for the FAA. The eventual passage of the Taft-Hartley Act was met by the FAA with a major strike, albeit preemptive, at Ford. That this effort finally failed was due to a combination of circumstances including falling membership levels in line with immediate post-war production cut backs, withdrawal of strategic support by UAW locals, new employer initiatives over pay and conditions and simple exhaustion of union resources, in addition to the withdrawal of legal protections.

State activity in relationship to union growth is better understood as one of many important factors in the contours of unionisation, at least in the medium term. State agencies such as the NLRB can be seen to act in erratic fashion, alternatively finding in favour of employers and the FAA, now acting as a stimulant to union growth, now acting as one of its impediments. Decisions can be seen to be made on the basis of strength of argument, the political affinities of constituent members, the imprecision of the law, response to pressure from industrial action, and pressure from employer's lobbies. In the long term, explanations of a more structural nature seem to fit a little more closely. The passage of enabling legislation such as the
Wagner Act to bring a general union movement into the ambit of a regulated, proceduralised industrial relations system, the problems of a threat of expansion of that movement beyond the shop floor to encompass intermediate levels of management met by the revisions of Taft-Hartley and resultant fixed limits on the extent of union influence, points to a larger picture of successful state regulation. Such an interpretation, besides being teleological, remains inadequate however in that its functionalism ignores the actual fluctuations and possible alternatives outlined above. More importantly it ignores the range of other factors, many of which themselves influence state activity, which contribute to the dynamics of unionisation. Just as the Wagner Act can be seen to be as much a response to union growth as a stimulant, so too the activities of the NLRB and NWLB can be seen to be reacting to a situation determined largely outside their control. As Winter had informed the Slichter panel members, "We are faced by an accomplished fact...". This fact, the establishment of the FAA, was as much the product of the long term reshaping of the foreman's position, short term pressures and demographic shifts of wartime production within the ranks of workers and foremen, and the impact of the wider union movement, as the contours of legislative support. If the concept of the state is broadened and the impact of its actions examined indirectly enough then causal chains can be set up to incorporate these latter factors as well. These links become so extended however as to deny any useful explanatory function. In terms of direct causal dynamics the role of the state must take its place, albeit an important place, as just one of many causal factors.

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The FAA in decline

Two immediate events in 1947 signalled the beginning of the final phase of US supervisory unionism - the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act and the loss of the major strike effort at Ford. The strike involved around 3,800 foremen. Lasting 47 days it was initially well supported, but when union resources dwindled large numbers of foremen began to return to work. A ten to one majority of remaining strikers voted to terminate the strike on July 7 - two weeks after the passage of Taft-Hartley. (150) Thirty-two strikers were subsequently dismissed by Ford for alleged involvement in violent activities during the strike. Most of these men were prominent in the leadership of the Ford FAA chapter, and the action was widely viewed as a purge by the employers, later confirmed by the success of an unfair labour practice charge brought before the NLRB by the FAA. Although Ford eventually paid substantial compensation the foremen were not to be reinstated. (151) Robert Keys, FAA president since its inception, was an early casualty of the strike's failure. At the next FAA annual conference in September Keys succumbed to pressure for his resignation. The strike was now viewed as a major tactical error. Carl Brown, the newly elected president echoed popular opinion when he called it "ill-advised, ill-timed and ill-conducted." (152)

Loss of members now became a serious problem for the FAA, although estimates of membership vary considerably. In the late 1940s figures between 10,000 and 33,000 are variously reported, but accounts of the early 1950s agree a figure around 20,000. (153) This represents a serious enough loss from a total membership which peaked above
50,000 in 1945, but is more damaging when considered in the context of the hopes of the FAA in expanding beyond its Detroit, automobile industry base into other sectors nationwide and recruiting among the estimated two million non-unionised foremen of America. Some chapters of the FAA formed splinter groups following the set-backs of 1947. Thirteen chapters withdrew immediately after the Ford strike. Members at Packard for example formed the Packard Foremen's Guild before the year was out. Those at Hudson waited until 1948 before forming the Hudson Supervisors Association (HSA). Still confident of their strength the HSA almost immediately held a nine day strike over recognition which involved nearly 550 foremen. The strike was a success for the association, and agreement was reached with the company, but with the proviso that there were to be no links with the FAA. The HSA was still holding the majority of Hudson foremen as members in 1953 when walk outs over lay off procedures were staged.

The FAA did retain some of its contracts, most notably at Kaiser-Frazer where over 600 foremen were organised. Other small contracts such as those at Detroit Edison and United Stove Works were maintained and some new ones negotiated with minor railroad and maritime companies. FAA members at the major factories including Briggs, Ford, Chrysler, and Studebaker continued to pay their dues but found themselves in a union with no formal agreements and which was being effectively ignored by management. For their part employers were reluctant even to pursue their new rights under Taft-Hartley. There was no need. As one labour relations director put it, "The thing is dying on the vine anyway, so why not let it go ahead and die a natural
The FAA did attempt to fight Taft-Hartley throughout 1948 and 1949, not through the courts but rather through setting up a lobby in Congress to get the law revised. Their resources in this were greatly unequal to those which the employers could muster, and partly in recognition of this the FAA set itself limited aims. Reversion to the provisions of the Wagner Act were not to be expected, the FAA admitting that, "there would be fundamental and proper objections to organising by foremen. One of these would be the eligibility of foremen to membership in a rank and file union." Instead the FAA proposed a "happy medium", protesting that with Taft-Hartley the "pendulum had swung too far one way." The FAA now called for a separate law establishing collective bargaining rights for foremen. Many Democratic Senators and Congressmen were openly supportive of such legislation and a few Republicans were also reported to be "sympathetic", but the FAA's efforts were never given serious consideration and were to come to nothing in the increasingly inhospitable political atmosphere of the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The FAA had early on abandoned hope of support from organised labour. Appeals during the crucial final stages of the Ford strike had been rejected more or less out of hand by the UAW, the AFL and the CIO. The union had even appealed to John Lewis's mining union, the UMW, for affiliation. By way of a response Lewis was shortly to abandon his own supervisors union, the UCTSE. In recognition of the futility of any further approaches to any of these organisations the FAA again attempted to distance itself from any notions of
involvement with the wider labour movement, appealing for separate legislative controls and claiming by 1949 that the FAA had in fact defied production workers' picket lines during post war strike activity. (161) As in previous periods the FAA was forced by pragmatic considerations and rejection by production workers' organisations to make the most of an independent stance it would rather not have taken.

The union continued on into the 1950s under the leadership of Carl Brown. A "forgotten union" it was reduced to claiming secret contracts with small companies for fear "the big boys", meaning larger companies, would exert pressure to oust it. (162) By 1963 the FAA was down to a handful of members - perhaps 700 nationally - 150 of whom were active in the Detroit area. Requesting affiliation to the UAW-CIO in that year they were again rejected. By now the officers of the UAW had little idea who the FAA were, thinking it a good idea to attempt to recruit white-collar supervisors as a way of attracting white-collar rank and file members, but expressing no interest in "blue-collar shop floor foremen" at all. (163)

In summary, this chapter has examined the interrelated responses of both employers and the state to foremen's unionisation. Employers undoubtedly saw the advent of the FAA as a major threat to their control of industry, even after taking account of the alarmist and often rhetorical nature of their anti-FAA proclamations. Employers at the time saw the rolling effect of the success of the general union movement, the consolidation of the UCTSE into the mineworkers union, and the FAA's initial recruitment levels as portents of the extension of union power to a whole new strata of the workforce. White collar
workers were sure to follow, although claims that management itself would similarly come under the aegis of the union movement were perhaps not seriously held beliefs. While employers could not by the 1940s hope to dislodge the general union movement, they determined to draw a boundary line across which union influence should not spread. Shop floor supervision was to be this line. Evidence of the FAA's independence from the general union movement or production workers locals, whether from observation or the assurances of all parties, did not allay employers stated fears that, should foremen become unionised, managements shop floor representatives would become "union conscious". Foremen would be unable to carry out their duties effectively, and would eventually be taken over by an anti-management ethos.

Employers' arguments against the unionisation of foremen rested on the proposition that foremanship represented a tangibly different form of work from that of the general factory worker. The foreman was "part of management" and the proceduralisation of industrial relations typical of general union agreements would be incompatible with such responsibility. Individualism and the "open door" were available to foremen and their ability to function under such a system was itself a characteristic which marked them off from the common worker. A good foreman should be able to stand up for himself.

In putting forward as evidence idealised job descriptions and a multitude of forms requiring the attention of foremen, employers strove to indicate to formal inquiries the extensive responsibilities residual in the foreman's job. In doing so they ignored the serious erosion of the foreman's power, both in the long run in terms of
production rationalisation and in terms of the transfers of power inherent in unionisation of the production workers. Some companies, notably GM, had made greater efforts to restructure and support the foreman's role in advance of these events, and could thus present a stronger case, but generally employers' insistence on the continued integration of foremen into the executive management structure was of little empirical substance. Employers did not rely solely upon arguments put forward in the arena of official inquiries however.

More direct employer anti-FAA strategies included firing individual foremen, reclassifying foremen to put them beyond the reach of the union or threatening to create a new strata of supervisory workers to supplant unionised foremen. Employers acted collectively through such agencies as the NAM and ACWP to disseminate anti-FAA propaganda and coordinate, largely through the leadership of GM's Charles Wilson, a campaign to obtain legal sanctions against the union, either through existing legislation or through the promotion of new laws. Such concerted activity was initially frustrated by the momentary reluctance of firms such as Packard and the longer term recalcitrance of the Ford management, but generally the automobile industry, under the leadership of GM, presented a united and effective lobbying force against which the FAA, with limited resources available, was always struggling. Managerial changes at Ford which brought them into line with the rest of the employers, and the FAA's consequent loss of its most prestigious contract and the unsuccessful attempt to resecure that contract by strike action in 1947, saw the FAA facing a united and purposeful opposition finally successful in obtaining the legislative backing for their anti foremen's union.
Employers also supplemented their more overt anti-FAA activity with a strategy reflecting that of British engineering employers when faced with unionisation of their foremen following World War One. By fostering alternative organisations for foremen, more closely under their own control, employers in both countries had hoped to divert potential NFA or FAA members, or at least attempt to put them under some form of contractual obligation not to join a union. Organisations such as the NAF in America, were moderately successful in recruiting foremen, although the direct financial and ideological influence of employers precluded such institutions addressing any of the pressing issues which foremen sought to air through the agency of authentic unions such as the FAA. Such initiatives represented only an adjunct to the major employer strategy to dislodge foremen's unions, important more as a forum for the dissemination of information to employers and non-union foremen alike.

Employers concentrated a major part of their anti-FAA effort into attempts to change the law which, as it stood under the Wagner Act, had the potential to aid the union. The ambiguity and imprecision of the law as it defined, or rather did not define, the eligibility of supervisors for protection in organisation provides an illuminating example of the way in which legal strictures - the rules under which state agencies operate - are open to degrees of interpretation and individual, political intermediation. The part played by the New Deal generally in promoting unionisation or channelling it into more acceptable forms remains controversial. On the specific issue of foremen's rights the NLRB was to go through a series of vacillating
positions dependent on individual board members political orientation, strength of arguments, and pressure brought to bear by employer or union action. The board's decisions ranged from outright rejection of claims by the FAA to be allowed to operate as a union, to the approval of foremen joining any union be it specifically for foremen or open to membership by production workers. A brief interregnum by the NWLB, provoked by the damage to war production caused by the FAA's strike activity, failed to produce any decisive position on the issue. The Packard decision by the NLRB and its support through the courts, which seemed to finally affirm the rights of the FAA was to be only a brief moment of success for the union as, under the continued sponsorship of the employers, the last of a series of attempts to permanently modify the law resulted in the successful passage of the Taft-Hartley Act. This act unequivocally withdrew legal support for foremen, now clearly defined, to unionise. Foremen could still organise, but they could no longer force employers to recognise their organisation or seek protection in such activity through the law.

The passage of Taft-Hartley can be represented as the final triumph of employers over the initiatives of the FAA, the marshalling of state power in favour of the wishes of capital and guarantor of continued control over the lower echelons of industrial management. The state had effectively drawn the boundary line for employers over which unions should not encroach. The contours of support by the state however show that such an interpretation can be misleading. Other configurations of state-capital relationships were possible. The NLRB had shown that in the medium term at least employers could not expect unwavering support. The final passage of the act itself represented no
surety that the FAA would not continue in defiance of the law as they had done on previous occasions, or force further revisions or reinterpretations through the NLRB or the courts. To be sure the Taft-Hartley Act was a great deal more water tight than the Wagner Act had been from the point of view of the employers, but its seeming success in reversing the fortunes of the FAA needs to be placed in the context of other trends evident in 1947.

1947 does mark a watershed for the FAA and supervisory unionism in the USA, and subsequent years are marked by an inexorable decline into virtual oblivion by the early 1950s. 1947 does not simply mark the passage of legislation enabling employers to quash or successfully ignore the FAA however - as witnessed by their having no need to use the legislation to any great extent - but also the point at which a crucial strike at Ford was lost. The strike itself was a reaction to both the prospect of the passage of the act and to the reorientation of Ford management - a management emboldened by the impending law no doubt, but also one which had radically different ideas about the structure and status of shop floor supervision to those of its predecessors.

In the longer term 1947 lies at a point where post war production was beginning to settle into what could now be seen as industrial stability based on economic growth rather than a return pre-war depression. The insecurity felt by many foremen had either been realised as they had been demoted following the conversion from war production or receded as salaries and jobs had become reestablished with the return of more normal working conditions associated with a return to automobile production. Economic stabilisation and the
gathering climate of hostility of had seen production workers' unions establishing the basis for the forthcoming so-called "Treaty or Detroit" and had finally shown their reluctance, at both national and local level, to contribute effective support for the unionised foreman's cause. Foremen's unease with proceduralised industrial relations was also slowly being abated as foremen became acclimatised to new structures of discipline and power and as employers came to pay more attention to the training of foremen.

All these factors, immediate and long term need to be taken into account in assessing both the rise and decline of supervisory unionisation. The role of the state, attitudes and activities of employers, the orientation of the wider union movement all provide immediate signals in the history of the FAA, but these must be understood in the context of changes in the structure of the supervisors role, whether in terms of restructuring brought about by mass production, the advent of unionisation or the more immediate concentration of such changes consequent on wartime production imperatives. None can be separated out as the single most important stimulant or retardant to the FAA but rather all are interconnected and provide the framework within which leaders such as Robert Keys were to find, for a brief span at least, a hitherto unorganised sector of the workforce now acutely receptive to ideas of unionisation.

The FAA had without doubt given the automobile employers a nasty shock, and if it achieved little of lasting consequence beyond closing the door of legal sanction for supervisory unionisation down to the present day, the union had awakened in employers the need to pay closer attention to this strata of the workforce. The following
Chapter Eight

The chapter will explore the reaction of employers in terms of consequent attempts to restructure and enhance the role and prestige of foremen and the origins of those schemes they chose to implement.
Footnotes Chapter Eight


5. U.S. Congress, Hearings before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 78th Congress, 1st session 1943, Full Utilisation of Manpower, pp. 581,761;
   Robert G. Waldron, Head of Industrial Relations at Hudson, quoted in NWLB, Testimony presented before a Special Panel in Certain Disputes Involving Supervisors, (Sliechter Panel Testimony), pp. 3499,3543;
   Chrysler Management Statement, Detroit Free Press, Nov.25, 1939, p. 3;
   See also Automotive Council for War Production statement, Detroit Times, May 11, 1944;
   Chamber of Commerce of the USA, The Unionisation of Supervisory Employees, Apr.28, 1943, pp. 3-5.

6. General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in Automotive Industry, p. 27;
   Clarence Avery, Murray Corp. President, statement, N.Y. Times, Apr.10, 1945;
U.S. Congress, op.cit., pp299-327 for the CIO's defence of their position;

Iron Age, March 15, 1945, pp. 78-80;

Chrysler Corporation, Shall the Rank and File Boss the Plant, Brief file before the NLRB, March 20, 1946, passim.

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8. Letter to Chrysler foremen from Herman L. Weckler, Vice President and General Manager of Chrysler Corp., August 30, 1946, copy in Hughes A. coll., box 2:2:1, WRALUA.


10. US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p. 361;


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15. Herman L. Weckler, 'Right in the Middle', statement issued to Chrysler foremen, Sept.3, 1946;
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17. Winters, memo to the NWLB Slichter Panel, July 21, 1941;
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18. Ibid., p. 2104.

19. Herman L. Weckler, Do You Want the Rank and File to Be Your Boss?, Chrysler, August 30, 1946.


22. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 358-60,495,2269-70;
   John Anderson, WSU Oral History, p. 166;
   United Auto Worker, Nov.13, 1937;
   Dodge Worker, May 1928, letter to editor;

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24. Ibid., pp. 1886, 3546;
   Charles E. Wilson, message to 'All Members of Management in General Motors', April 2, 1945, General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in Automotive Industry, Append. C.


25. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 2124-5;
   David Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, unpub. PhD, Wisconsin 1948, p. 124;
   US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p. 346;
   General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in Automotive Industry, p. 49.


27. Ibid., pp. 1888-9.


29. Address by Donaldson Brown, Vice President of GM, at the Waldorf Astoria, NY, Mar 1st 1943, quoted in US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p. 231;
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_________,'Foremen Are Bigger Men', Iron Age, Dec. 6, 1934, pp. 25-6;

Albert Sobey, 'Foremen's Clubs', A.M.A. Production Series, No. 5, 1926, pp. 3-13;

A. Lenz, 'Foremen Has a Key Role in Maintaining Harmonious Relations With Employees', Automotive Industries, Jan. 12, 1935, p. 51;

GM Executive Training Programme, copy in Kraus, box 16, WRALUA.

32. S. D. Jefferys, Management and Managed, p. 150.

33. GM Inter-organisational memos, Knudsen to Coquillette, Cowing, Good, Mayes, Roberts, Spahr and Streckert, March 28, 1934. Clause 7a refers to section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 which guaranteed the rights of workers to "organise and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing and (to be) free from interference, restraint or coercion of employers...".


35. Seitz, 'Legal, Legislative and Managerial Responses', p. 203.
36. NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, pp. 1479-1486, 1512-23, 1526-34, 1833-50;


38. NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, pp. 2066-75, 3435;
   Chrysler, op. cit., pp. 11-2.

39. Examples in Harry Ross, Acc.109, box 3, WRALUA, especially Nathaniel Goff letter, Nov.16, 1942.


41. Ibid., p. 26;
   NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, pp. 1523, 1685.

42. Ibid., p. 3101.


44. NWLB, *Slichter Panel Testimony*, pp. 1428-30, 1564-9, 1575;

45. NWLB, op. cit., pp. 1564-69.

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47. UAW-CIO Local 7, Chrysler Shop Steward Grievance Reports, in Digaetano N., Acc.23, box 23, WRALUA, Grievance no.49, July 1942; no.1586 Apr. 1944.


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52. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3048-9; Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, p. 284-90.

53. Ibid., p. 246.


56. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1940-43,2066-75,2079,3080-82.


59. NWLB, op.cit., p. 203.

60. See for example, On the Threatened Unionisation of Management, ACWP press release, Detroit, May 9, 1944.

61. Chamber of Commerce of the USA, The Unionisation of Supervisory Employees, April 28, 1943. A summary of testimony before the House Military Affairs Committee, March 25-28, 1943, in support of the proposed Smith Bill; N.Y. Times, April 10, 1945;
62. 'Should Management Be Unionised?', GM press statement, April 1945; ACWP, loc. cit.

63. 'Unions - Should the Foreman Be Allowed To Organise?', Detroit Free Press, April 4, 1943.

64. See for example Detroit News, May 10, 1944; Wall St. Journal, May 12, 1944.


68. Ibid., p. 3221.

69. Ibid., pp. 169-75.

70. See comments of Widman, director of UAW campaign to organise Ford, on proposal to allow workers to elect their own foremen, in Studs Terkel, Hard Times, Allen Lane, 1970, p. 41.

72. Ford Management Meetings reports nos. 6, 28 and 34 in Acc. 422, 207-D-2, boxes 5 and 6, Ford collection.

73. There was some dissension among Ford managers. One internal report outlined the possibilities of a total shutdown if the FAA struck, and recommended continued recognition of the union. Confidential Report, Ford Acc. 536, box 97; Detroit Free Press, April 10, 1947; N.Y. Times, April 10, 1947; Business Week, April 19, 1947.

74. Detroit Free Press, April 14, 1947; May 12, 1947.

75. Ibid., Feb. 18, 1949; April 20, 1949; Detroit Times, April 15, 1953; Detroit News, April 15, 1953.


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80. FMBS Executive Committee, 17th Annual Report, 1915;
   Coopey, op. cit., pp. 82-90;
   West Midlands Engineering Employers Association, Executive Committee Minutes, Feb. 25, 1918;
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81. 'Status For Foremen', Business Week, August 2, 1947;
   US Congress, Full Utilisation of Manpower, p. 483;
   L. Ruthenburg, 'A Programme For Foremen', address before the Maryland Utilities Association, Baltimore, Sept 21, 1945;

82. A. Sobey and W. J. Rhodes, 'Foremen's Clubs', A.M.A. Production Series, No. 45, 1926, pp. 3-6;

83. Business Week, Sept 21, 1946, p. 92;
   Ruthenburg, op. cit., p. 3;
   Levinson, op. cit., p. 456;
   US Congress, op. cit., p. 481, quotes figures received from the NAM claiming a membership in excess of 60,000 in 1943.

84. Sobey and Rhodes, Foremen's Clubs, passim;
   Jacoby, op. cit., p. 259.


86. Chicago Daily News, Sept. 18, 1946, p. 21, reports that of 7,000 members at the St. Louis convention over 80% were shop foremen;
Business Week, Sept 21, 1946, p. 92;
Anglo-American Council on Productivity, Training of Supervisors:
Report of a Visit to the USA of a Specialist Team to Study Supervisory

87. FMBS letter to Engineering Employers Federation member firms,
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94. Chamber of Commerce, Unionisation of Supervisory Employees,
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101. Fruehauf Trailer vs. UAW-AFL Fed. No.19375, 1 NLRB 68, decided Dec. 12, 1935;
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Larrowe, op. cit., p. 273;
General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in Automotive Industry, p. 4.

103. Godchaux Sugars, 44 NLRB 874;
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104. Larrowe, op. cit., pp. 282-3;
Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, pp. 205-10;
General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in Automotive Industry, pp. 29-30;
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106. California Packing vs. Teamsters Local 760, 66 NLRB 1461; Young Spring and Wire vs. FAA, 63 NLRB 298; US Senate, loc. cit.; Levinson, op. cit., p. 269; Jones and Laughlin vs. FAA, 66 NLRB 386. This ruling excluded supervisors of clerical and technical workers and some mining officials.


108. N.Y. Times, Sept. 30, 1947, p. 1; Levinson, op. cit., pp294-97, points out that there was provision in the act, similar to the NLRB finding in the Maryland Drydock case, that foremen in the "traditionally" organised industries should be exempt from the act.

The Taft-Hartley Act was further contested through the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court in August 1948 and January 1949 where its provisions were finally upheld. See 'Blow to Foreman', Business Week, August 28, 1948;

David Levinson, 'The Foreman in No Man's Land', Labor and Nation, Summer 1950, passim.

109. Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, pp. 78-9; General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in Automotive Industry, pp. 4-6.

110. Daykin, The Status of Supervisory Employees, pp. 298-99; NLRB, undated circular in Brown, box 10, WRALUA;


112. National Labour Relations Act, Sections 2(2); 3(3); General Motors, op. cit., p. 33.

113. Packard, Brief before the NLRB, case no. 7-R-1884 (Packard vs. FAA), 1944, p. 35.

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124. Public Hearing, Republic Steel, Ford, Chrysler, Murray, Briggs,
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125. NLRB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1416-7, 3316-24;
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126. General Motors, History of the Movement to Organise Foremen in
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127. NLRB, Slichter Panel Testimony, 22 volumes, passim;

128. NWLB, Report and Findings of a Panel of the National War Labour
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129. Winters, memo to NWLB Slichter Panel, Oct. 23, 1944; letter to
Edwin Witte, May 11, 1944, copies in Littauer NWLB.

130. NWLB, Slichter Panel Report, passim;
NLRB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 3249, 3574;
131. Ibid., pp. 160-1; Levinson, op. cit., p. 230.

132. Ibid.;

133. Ibid., p. 45;

134. NWLB, op. cit., passim; General Motors, op. cit., pp. 50-53.

135. NWLB, op. cit., p. 51.


139. Ibid.; Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, pp. 272-5; Chicago Journal of Commerce, June 25, 1946; For similar comments on the Ball bill see NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, pp. 1619,1907,2056.

140. Levinson, Foremen's Unions and the Law, passim.

141. C. P. Larrowe, op. cit., p. 288.

143. Ibid., Section 2(11).

144. Business Week, August 28, 1948;
    D. Levinson, The Foreman In No Man's Land, passim;
    __________, Foremen's Unions and the Law, pp. 95-96;
    __________, The Unionisation of Foremen, pp. 316-322.

145. Bogus promotions backfired in many ways as newly promoted 'foremen' began to appeal for overtime payment, under the Wage-Hour Law, for production work which they continued to spend much of their time doing. National Foremen's Institute, Executive Newsletter, No.135, Jan.10 1948, warned subscribers that "Hanging a supervisory label on an employee isn't enough to pull him out of the shelter of the Taft-Hartley Act."

146. NWLB, Slichter Panel Testimony, p. 3000,3550-76.


148. Herman W. Weckler, Letter to all Chrysler foremen, Sept 18, 1946; see also Detroit Free Press, Oct.1, 1946 (Packard);
    Detroit News, Aug. 26, 1946 (Packard); Sept.4, 1946 (Chrysler);
    Detroit Times, Dec 4, 1946 (Chrysler)
    T. G. Graham, Problems of the Foreman and His Place in the
    Goodrich Company, Akron, April 1945;
    Series of letters to Goodrich foremen from Graham, Sept.26, 1945;
    Oct.4 1945; Nov.5 1945, in Littauer collection.

149. Levinson, The Unionisation of Foremen, pp. 259-270.

150. Business Week, July 12, 1947;
    N.Y.Times, July 6, 1947;

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151. Levinson, op. cit., pp. 303-5;  


153. 'Blow to Foremen', *Business Week*, August 28, 1948;  
    *Business Week*, July 30, 1949;  
    Levinson, *Foremen's Unions and the Law*, p. 95.  
    Larrowe, op. cit., p. 289;  

    Levinson, *The Unionisation of Foremen*, p. 311;  


157. Ibid.


159. *Chicago Journal of Commerce*, Nov. 23, 1948;  

    *Business Week*, July 12, 1947;  
    *Detroit News*, July 21, 1947;  
    Levinson, *The Unionisation of Foremen*, p. 304.


163. Tony Connole, memo to Irving Bluestone, June 19, 1963;
    Jack Conway, memo to L. Gettlinger, July 12, 1963; copies in
    W. P. Reuther W., box 3464. WRALUA.
The period of the ascendency of the FAA, brief and transitory as it was, had, more than any other factor, thrown the "foreman problem" into sharp relief. It became belatedly recognised that changes within the labour process, the division of labour and the division of supervisory tasks, and the advent of union powers and procedures had created a strata of workers seemingly cut adrift from managerial prerogatives and status and demonstrably susceptible to the further encroachment of unionisation. In tandem with efforts to proscribe the activities the unions such as the FAA, employers began to perceive the need to embark on programmes of adjustments to both the foreman's material wellbeing and also the structure and content of his role at the workplace. A search for the answer to the problem began in earnest. As Business Week commented in June 1947, "Management generally is convinced that it was caught off guard once and will not be again. It is showing intense interest in programmes to give supervisory workers definite management status. Company officials do not want any rebirth of foremen's conviction that unions are necessary."(1)

This chapter will examine the chosen solutions in the aftermath of the FAA, aimed at reclaiming the allegiance of foremen, in particular the emphasis placed on human relations based techniques attempting to stabilise relationships among the workforce in general and give foremen a new understanding, through rigorous training schedules, of their responsibilities and position in the company. It is important to trace the history and origins of these ideas which
were not new but rather underwent a period of renaissance following the World War Two, and assess their impact or success in obviating unrest among the ranks of foremen. In doing so this chapter will also contrast the approaches of different companies to the "foreman problem", in particular that of Ford and General Motors, outlining the ways in which divergent strategies employed in the pre-war period were realigned and a clear and homogeneous pattern of response was to emerge.

The search for a solution to the "foreman problem" was made more difficult in that at least some of the contributory factors became compounded in the years following the war. Technological developments which had resulted in the progressive deskilling of workers and supervision could not be reversed or restructured in the post-war mass market boom which was developing. Indeed certain areas of production underwent a new phase of rationalisation based on wartime technological advances. Transfer machinery was introduced for example, whereby large complex components such as engine blocks, underwent a series of operations in one fully integrated machine tool system. Union procedures which had done so much to curb the foreman's vestigial social power, had also become firmly established by the post war period. The shift in intra-union power away from the shop floor towards the leadership of the UAW was mainly to do with remunerative issues - pattern bargaining and COLA agreements - and still left the local committeeman to deal with the everyday grievances in the shop. He was however increasingly likely to deal with the personnel or industrial relations departments which had themselves seen a significant expansion during the war to deal with government
directives and the established union presence, and were to remain into the post war period.

On the plus side for employers the FAA was seemingly decisively beaten, Taft-Hartley legislation had been secured and the UAW had indicated that it had no serious intention for the moment of recruiting foremen. In addition wartime government pay restrictions had been lifted enabling differentials between foremen and operatives to be restored, thus reestablishing a tangible division between supervisor and worker. Employers knew however that pay issues had been of less importance than issues relating to security and status to many of the foremen who had joined the FAA. In addition the current disinterest in foremen displayed by the wider union movement was no guarantee that in future they might assume a more predatory stance. Nor was there any guarantee that some future administration would not amend the legislation to enable foremen to organise. Management perceived the need for a more fundamental change in the foreman's position than pay rises could provide. Reflecting the recurrent themes of security and status of the FAA years the solution had to be found in terms of effectively reestablishing shop floor supervision as "part of management".

There was no shortage of advice on the subject. The "foreman problem" had generated a virtual avalanche of academic and professional surveys, studies and monographs. University departments, personnel consultants and company representatives published and disseminated an increasingly large body of advice on how to treat the maladies of the foreman or welcome him back to the managerial fold. The great majority of this advice was in no way new however and it is
necessary to return to the inter-war period to trace the origins of these extremely numerous but essentially similar solutions.

Some earlier managerial theories had had little to say concerning the role of shop-floor supervision. Scientific management and the practical applications of its Fordist derivatives had only sketchily formalised the foreman's role in theoretical terms. The Rigidly segmented functional foreman system of Taylorism for example was never implemented in its full sense. Although the functions themselves were to become structurally located within the increasing departmentalisation of control there did not develop any specific group of workers who could be identified as, or identified themselves as "functional foremen". Work measurement and bonus oriented schemes such as the Bedaux or Gantt systems relied on a mixture of self or gang regulation and expert rate setting - again with little to say about the formal roles and functions of foremen. Fordism, in as much as the system was practised, saw foremen as fulfilling an increasingly police oriented function in support of the control inherent within work systems and, correspondingly, increasingly remote from the formal managerial structure. Another branch of managerial theory - the Human Relations school - had by contrast to impart a central role to the question of shop floor supervisory practice, and it was the foreman as practitioner of this method of management that initially focussed attention on this strata.

Human relations managerial theory has been well documented and vigorously criticised elsewhere. (2) A brief summary of the general tenets is necessary here. Usually seen as originating in the work of Elton Mayo, human relations is based in a behavioural psychology
approach to understanding and designing work. Founded upon notions of Durkheimian anomie with the onset of the division of labour, the school used the work of Hugo Munsterberg in industrial psychology, employee selection techniques pioneered by Walter Dill Scott(3) and the results of Mayo's own Hawthorne experiments, to demonstrate that social cohesion and group identification at the workplace is an integral factor affecting output quantity and quality. Social activity at the workplace had of course been recognised by Taylor in terms of "systematic soldiering" - the informal group regulation of output levels to subvert or manipulate piecework. Whereas Taylor and rationalisation practitioners adopted systems designed to eliminate the possibility of such activity by strictly defining and encoding work regulations or by mechanical substitution, human relations advocates sought to foster and exploit this phenomenon for the benefit of production. Communal spirit on the job, instead of being repressed, could be harnessed and directed via a reorientation of goals towards the good of the firm and thus, indirectly, the good of the employees themselves.

In addition, as a further plus to management, the inherently non-conflictual nature of human relations management supposedly rendered unionisation obsolete. Though never explicitly promoted as an anti-union system (Mayo himself for example had little to say on the subject) the human relations approach was seen by many as a way of setting up alternative representational structures to unionisation.(4) Thus early interest was shown in such alternatives in the period of industrial unrest following the First World War. Also the high turnover problems of this period promoted interest in such non-
coercive solutions to waning company loyalty. The human relations solution can also be seen to dovetail with the broad trend of welfarism in industrial relations which emerged after the war, encompassing pension schemes, employee stock ownership, investment and savings plans, canteen and medical facilities, company magazines, clubs, picnics and general recreational facilities. Automobile companies were well represented in such activities throughout the 1920s.(5)

If a human relations perspective was to be applied as part of this trend then the position of the foreman became the lynchpin to success of any such scheme. If employees' energies and innate cooperative spirit were to be effectively channelled towards the firm's goals then the supervisor who was in immediate contact with the workers held a crucial position. "Human engineering" required the presence of an able human relations engineer and if the foreman was to fulfil this role he needed to be equipped with the requisite psychological tools with which to "engineer" his workers. The foreman also had to become a leader rather than a driver. High turnover in particular had been blamed on driving supervision and a new generation of foremen had to be trained to understand the social and psychological problems of mass production, to empathise with rather than chastise workers, to lead by example, and to select the right man for the right job, "to know his square men and his round men".(6)

This transformation of foremanship could supposedly be achieved by two methods. Firstly foremen could be recruited on the basis of their aptitude for the new emphasis on personnel over technical skills by means of rigorous selection and rating procedures. This entailed
the use of I.Q. tests, job psychographs, and other pre-selection procedures developed by Ordway Tead and others, being applied to foremen in addition to production workers. Foremen's tests were far more problematic however. Production workers tests could be limited in part to seemingly tangible physical or mental measurements. Popular versions included the Minnesota Dexterity Test, the Johnson O'Connor Wiggly Block Test and the Otis Test of Mental Ability.\textsuperscript{(7)} (It must be noted that the formulae involved in these tests and their measurement criteria are of dubious worth and the subject of ongoing debate, nevertheless they continued to have a fairly widespread impact.) Foremen's selection tests by virtue of the personality attributes being sought were to involve attempted measurement based on more abstruse criteria. In the event the search for an effective measuring device was largely unproductive. As a 1926 survey of foremen selection and training observed, "the primary question is to be able, if possible, to know in advance of the existence of traits of leadership...Attempts in this direction...have not led to any worthwhile results."\textsuperscript{(8)}

The continued emphasis on selection of foremen from the ranks of production workers and the general rejection of recruitment of specialist or college trained supervisors, plus the impracticalities of reselecting large sections of the existing supervisory workforce, meant that the second option, that of inculcating human relations foremanship, was most widely applied i.e. training existing supervision in "human engineering" techniques. Good foremen were to be, as Whiting Williams asserted, "made not born".\textsuperscript{(9)}

In the process of introducing what became known as the "new
"foremanship" the principles of human relations were to be applied to the foremen themselves. For example, as a way of reorienting the foreman's own goals a major part of many training schemes was reserved for teaching a general understanding of the overall functions of the firm, to put foremen back in touch with the total picture of production and all its phases and provide an understanding of the role of departments and functions now remote from the shop floor - production control, accounting, quality control etc. - but nevertheless influencing the foreman's everyday tasks. This was designed to offset the foreman's own alienation engendered by the subdivision of supervisory and control tasks. (10) In some cases this practice was extended to the regular furnishing of foremen with periodic appraisals of company policy. (11)

Once equipped with an expanded and comprehensive conception of his role relative to the corporate whole the "new foreman" had to be provided with the psychological and social skills of personnel counselling in order to bring out the new positive attitude towards work in those below him. These skills could be imparted using the standard psychology methods of role playing and group therapy applied on a regular basis to groups of foremen. This method had the additional benefit of modifying foremen's own behaviour by exposure to, and criticism from within their own peer group.

What became known as the "conference method" thus emerged as the single most popular means of foreman training throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Expansion of this type of training over purely technical, job related training was such that as early as 1921 a survey by the National Association of Corporate Schools found that of 156 topics
taught in 16 sampled foremen's courses, over two thirds were human relations oriented. (12) For Calder, writing in 1921, only two out of twelve qualities needed by foremen related to trade skill or knowledge of production methods. (13) One Swedish visitor to the US in 1926 remarked upon this shift in emphasis at the time, "the same importance is not given to a foreman's technical knowledge in the United States as in Europe. A thorough acquaintance with his own work's technical details is demanded of him, nevertheless, but the knowledge is restricted to a relatively small sphere." (14) The highly rationalised labour processes much of the US industry, the automobile industry in particular, was reducing this small sphere to progressively smaller dimensions. Human relations advocates recognised a trend rather than creating one. It was not as if they were advocating any diminution of the foreman's technical training but rather reacting to the fact that such an aspect of the foreman's job was declining anyway. In the vacuum created by the exodus of aspects of the technical role of supervision from the shop floor the foreman was seen to be left with more of a personnel role, especially in terms of disciplinary functions, but had adopted a harsh, confrontational approach to sustaining production. Human relations simply sought to supplant this with a softer, more reasoned approach.

Expansion of human relations retraining was promoted through a number of agencies. Firstly there was state intervention via the education system. Under the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 the federal government made $3,000,000 available annually for vocational education, stipulating that states or communities must match federal funds from their own resources. Thus local authorities could defray
50% of the cost of vocational education. (15) The Federal Board for Vocational Education (FBVE) was set up and foremen training became one of its major preoccupations. Frank Cushman, head of the industrial education service of the FBVE was particularly interested in shop floor supervision, publishing a number of books and articles on the subject in which he advocated attention to the "human factor" and conference methods. (16) The FBVE Bulletin carried regular reports on foreman training schemes in operation and recommended expansion in this area as "one of the most vital and pressing problems in the field of industry..." (17) Conference meetings of foremen were given recommended topics. "The Best Team Wins", "Man Factors", "Promotion of Interest", "Job Pride as an Interest Factor", "The Development of Satisfaction", and "Appreciating the Other Fellows Troubles" are fairly typical examples. (18) A particular emphasis developed on the need to train conference leaders among foremen who could guide group sessions among other foremen to ensure that the spontaneity of such occasions was carefully channelled into productive directions. Economy dictated that such leaders could then disseminate their own skills to the wider audience of foremen.

Foremen training became available in two thirds of all state vocational education departments by the mid 1920s and became a major preoccupation with many universities and colleges. (19) The conference method fitted in easily with academic seminar practice, and academic industrial experts of the burgeoning human relations school were keen to have some direct input into industrial practice via the training of foremen. Some universities became directly involved in on site foreman training in the 1920s. Purdue was the leader in this field holding
lectures and demonstrations and organising conferences in board rooms, production areas, warehouses or outside in factory yards, at over 400 companies between 1923 and 1930. A lecture followed by a round table discussion was the standard format employed during a course of six bi-weekly meetings. The service, paid for by state funds was entirely free to participating companies. (20) Similarly Pennsylvania had taken its foreman training course to over 100 engineering plants by 1927. (21)

Many foremen were trained outside the factory at night school, weekend conferences, or through personal initiative in subscribing to the growing corpus of correspondence courses which were becoming available. (22) A significant percentage of the latter were aspirant workers who saw some form of certificate of foremanship as a key to promotion. Most foremen continued to embark on training programmes under the sponsorship of industry however and many direct links were to be forged between colleges and companies for this purpose. (23) This trend was aimed at individual firms which could not bear the cost of permanent training schemes or personnel. A Modern Foremanship Council was set up at La Salle Extension University with the active involvement of business leaders and factory managers for example. Human relations advocates including Hugo Diemer and Meyer Bloomfield produced course manuals on modern foremanship with a strong emphasis on leadership and urging that "Discipline is not to be gained by harsh or tyrannical treatment." (24) Universities including Wisconsin and Rutgers ran similar extension courses for foremen with a growing element of "leadership" oriented components. (25)

In addition to initiatives by the state and education authorities
numerous other agencies were at work throughout the 1920s promoting the new foremanship. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce issued a series of bulletins stressing the need for foremen to be trained in responsibility for human organisation, loyalty and teamwork, and also gave general appraisals and aggregate lists of foremanship courses available. It is worth noting that top of the 1935 list was "Analyzing Yourself", followed by "Development of Personality", "Effective Leadership" and so on. "Basic Factors in Production" came 59th on the list, well behind "The Foreman and the Social Order" and "Example of Character".(see Appendix II) In addition the Chamber of Commerce invited speakers to its annual meetings to discuss foremanship. Cyrus McCormick for example gave an address in 1926 entitled, "Foreman Training is Essential to Plant Self Governance".(26)

The YMCA also promoted foremanship training in addition to the existing inter-war efforts to develop foremen's clubs and social activities which were to form the basis of the National Association of Foremen. Their pocket manual Foremanship, which contained the outline of courses taught in YMCA schools, went through several reprints throughout the 1920s. The schools themselves made training available to firms at a cost of between $25 and $50 per foreman. Course content echoed human relations tenets. Of the YMCA list of qualities necessary in good foremanship 75% related to the foreman's "attitude" and only 25% to "personal and technical skill".(27) The National Foremen's Institute also issued guidelines for those firms interested in in setting up foremen's conference training to aid foremen in developing communications skills, "understanding workers home problems", and rehearsing foremen in the use of "practical psychology".(28)
Most manufacturers' associations also joined the general clamour for the promotion of more thoughtful foremanship. The National Metal Trades Association (NMTA) for example compiled its own manual for foremen's conferences. At the NMTA meeting in Cleveland in 1925, Albert Kauffman of the Link Belt Company outlined the direction in which foremanship should progress. "In the successful management of the future, knowledge of finance, technical processes, salesmanship and business law will all be subordinated to knowledge of men and to an appreciation of their problems and needs and factors making for their contentment and happiness."(29) The National Association of Corporation Training, absorbed by the American Management Association in 1924, also promoted foreman's training courses.(30)

Companies were also regaled by independent industrial consultants cashing in on the wave of heightened interest in the foreman. The Business Training Corporation for example claimed to have trained over 30,000 foremen from 400 companies between 1918 and 1921. Industrial Relations Counsellors Incorporated consultancy promulgated Mayo's Hawthorne experiments and their applicability to the role of the foreman throughout the 1930s.(31)

Many larger firms had no need for government agency or outside consultants. Following the increase of many personnel departments during the First World War and early 1920s some larger corporations were able to set up their own programmes of education and training for foremen. Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing for example set up committees in the 1920s for this purpose. The programme expanded throughout the 1920s and 1930s into a regular series of conference bases courses. Groups numbered up to twenty participants ideally
including one participant each from production control, accounts, inspection, time study and the toolroom and at least six ordinary foremen. The resultant pooling of ideas and experience, in as informal atmosphere as possible was designed to aid personality development, leadership, morale, discipline, and self analysis. \( ^{32} \) General Electric, National Cash Register, American Rolling Mills, Armco, and Procter and Gamble are among those firms pursuing similar in-house programmes. \( ^{33} \)

Personnel and industrial relations departments implementing "new foremanship" schemes had a wealth of information at their disposal provided by a rapidly increasing number of publications. Journals carried many hundreds of articles based on the foreman throughout the 1920s. The \textit{American Machinist} for example ran 'The Foreman's Round Table' weekly discussion from 1926 onwards. Journals including \textit{Iron Age, Machinery, Mechanical Engineering, Factory and Industrial Management,} and \textit{Industrial Management} all ran regular contributions, often by company personnel, outlining existing or proposed schemes for new foremanship training. \( ^{34} \) Books in the now classic human relations mould such as C.R. Allen's \textit{The Foreman and His Job}, Frank Cushman's \textit{Foremanship and Supervision} and Hugo Diemer's \textit{Foremanship Training} were widely read by personnel employees and managers. Clarence Howard, president of Commonwealth Steel and a convert to "human engineering" principles, bought several hundred copies of Sherman Rogers' \textit{Foremen! Spark Plugs or Grounded Wires}, for distribution around his plants. \( ^{35} \)

The automobile industry in general was an important participant in the movement to retrain supervisors in the "new foremanship". The FBVE estimated that in 1927 approximately 30% of all foremen trained
in conference leadership came from the industry.\(^{(36)}\) An National Industrial Conference Board survey of the same period produced similar findings.\(^{(37)}\) The Purdue programme outlined above was taken up by 44 automobile industry companies by 1931 including Delco Remy, Studebaker, Stutz, Chrysler, Automotive Gear, American Car and General Motors.\(^{(38)}\) Packard established close links with the National Association of Corporation Schools (NACS) in the early 1920s and established their own foremen's school where foremen could attend conference style training courses.\(^{(39)}\) Chrysler also gave foremen's training a high priority, so much so that their Director of Industrial Relations, John M. Amiss, was told to concentrate on this at the expense of apprenticeship training in 1927.\(^{(40)}\) The industry's trade journals carried regular features designed to inform managers of schemes available. The Society of Automotive Engineering's journal for example outlined programmes and ran contributions from automobile companies on foremanship initiatives.\(^{(41)}\)

It was General Motors which was to take the lead in the adoption of new foremanship principles. It is here that one of the interesting contrasts arises between GM and Ford during the inter-war period, a contrast which, as noted in previous chapters, may have some bearing on the varying levels of success of the FAA in recruiting members at both companies. GM was to remain impervious to FAA recruitment drives throughout the 1940s, with a few notable exceptions such as the Diesel Engine plant. That GM was to take up a position in the vanguard of the legal and political campaign against the FAA, reflects an early commitment to the idea that the position of the foreman was of great strategic importance in industrial relations and a determination from
the mid 1920s onwards to reinforcing the foreman's sense of belonging to management.

The GM stance stands in marked contrast to that adopted by Ford during this period. The continued Ford preference for "driving" foremanship has been outlined in chapter four. The solution to turnover, absenteeism and production problems for Ford lay in a combination of high wage-effort bargains, labour market manipulation and the substitution of machine control for human discretion wherever possible. The emphasis for Ford foremen was on a policing function based on at the least a respect for the authority, and more often, abject fear among workers. Foremen themselves were to be overseen by the omnipresent office of the servicemen as the thin veneer of Ford paternalism faded into the 1920s. Some minor satellite factories did take an interest in new foremanship - the Indianapolis plant became involved in the Purdue training projects for example\(^{42}\) - but for the major complexes such as the River Rouge in Detroit the only psychology foremen were deemed to need was that of the ability to intimidate.

This had not always been so. The brief period of experimentation at Ford after 1913 during which the sociological department had been set up represented a pioneering attempt to implement a structure of industrial control based on human relations principles. In intention at least these initiatives were aimed directly at reorienting the attitude and role of foremen. J.R.Lee had after all pinpointed the "unintelligent handling of men on the part of the foreman" as one of the reasons for the high turnover at Ford before the war.\(^{43}\) Such initiatives, as noted in chapter two above were to be short lived. Foremanship at Ford in the 1920s and 1930s settled into a routine of
recruitment and practice based on brutal and harsh treatment. As foreman Howard Beebe recalled, "you were told to treat your men tough to keep the production going. They would be all over your back too... Oftentimes you would get treated pretty rough yourself." His contemporary Bill Klann was similarly instructed to "give the men hell" in driving production. The most prevalent reason for the dismissal or demotion of foremen around this period was that they were "not heavy enough for the job" or "would not push the job enough". With the general decline of welfare initiatives into the 1920s including the eclipse of Lee's efforts at Ford, and the accession to power there of Charles Sorenson, a man noted for favouring a robust attitude at all levels of supervision, Ford foremen began to build a reputation as the "slave drivers" of the industry. The situation carried on unaltered into the 1930s. The Works Progress Administration heard evidence in 1937 that workers at Ford were "driven at an inhuman pace by foremen picked for their brutality". An indication of the way in which Ford factories became synonymous with this type of foremanship is given in the recommendation by workers at Kelsey Hayes in 1937 that two foremen, deemed to be pushing men and production too vigorously, "should be shipped to Ford's for a try out." Beyond the overall recommendation that foremen should behave in this fashion Ford management seem to have paid little formal attention to either the training or general role of foremen throughout the 1920s and 1930s. In line with the general dearth of formal record keeping at Ford foremen were not even formally classified in terms of their responsibilities. This was revealed when unionisation succeeded at Ford. During the NLRB elections foremen had to be identified through
verbal descriptions of job activity by production workers in order to separate those eligible to vote. (49)

In contrast, General Motors maintained a position of considered attention to the position of shop floor foremen in terms of his selection, training and responsibilities, throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The GM Executive Training Programme for foremen had been implemented in 1920 aimed at giving an overall view of the company and stressing their "managerial responsibilities". (50) GM also enrolled their foremen in the foremanship courses of the NACS and the Business Training Corporation between 1918 and 1921. (51) The company began to develop its own courses by the mid 1920s, run at the GM Institute of Technology and other training centres. Again the conference method soon established primacy as over 300 foremen took the 40 part courses each year. These were supplemented by regular monthly conferences in which foremen from all divisions of GM took part. (52) The courses themselves tended to favour the selection of younger applicants for training and were also open to workers not yet promoted but who wished, on payment of $30, to enhance their suitability as candidates for a foreman's post.

The GM programme became increasingly influenced by the human relations school as the 1920s progressed. Glen L. Gardiner, soon to become the leading advocate of human relations foremanship, became employment manager at their Oakland division in the mid 1920s. While in this post Gardiner continued his involvement in the University of Wisconsin Extension College foremanship courses. (53) For Gardiner the stress of new foremanship was to be placed on "man factor" problems, soluble through the training of foremen in industrial psychology. (54)
This approach also greatly influenced the work of Albert Sobey who was to assume overall control of foreman training as GM's Director of Education. Sobey, a keen supporter of YMCA style foremen's clubs and similar activities of the National Association of Foremen, held that the optimum training for foremen in human relations would mark "the return swing of the pendulum from the F.W.Taylor movement". Subscribing to notions of a new industrial revolution "centred in human science, a growing knowledge of men, the administration of manpower, and the social and economic relationships of life", Sobey advocated that new foremen must be trained "to develop leadership, a broad understanding of men, vision and something of industrial statesmanship". (55)

The impact of these programmes in terms of industrial relations is difficult to assess. Certainly many thousands of GM foremen dutifully completed the courses championed by Gardiner and Sobey, and in the process undoubtedly gained a broader view of the structure of the company. The initiatives probably failed in their major aim of imparting the craft of "industrial statesmanship" but the management at GM was nevertheless sufficiently convinced of their worth to give Sobey a prolonged reign. The programmes were carried on into the 1930s as were general welfare initiatives including housing, savings and insurance plans and provision of recreational facilities to which benevolent foremanship was probably seen as an ancillary. When the balance of welfare initiatives did start to decline as a response to the depression the "Leadership Training" programmes were extended to cover all divisions of the GM corporation and remained well supported throughout the 1930s. (56)
Foreman training in human relations and its implied benefits to the wellbeing both worker and supervisor in terms of job satisfaction via a worthwhile and harmonious social existence on the shop floor were not attempted purely from altruistic motives of course. The rationale behind human relations management had always been implicitly linked to increased or improved production and hence to higher profits. A happy workforce meant high output of good quality. The other implicit benefit of this strategy was its supposed value in offsetting the need for unionisation. With the growth of the industrial union movement in the 1930s a new sense of urgency was imparted to the correct training and preparation of GM's foremen if not to offset then at least to cope with the onset of unionisation among production workers.\(^{(57)}\) As the establishment of the UAW became a real prospect Sobey's emphasis in training began to shift however. There was a continued advocacy of the inculcation of "team spirit" in foremanship, the difference being that now the foreman was to be convinced of his place in the management "team". Driven by the early recognition that many foremen were expressing feelings of being "short-circuited" by the procedures set up in the transitory "employee representation" plans during 1933 and 1934, Sobey's conference training shifted emphasis to the need for stronger links and understanding between the foremen on the shop floor, members of other technical and production related departments, and most importantly, higher management. If a line was to be drawn between management and worker, then members of shop floor supervision were to be in doubt on which side they stood.\(^{(58)}\)

Sobey's work, and its shift of emphasis, reflected a recognition...
by GM's higher management that in the forthcoming restructuring of industrial relations the foreman was to hold the "key role". William S. Knudsen, Executive Vice-president in the 1930s publicly outlined his views on the importance of job of foreman. Recognising the threat of foremen as "men in the middle" of a polarised industrial relations system, Knudsen proposed a reemphasis of their status and power. In Knudsen's view personnel departments had encroached too far onto the foreman's territory, especially in terms of hiring, firing and general discipline. Too much "industrial science" had interfered traditional foreman-worker relationships. It was Knudsen's hope that "we will get back to a time when the so-called personnel department was out on the bench." (59) A clear demarcation also needed to be reestablished between foreman and worker and to this end Knudsen abolished working foremen and group leader classifications. Ratios of workers to foremen were also to be stabilised at an optimum of twenty to one. Foremen's wages were to be pegged at a fixed rate 25% above the highest paid worker in their section. (60) Around the same time individual GM companies began redoubling their efforts in sponsored social events for foremen only and increasing support for foremen's clubs. (61) In a prophetic statement made in 1934 Knudsen foretold of what he saw as principal danger of neglected shop floor supervisors, that of unionisation. He told managers, "I plead with you to go out into your factory and gather up the bottom strata. Someone else has been trying to gather it up while you were not looking." (62)

The purpose of the strategy of increased attention to foremanship in the early 1930s was more to do with offsetting unionisation of the workforce in general however than confronting the unionisation of

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foremen. A foreman, newly invested with formal disciplinary powers and infused with a new sense of loyalty from a feeling of belonging to management, could stand as the first line of defence against the nascent industrial unions. This is revealed in a series of inter-office memos from Knudsen to his managers in 1934. In view of the restrictions imposed by the National Industrial Recovery Act over discrimination once a worker was hired it was deemed important to avoid recruiting men with a history of union activity. "We must watch our hiring. Don't just pick men out of the line but be sure we know who we are hiring. Check them up very carefully. We must be sure our foremen are with us and are doing the job." Foremen would be more effective than employment departments at weeding out known organisers and thus the foreman's right of veto over hiring was to be restressed. (63)

Once unions were established at GM, foremen there were to have their position at the first stage of the grievance machinery protected - a frequent complaint of FAA foremen at other factories being that they felt left out of this stage of the procedure. (64) More importantly perhaps GM never allowed the same degree of freedom to local union representatives as in other factories and thus avoided the challenge to the foreman's power of a strong union presence on the shop floor. The shop steward system was not formally recognised, rather a series of negotiated agreements led to a compromise bargaining committee without the acceptance of full shop floor worker representation. Given the high ratio of committee men to workers the latter had little option but to approach their foreman in the first instance if aggrieved. (65) Despite the initial wave of conflicts

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around the establishment of the UAW through the period of sit-down strikes etc. GM was relatively quick to normalise its relations with the UAW. As Harris notes, "GM alone of all the major automobile manufacturers managed to stabilise its labour relations on more or less acceptable terms before the outbreak of war." (66) These stable relations included a jealous protection of the foreman's position in agreements in terms of hiring, firing, discipline and, as noted, in the grievance process. (67)

This tough stance on the extent of influence of the union movement over the position of the foreman was later to be reflected in the GM campaign against the FAA described in the previous chapter. GM foremen themselves were never to display much enthusiasm for the FAA however, and much of the company's campaign against the union was conducted against the efforts of the FAA at other employers premises. If GM had capitulated to the FAA then its future success would have been more or less guaranteed, instead foremen at the GM plants were to exhibit a singular indifference to recruitment efforts. FAA president Keys made numerous visits to GM plants to no avail. GM foremen took no part in any FAA strikes and there were only two petitions for representational elections presented to the NLRB from GM plants, one from the Diesel Engine plant in Detroit and the other from the Melrose Park plant in Chicago - both recently established factories. (68) Thus GM foremen appeared to have no need of legal constraints on their interest in the FAA, being seemingly impervious to all organising efforts.

Something had made foremen at GM more resistant to unionism than their counterparts at other automobile factories. How much had the
influence of long term training programmes along human relations lines contributed to this resistance? Were GM's foremen convinced that they were an integral part of management or had more tangible factors been responsible for the isolation of GM foremen from the union movement which was readily accepted by a large majority of foremen at the other major automobile manufacturer's plants?

As we have seen the foreman's position at GM had been bolstered throughout the 1930s by pay differential maintenance, support of their shop floor status in terms of protection against the erosion of their power by union procedures or the expanded role of personnel departments in terms of hiring, firing and discipline, and by attention to selection and training programmes. Underpinning all these initiatives was the attempt to maintain or widen a division between foreman and worker manifested in the foreman's perception of his essential difference from those engaged in production. This was in spite of the objective fact that the division of labour had brought a reduced role to shop floor supervision - a fractionalisation which had more closely aligned the foreman with production workers than with executive management. How useful was the human relations training component, pushed at GM more than any other automobile plant, in defying this objective diffusion of the foreman's status or difference and reestablishing at least the notion of separateness, responsibility and an ideology linked to that of management?

Human relations had not been without its critics during the inter-war period. As noted, GM's Knudsen had railed against too much "industrial science" when the danger of unionisation loomed. The remote, academic environment of many of the theoreticians and the
inapplicability of the method of human relations had also been singled out for criticism. Goodyear’s industrial relations department for example discounted the value of non-industry based advisors. “We have not found any high-school or college-trained professor who can step into industry.”(69) The seminar or round table method of the foremen’s conference also lacked credibility in some circles. Despite intense efforts to train conference leaders able to guide discussion and thus promote the desired group therapy, meetings tended to be dominated by a minority of more vociferous individuals.(70) More serious were criticisms that these type of foremen training schemes were only grudgingly accepted by participants, especially older foremen. As Roethlisberger, in the vanguard of the post war renaissance of the human relations method, was to comment, “the foreman gives lip-service in his courses to things which in the concrete shop situation he feels it would be suicidal to practice.”(71) Take GM’s Glenn Gardiner’s advice on psychology which would see workers “disarmed of their bitterness”. A foreman cutting the pay of his workers for example should break the news in the following fashion: “Here’s the company’s side of it: You fellows have no doubt noticed that the selling prices of our competitors are getting down below ours...”(72) Workers reactions to a cut in pay were unlikely to be mollified by such statements which only serve to illustrate Gardiner’s tenuous grasp on the realities of shop floor life.

Other critics saw the abstract and complex nature of human relations management as too much to take in for the average foreman who, by virtue of his shop floor origins lacked the “necessary intelligence”. It was therefore deemed “futile to attempt to teach the
A more specific criticism was aimed at the lack of substantive content in many of the programmes implemented under the aegis of conference training; ""Conference" is a broken winded and pestiferous term. Any meeting from two to perhaps one hundred persons who gather to conduct a "gab-fest" is dignified as a conference." Finally there were doubts expressed about the lasting effects of such training even where properly conducted. Foremen might modify their behaviour for short periods following the courses but under the everyday pressure of shop floor life a reversion to adversarial methods of achieving production would be inevitable. The testimony of one foreman before the NWLB Special Panel highlights the transitory nature of human relations retraining programmes;

"Q. They passed out literature to you and then you had conferences?
A. That's right.
Q. The conference method of instruction, is that right?
A. That's right.
Q. And the course dealt chiefly - it did not deal with technical aspects of your work, but with the human relations and labour relations, psychological aspects of it, is that right?
A. Well, yes. We had a first-aid course. We had a course in grievance procedure set up...and we had, oh I forget now, general schooling I imagine you would call it...
Q. And there was considerable stress on the importance of cooperation between foremen and the the interest of of integrating the work among the various departments; do you recall that was one subject?
The major criticism of human relations training techniques remained that they ignored the realities of modern rationalised and subdivided mass production methods. In many cases it was simply not possible to impart a degree of interest or satisfaction into the section of the overall process that the detail labourer, or his supervisor was left with. Wage-effort bargains and their constant reorientation through optimalising pay, bonus and incentive related schemes continued to run in tandem with reappraisals of job measurement and mechanical substitution, to guarantee output, not by group leadership but rather a mixture of physical compulsion and manipulated consensus. Workers resisted these methods, individually and collectively with varying success at differing periods and locations, but the persistent dominance of Taylorist and Fordist derivatives or various alternative or complimentary incentive related systems, and the continued implicit acceptance of adversarial industrial relations, is in itself evidence of the rejection or inapplicability of a system of production revolving around the diplomacy or "human engineering" skills of foremen.

Futile as it may have been attempting to change the nature of soliciting effort or the social relationships on the shop floor, the considerable attention paid to the question of educating foremen is of importance. It demonstrates that for some companies at least, notably GM, the foreman was a figure worthy of some considered attention. GM still used intensely rationalised production methods - their flow line assembly for example was as fully integrated and paced as any at Ford - and only token attention was paid to the notion of fitting workers
to jobs. The considerable investment made in the elaborate training schemes in terms of direct costs and the costs of absentee foremen while undergoing training however may have been recouped in different ways than the successful transmutation of foremen into industrial psychologists or counsellors. The programmes' value lay in convincing the participating foremen of the company's continuing high estimation of their worth. If nothing else the expressed emphasis on the "key role" which supervision played and the fact of selection for quasi-academic training, often away from the shop floor, reinforced the foreman's feeling of separation from the ranks of manual workers and encouraged notions of elitism.

GM had made a long term effort to guarantee that their foremen felt tangibly different in status and prestige from those who operated machinery or assembled parts - to insulate the foreman from identifying with those "below" him. That one of the earliest and methods chosen, that of human relations training, carries as one of its basic tenets empathy with the pressures or problems of other workers is not as paradoxical as it may seem. The foreman's human relations knowledge was in reality meant to give him an understanding of workers feelings, not in order that he would more closely identify with them, but rather that these feelings could be manipulated to maximise work efficiency. Just as the foremen's conference was to be manipulated and controlled by the trained conference leader so too the foreman was to take on the guise of mentor, counsellor, even friend, but the essential separateness, the notion of leader was always to remain. Thus human relations training of the foreman to instil and reinforce a continued division between foremen and the ordinary
production worker.

In spite of the apparent usefulness of human relations in these terms, the general movement declined into the 1930s as unionisation became an established fact, as labour market problems such as turnover and absenteeism on the scale of the post World War One period declined, as the ethos of welfarism was dissipated and, not least, as the general effectiveness of human relations in extracting greater profits was revealed to be somewhat doubtful. Some firms, such as Ford, had never bothered to find out if human relations could achieve worthwhile results. Even GM as we have seen, had opted in the end for a more pragmatic version of human relations aimed primarily at building a team spirit encompassing the foreman and the rest of management rather than the general workforce. The idea of the human relations foreman was not finished however. As the FAA arose following 1941, seemingly to confirm Knudsen's warnings, a wider range of managements turned their attention to the problem of the foremen. Two factors now seemed apparent to all. The unionisation of production workers had left the foreman as the "man in the middle" or worse, as a marginalised figure, bypassed by grievance and seniority procedures and pay negotiations. Secondly the foreman had become the subject of a spreading union consciousness, had been drawn into the fold of the new union movement and in the polarisation of industrial relations was beginning to chose the side of the worker rather than that of management. Human relations theorists were again to put themselves forward as the only people with the answer to this problem and the result was a renaissance for the movement.

The same range of agencies were to the fore in promoting what was
in essence a rehash of the "New Foremanship" movement of the early 1920s. The federal government, just as it had sponsored vocational education at the end of World War One, began to push initiatives such as the War Manpower Commission's Training Within Industry (TWI) scheme throughout World War Two. Broken down into several 'J' courses comprising Job Instruction, Job Methods, and Job Relations training the five-day courses were attended by hundreds of thousands of foremen throughout the USA.(76) The Job Relations section was heavily human relations influenced and advocated the ubiquitous conference method. Foremen were also issued with a supervisors handbook containing a balance of information on wartime regulations and advice on how to cope with employees "personal problems". The Department of Labour also issued a variety of aids to foremanship, again stressing the ideal attributes of "leadership ability rather than drivership".(77)

University departments again became interested in the foreman as a "problem" figure during the 1940s. Although many university staff were actively involved in setting up training schemes (Roethlisberger at Harvard played an important part in setting up the TWI programme for example(78)) the major academic focus became one of extensive study. Perhaps influenced by criticisms of scholarly abstraction in previous attempts to outline the ideal attributes of good foremanship, several university departments began major projects based on rigorous case study, questionnaire, interview and direct observation methodologies. In this way the social scientists involved hoped to uncover the precise constituents of the malaise which had driven foremen to seek the protection of collective action. The University of Michigan for example inaugurated a ten year research project in 1947
to cover foremen in the mid-west manufacturing industry. Controlled
groups of human relations trained foremen were compared with those who
had not received such training. Attitudes of workers, shop stewards
and foremen were also tested across a range of issues under the
supervision of Renis Likert and Robert L. Kahn. Despite impressive
compilations of results and attempted correlation of attitude surveys,
output levels etc., interim reports came out in favour of most of the
now traditional human relations axioms. "Employee centred" foremen
would get more production, foremen should be given more
responsibility, and the notion of leadership was again deemed to be
all important. These findings were in spite of the fact that no actual
significant difference could be identified in comparisons between the
performance of the controlled groups of human relations trained and
those not in receipt of such training. (79) In the section of the study
conducted at the Studebaker automobile plants foremen with higher wage
levels or higher seniority were shown to be more satisfied with their
job. Human relations trained foremen asked about their preparedness to
help the company out by taking a pay cut in "hard times" responded in
exactly the same way as ordinary production workers, (80) although
newer, younger foremen tended to be more "pro-company" than older
ones. (81)

The net result of the Michigan survey was predictably pro-human
relations, although much was made of the foreman's position relative
two organisational groupings - workers and management - and the
conflictual nature of his role. This was seen to be normally tolerable
but exacerbated during polarisations caused by industrial disputes or
in the event of a divergence of goals between the two groups - a
reiteration of the now popular "man in the middle thesis". (82) Solutions offered by Michigan were essentially a restatement of the need to train and cherish good human relations foremen although a significant level of realism, based in legitimate study, informed the surveys. It had been Michigan's Industrial Relations department which had given out advice in the 1930s that foremen should have their workers learn a simple set of rules by rote. The envisaged result was that; "A foreman, instead of bawling a man out, can say to him, "John, what is the fifth rule?" The man answers, "Take care of company property." Many times little more need be said. The man improves himself." (83) Advice based on the new Michigan surveys, when it emerged in the early 1950s, was altogether more pragmatic and cautious.

Most other universities also put resources into surveys of the role of foremen, especially after 1947. At Purdue Lillian Gilbreth and A.S.Cook led a number of studies into the psychology of supervision. (84) A survey of International Harvester's foremen was undertaken by Ohio State University, eventually critical of human relations training only in that it was often not rigorously applied and thus produced only brief changes in attitudes and behaviour. (85) Harvard's study produced similar results. Portraying management as a series of specialist department subgroups and management teams the survey concluded that they all afforded the shop floor supervisor low status. Again the contradictory and difficult role of the foreman was seen to result in anger and resentment on his part. Recommending improved horizontal and vertical communications, the study could offer no better recommendation than the traditional conference method of
training for foremen. (86)

Some universities continued an active on site involvement with collaborative programmes of training. Pennsylvania State for example after surveying foremen by questionnaire and interview method, designed specialised systems for individual companies. (87) The Curtiss Wright Corporation for example, manufactures of aircraft propellers, was the recipient of one Penn State idea - the Foreman Training Personality Wheel. Using propeller blades and foremen's personality attributes as analogies. If any of these attributes such as "suggestibility", "irritability", or "sociability" was disproportionate to the others then the propeller would become imbalanced - the dysfunction of an imbalanced propeller being deemed to be a consequence which all Curtiss Wright foremen could identify with. (see fig. 2)

While some of the major academic studies did begin to take a slightly more critical line on human relations and undertake a more searching evaluation of the genesis of the foreman's alienation, other agencies seized the opportunity to recirculate the programmes of the 1920s in virtually unaltered form. The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) began distributing guidelines and film slide shows for foremen's conferences. The following narrative between two foremen is typical. "Steve made what to Al seemed like a queer observation: "Men's traits deserve as careful study as the instruments of production." The analogy set Al thinking." (88) The American Management Association (AMA) issued a bound collection of articles in easy clean covers designed for shop floor use, entitled "The Foreman's Basic Reading Kit". Titles included "The Foreman and Human Relations",

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The six-bladed, dual reaction propeller is used as an analogy to the personality of the foreman and his six traits or characteristics as analyzed in the counseling interview. The balance of the six-bladed propeller, compared with the balance of the six personality traits. As the six blades are balanced with the engine for efficiency, so the six personality traits must be balanced with the mechanical, mental, and emotional aptitudes or the human motive for efficient and good supervision.

(FIGURE 2) (Source: The Dartnell Corporation, Special Investigation of 132 Companies, Ex. X)
"Understanding Human Relationships" and "Helping the Worried Worker". The AMA also promoted the "foreman's letter" as a means of bringing the foreman back into the ambit of management. Monthly bulletins issued to foremen were to improve communication and, by imparting "confidential information", increase the foreman's sense of belonging to the privileged circle of management. General Electric, Allis Chalmers, Standard Oil, Eastman Kodak, Dupont and Caterpillar were among the many firms implementing this scheme. The employer sponsored National Foremen's Institute (NFI) continued to publish information to aid managers in their avoidance of unionisation among their foremen and also set up its own courses for the training of foremen conference leaders - claiming to be training nearly two thousand annually. In addition the NFI distributed advice on enhancing the foreman's prestige by providing status trappings such as offices, phones, nameplates, encouraging the wearing of business suits and so on. The NFI also undertook its own surveys into foremen's attitudes, the findings of which, not surprisingly confirmed the worth of NFI sponsored human relations training. For foremen themselves the NFI issued a monthly "Supervisor's Memory Jogger" - a notebook cum diary interspersed with human relations homilies pointing out how George Washington and Abe Lincoln would have made good foremen and advocating the use of direct eye contact. Vickers, Westinghouse, Remington-Rand, and Borg Warner were among the companies distributing these to their foremen. The National Association of Foremen (NAF), much expanded due to increased employer sponsorship in the 1940s, formed the Foremen's League for Education and Association in 1945 to sponsor and coordinate foreman training consistent with the NAF "Code of Ethics",

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a series of human relations oriented tenets.\(^{(93)}\)

As in the 1920s a wealth of publications appeared outlining the basic human relations attributes of the ideal foreman and delineating suitable schedules and topics for foremen's conferences. Glenn Gardiner reemerged with titles such as *How To Create Job Satisfaction: A Manpower Maintenance Manual For Foremen*. N.R.F. Maier's *Principles of Human Relations*, popular into the 1960s, was published in 1952. Uncritical of Mayo's Hawthorne findings, Maier posited a somewhat contradictory "democratic leadership" for foremen and likened workers to children in need of behavioural exemplars, encouraging the training of foremen in psychology and counselling techniques.\(^{(94)}\)

Many individual companies had, by the late 1940s established their own foremen training schemes. Caterpillar Tractors installed its own conference training system around this period after undertaking a study of the systems at 67 other companies. Caterpillar foremen were made to sit in different positions periodically and conference leaders were chosen on a rota basis.\(^{(95)}\) Other major automobile companies in addition to GM also began intensifying efforts to train their foremen. Chrysler set up its own Foreman's School near the Jefferson Avenue plant in Detroit where foremen took the "Chrysler Conference on Business Management" course.\(^{(96)}\) Course material stressed the importance of "the square deal", the foreman "putting himself in the worker's place" and "the importance of cooperation". Foremen were to be trained in "stimulating job interest and enthusiasm".\(^{(97)}\) Chrysler's foremen were instructed that "human reactions" were their biggest problem. They were also warned to limit their expectations of certain workers' capacities since such workers' intelligence was
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BUILD MORALE AMONG YOUR WORKERS?

Morale has been defined as a lot of little things that make a worker like his job.

SEE THAT THE WORKER GETS OFF TO A GOOD START

TREAT THE WORKER AS AN INDIVIDUAL

BE FRIENDLY

GIVE THE WORKER A SQUARE DEAL

MUCH OF YOUR WORKER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS JOB DEPENDS UPON YOUR LEADERSHIP.

McDonell Aircraft Co., Training Division, manual illustrations, from Baudek and Brooks, The Supervisor's Job in Industry

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"limited by heredity". Nevertheless the power of psychology was not to be underestimated; "It is possible to make some workers sick by telling them they look sick. It is possible to make some workers better by telling them they look well. Obviously supervisors can make use of this principle."(98)

As previously the foremanship training programmes had the dual function of attempting to construct harmonious industrial relations and also of enhancing the foreman's feelings of executive status. By giving foremen an insight into the general management structure Chrysler's "Management Fundamentals" course hoped augment the more ethereal psychological training with concrete information on the overall functions of control and authority in the firm. There were also practical sections on job analysis, work schedules, costs, overheads, waste control etc. but even these sections frequently lapsed into issues of morale, personality, leadership, and other human relations concepts.

Other automobile manufacturers also implemented human relations based training for foremen around this period. Packard increased the intake to their foreman's school's conference based courses throughout the 1940s and shifted the emphasis of course content towards topics such as "Psychological Aspects of Delegating Authority and Responsibility" and "Developing Job Satisfaction". In common with Chrysler, Packard claimed that the conferences were a forum both for the discussion of job related problems and the foreman's own grievances - "an opportunity for them to get off their shoulders things they want to."(99) Briggs also became involved in conference training for foremen, holding a series of up to 200 meetings a year by
Studebaker held similar conferences as did the Detroit Motor Products Corporation. The latter company went as far as inaugurating classes on public speaking for foremen to overcome the reluctance of some foremen to take part in the conferences. By 1944 all the major automobile companies surveyed by the Automotive Council for War Production based their foreman training on conference or "round table" methods with a substantial element of human relations.

This form of training, in addition to being a response both to the threat of general unionism and to the specific unrest among foremen, was also designed to help supervision overcome the evident problems many of them faced with the new wave of wartime recruits to the factory. As we have seen above, women, and rural workers, unaccustomed to the rhythms and habits of industrial life, had caused particular difficulties for many foremen. Women workers, in view of their many "weaknesses" and perceived susceptibility to psychological manipulation, were singled out as a particularly suitable subject for special treatment by many human relations advocates. Jack Byrd, foreman at GM's Cadillac plant in 1944, attested that he spent a great amount of time on "humanics" (a favourite GM human relations term) in "the conversion programme from manpower ... to womanpower". Special conference titles at Chrysler were reserved for topics including "Women and War Work" and "Inter Racial Relations" and so on. The general assumptions of the behavioural psychology underpinning human relations training of foremen with regard to dealing with women, blacks, ethnic groups, or workers in general continue to be based on the notion that all were susceptible to manipulation and control by
simplistic combinations of selection, counselling and judicious praise. Failing this, human relations experts were not above advocating more straightforward and traditional methods of overcoming problems of group integration. Continued segregation of black workers was advised in the pragmatic recognition that there were some areas where the engendering of team spirit was beyond even the powers of human relations. As a Harvard spokesman advised, "In introducing the single negro...into the department, the foremen must take great care with whom he comes into contact. He must be quite sure that he can adjust to the persons with whom he must work, or if no such adjustment is practical, that he placed on a job where his frequency of contacts with others is relatively low." (104)

In spite of the changes in manufacturing methods and technology brought about by war production, human relations advocates continued to emphasise the need to downplay the purely technical criteria in foreman training, as they had done in the 1920s. Ruthenberg for example thought that technical ability constituted only 15% of the necessary qualification for foremanship, the remaining 85% being composed of initiative, leadership, and the ability of developing men. (105) The TWI programme of the 1940s concurred with this preference for personnel skills; "Experience proves that intelligence, personality, vitality, and other leadership abilities should outweigh technical or trade ability..." (106) Many foremen continued to face pressure from the introduction of new processes during wartime however, a problem compounded for the many foremen transferred from now defunct automobile processes such as painting, trimming etc. and one especially acute for the large number of newly promoted foremen.

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The increase in the level of training, heavily human relations influenced, was in large part a response to this wave of new promotions. Attempts were made, mostly unsuccessful, to establish rigid selection and rating criteria to ensure that only the most suitable foremen were promoted in the first place. Murray Bodies for example used a series of psychological tests to determine candidates' suitability gauged by potential to work "harmoniously" and their "skill in human relations". (107) In reality the promotion process was swamped by the large number of new foremen necessary to meet the wartime expansion of the workforce, and as in the 1920s, such tests again proved to be of dubious worth.

Despite its widespread application human relations based selection and training proved to be of little lasting value to the shop floor foreman, especially during increasingly stressful war production and, as in the previous period of its ascendancy, there were contemporary critics who recognised this. The inevitable domination of foremen's conferences by one or two individuals, often members of higher management in attendance, and the implausibility of a major restructuring of a foreman's personality - especially those older foremen who had been selected in earlier years on the basis of the robustness of their character - were frequent criticisms. (108) This unsuitability of training for older foremen was confirmed by the University of Michigan researchers during the war. (109)

Spokesmen for the now established production workers' unions generally scoffed at the whole idea. Since human relations had little explicit comment on trade unionism it was not perceived as an immediate threat and its uncertain impact in real terms gave little
cause for alarm. Comment, where it occurred, tended to be of a dismissive nature. The Electrical Workers' journal review of Lillian Gilbreth's *The Foreman in Manpower Management* is fairly typical, pointing out that the book, "smacks more of classroom academics than it does the noise and dirt of the factory".\(^{(110)}\)

Some human relations advocates were themselves critical of the new training movement, pointing out that the course contents were unrealistically complex for the ordinary foreman to grasp and the range of topics both too wide and too impractical. Salner thought so; "Analysis of a large number of foreman training programmes that are recommended as models by respectable publications seems to indicate that good industrial foremen must possess a combination of the characteristics of an operating vice-president, a sergeant of marines, an inventive genius, Mahatma Gandhi and the Committee for Economic Development."\(^{(111)}\) Others thought foremen's conferences to be ineffectually superficial. Maier for example highlighted the problems surrounding the transient nature of the foreman's training in psychology which was bound to break down under the everyday pressures of production and the entrenched attitudes which no amount of role playing could shift.\(^{(112)}\)

Maier, Roethlisberger and others continued to champion the basic tenets of human relations, in spite of the revealed weaknesses or impracticalities of such schemes. Roethlisberger traced the foreman's current wave of unrest to the division of supervisory labour and the foreman's alienation by technological rationalisation until he had become "victim and not monarch of all he surveys". Critical of the uneven and unrealistic application of human relations, Roethlisberger
nevertheless maintained his faith that, through learning to foster
superior - subordinate relationships and learning to promote change in
a "positive way", the foreman was set to become "the new
representative of a new "adaptive society"."(113)

Human relations advocates such as Roethlisberger and Maier were
correct to attribute at least some of the foreman's problems to a
growing sense of alienation, and to identify the foreman as an
important presence on the shop floor in terms of either combatting or
compounding the same trend of alienation among the workforce in
general. Human relations had successfully pinpointed the causes of
these problems in terms of the division of labour and bureaucratic and
technological rationalisation of the labour process. It failed in that
the remedies offered never sought to affect or redirect what were
structural changes to the way in work is done. Rather foremen, as
human relations practitioners, were expected to deal with the
consequences of modern industrial production methods, adapting and
conforming both their own and their workers' behaviour to fit in with
rationalisation and change. This tinkering with the effects of the
division of labour could only hope to have a marginal impact. Worse,
the human relations retraining of foremen could actually have a
negative effect on their identification with the goals of the firm. By
giving foremen an inflated view of their position in the managerial
hierarchy and encouraging the notion of occupational status and self
esteem, which was at the core of human relations training, unfulfilled
expectations could result. Donald Wray cited the case of foremen
joining the FAA following their participation in one human relations
programme. "The course emphasised their importance to and
identification with management, thereby sharpening the foreman's consciousness of the cleavage between the expected norm held before them and the realities of experience."(114)

In spite of these general misgivings the resurgence of human relations based training continued apace into the 1940s. GM, for example, carried on with programmes based on Sobey's bi-weekly "team training" conference sessions.(115) The shifted focus of the training, to encourage identification among foremen of their role with the management "team", was also accompanied by a parallel set of more tangible indicators of GM recognition of the worth of their foremen. In 1945, following the lifting of government restrictions foremen were receiving perks including three weeks paid vacation, unlimited sick leave, 25% discount on car purchases, and full pay during any stoppages due to industrial dispute. The foreman's 25% minimum differential continued and foremen were now paid shift and overtime rates proportionate to those of the production workers. Foremen at GM continued to have their position in the grievance machinery supported by higher management and industrial relations departments. Existing procedures covering hiring, discharge and discipline, in which the foreman's role at GM was assured, were not up for negotiation. "In 1948 the GM spokesman told Reuther that these...would be changed only by revolution."(116)

GM continued to build on the established multi-level support and training of the foreman, seemingly to good effect from the point of view of resisting the FAA. Ford, as we have seen, had no such basis of support to build on given the neglect of the foreman's position up to the 1930s. When Ford eventually capitulated to the UAW in 1941, the
agreement's signed were paradoxically probably the best available to
the UAW at that time.\textsuperscript{(117)} These agreements left the Ford foreman high
and dry - unused to compromise yet now expected to comply with
decisions made remote from the shop floor, or to work in situations
dictated by new procedures, all of which took place under the
increasing pressure of wartime production. While Ford management was
under the regime of Harry Bennett its response to growing unrest among
foremen was to acquiesce in their formation of the preeminent chapter
of the FAA and to stand aloof from the other automobile industry
employers who, led by GM and the manufacturers associations, were
building a multi level campaign of resistance to the union. Foremen
training was not seriously considered and the enhancement of foremen's
prestige, if not by financial reward given continued government
restriction, then by other less tangible means, was not attempted.

With the collapse of the Bennett regime in 1945 and the
assumption of control by Henry Ford II the Ford company underwent an
immediate reappraisal of their position with regard to foremen. In
addition to the withdrawal of the agreement with the FAA and
subsequent confrontation culminating in the strike of 1947, which saw
victory for the company, Ford management began to instigate a series
of measures, emulating the strategies of GM, aimed at rehabilitating
their foremen via a combination of training, status enhancement, and
material reward. Such moves were facilitated by the lifting of
government restrictions on pay and the return to automobile
production, but an equally important factor in the case of Ford was
the change of outlook brought about by the change of regime and the
ousting of the Bennett, very much the figurehead of the pre-war

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methods of driving production.

There had been tentative moves at Ford to confront the "foreman problem" before Henry Ford II took over power. A specialist Foremen's Personnel Office (FPO) was set up in 1943 for example, largely to deal with the procedures set up by the FAA agreements, but also to support the foreman's position in disputes with higher supervision. (118) Superintendents were no longer allowed to fire or demote foremen without prior consultation with the FPO which now assumed absolute power over promotion, demotion, discharges and grievances. (119) This department, which proved unpopular with both superintendents and FAA representatives, was set up partly in response to the greatly increased turnover of foremen during the war years. The systematic gathering and compilation of information on foremen was to form the basis of more intense interest in foremen when it was later to be controlled by personnel staff specialising in foremen, recruited from GM. (120)

One of the manifest differences between management and worker had always been the method of wage payment. Shidle and Peat recommending a move of foremen to a salaried basis in the early 1940s, were convinced that the abolition of time clocks was a weapon against foremen's unionisation. Bringing the foreman out of the "hourly rated" category could also serve as a general delineation of those eligible for union membership. By 1943 Ford brought their payment methods into line with most other automobile manufacturers, including GM and Chrysler, in taking foremen off the clock. (121)

Ford also began to implement a more intensive training programme for foremen in 1943. (122) This training, adopting the human relations
conference technique, was linked to a $500,000 research programme undertaken into human relations management throughout the war. Stress was placed on the elimination of fear among workers. Mussolini and Hitler were used to betoken bad foremanship and control by terror; "understanding" was to be the foreman's key attribute. "Every mistake by a worker is a foreman's opportunity." Cooperation, sincerity, patience, interest in a man's personal affairs and so on were all recommended in classic human relations fashion as job skills were pushed into the background. The accompanying Ford 'Supervisor's Manual' emphasised that "85% human relations ability as compared with 15% in technical and trade skill is the desired ratio in a supervisor." Foremen also began to receive a regular newsletter, the 'Ford Supervisory Bulletin', in 1945, for "the dissemination of essential information among management personnel", thus attempting to bridge the information gap between higher management and shop floor supervision and simultaneously enhancing the foreman's identification with "management", which was itself one of the dual aims of the programme of human relations training for foremen.

All these initiatives received a new impetus when Henry Ford II took over in 1945. By 1947 the campaign to "restore the prestige and dignity of foremen" was well under way. Foreman's conferences had been greatly increased in 1946 and a series of management meetings was set up, overseen by Ford himself, to discuss foremen's development. Elmo Roper was commissioned to undertake a survey of all Ford foremen to ascertain opinions on working conditions, inter-shift cooperation, knowledge of the union contract, conditions on the shop floor, and the general position of foremen compared to 1941, the year which saw the
rise of the FAA. Results confirmed that the foreman's lot at Ford had improved over the intervening years but nearly 50% of foremen still thought they had insufficient authority, 77% thought that workers under them were unsatisfactory, 41% thought that favouritism or kinship governed possibilities of advancement and 55% thought their job to be insecure. An overwhelming 80% thought that Ford was "worse or no better" than other companies to work for. Roper summed up the results of his survey; "If we are to paint a portrait of the Ford foreman today, one would find a man rather dejected on all of the four points which contribute to employee morale. He does not feel secure in his job. He believes his chances of advancement hinge to great extent on how much "pull" he has with those at the top. He thinks he is treated as a number on a payroll and does not receive the dignified and fair treatment due an individual. He thinks the workers under him are "second grade". " Shop floor supervisors stood in contrast to white collar workers and their supervisors who were said to exhibit few of these problems.

The timing of the Roper surveys and Ford's management meetings was coincidental with the decision to move against the FAA and, following the company's victory in the strike, the way was cleared for a new phase of reforms beginning in late 1947. One of the basic aims of the ensuing programme was to separate, as completely as possible, the foremen from their subordinate workers. Status indicators were to play an important part in this process. In addition to substantial pay increases a package of reforms was agreed upon in September 1947 to include reserved parking lots, individual desks, private locker rooms, and segregated dining areas. Foremen were to be fitted out with
"distinctive" work coats and the identification badge, worn in common with ordinary workers, was to be replaced by a special I.D. card. Regular dinners, attended by foremen and higher management were also set up. (133) The wage structure was formalised into six ranges with merit increases to determine individual levels, with improved shift and overtime rates. (134) Ford also undertook to make periodic "community salary surveys" to ensure that their foremen maintained parity with, or earned more than their counterparts in other industries in the area. (135) Vacation entitlements were improved and a new car purchase plan giving foremen improved discounts was announced. (136)

An earlier plan to recruit more college graduates into the job of foreman was dropped, having been revealed as impractical, and internal promotion ladders were again restressed. The Salaried Employee History record system was set up as an aid to selection and to placate accusations of favouritism in promotion. (137) The hierarchy of shop floor supervision was shortened to three levels - foreman, general foreman, and superintendent - replacing what had previously been as many as eight classifications. Foremen were endowed with new levels of authority, especially in disciplinary terms as the 'Foremen's Report of Reprimand' was introduced to deal with a wide range of "violations" on the shop floor including failure to meet production or quality targets, interference with other employees, timekeeping infractions and other misdemeanours. Union officials were advised accordingly on the reinstatement of the foreman's immediate disciplinary power. (138)

By the beginning of 1950 Ford's supervisory employee programme had been well established. Specialist personnel such as Richard
Roberts, head of the new Management Relations Department which coordinated this programme, and some of his team had been recruited from GM bringing their long term experience and underlining the new spirit of cooperation on this issue between Ford and the other automobile producers. (139) There were two basic components; firstly selection and training and secondly compensation and prestige and status building. The selection procedure involved individual application either through prompting by immediate supervision or through reading about the programme through the plant papers. (Interestingly the college graduate recruitment programme was once again rejected almost entirely.) (140) Aptitude testing and series of interviews followed, the most crucial of which being by the specialist Trainee Foreman Selection Committee. Once accepted foremen went onto a waiting list to be selected by departmental superintendents and general foremen as vacancies arose. (141) In general Ford professed a desire to recruit younger men, apprentice trained or high-school educated and showing "informal group leadership" skills. The criteria that a prospective foreman be "respected by his fellow employees as a "regular guy"" was to replace an earlier insistence on "the "driver" or "two fisted" type." (142)

In the period between 1948 and 1951 over 4600 applications were received for foreman training. By 1951 477 were in training, 1020 had completed the course and were on the waiting list and 554 had been placed. (143) The scheme thus created a pool of available foremen from which to select new supervisors, many times the size of the vacancy list. Despite company statements to the contrary, it seems clear that this pool formed part of strategy to extend the inculcation of what
was deemed to be good behaviour - meeting production schedules, observing quality constraints, working as a team etc. - to a wider group of expectant supervisors amongst the ranks of the ordinary worker, in particular those more recently recruited, younger, skilled workers.

Training for Ford's established foremen continued along the lines set up after 1945. Each level of supervision was expected to be an "on-the-job coach" to his immediate subordinate and this was supplemented by regular attendance at the conference based training programmes. Conferences were held each week, usually involving a group of around 20 foremen, and covered personnel responsibilities, production, cost, and quality controls, and general explanations of overall company functioning and policy. All of Ford's supervisory training programme contents and effectiveness were now continually monitored by a special committee of top operations managers. (144) Established foremen who aspired to higher responsibility could also enrol in the Industrial Management Training Programme run by Ford in conjunction with Wayne State University. (145)

The training for prospective and existing foremen continued to have an inbuilt bias towards the development of personnel skills. In the 1951 programme for example the time allocated towards "personnel responsibilities" was 60 hours - compared to a combined total of 18 hours for tools, machines, equipment and material. By 1954 this ratio had been further extended to 74 to 18. (146) In addition lower levels of supervision were encouraged to "engage exclusively in the performance of management functions" and stay aloof from the performance of manual work. (147)
Status and prestige reforms of the early-post war years, from parking spaces to separate eating facilities were also consolidated and extended as were the foremen's newsletters, bulletins and management-foreman social events. Ford also continued to build on earlier salary reforms into the 1950s further increasing differentials to outpace the automatic cost of living allowance schemes won by the UAW. Shift and overtime pay, vacation allowances, sick pay, life and disability insurance and pension schemes were also further improved. (148) These measures, designed to restore tangible divisions between supervision and production workers, were replicated within differing sections of the supervisory workforce. Foremen in the tool and die department now earned substantially more than assembly operation foremen for example. This was partly a reflection of the continuance of differing levels of technical skill but also indicates a strategy of imparting divisions among the supervisory workforce in an attempt to offset a recurrence of any consensus in favour of collective activity. (149)

The fading FAA reacted predictably to Ford's post Taft-Hartley reforms, asserting that they meant a return to the problems for foremen of 1941, and generally trivialising Ford efforts at status and prestige enhancement. (150) Few foremen were by now interested in the comments of the FAA it seems but as an extra precaution the company deemed it necessary to introduce a document for foremen to sign, reminiscent of the "yellow dog" contracts of the 1930s. The contract underlined the employers strength after Taft Hartley and was a thinly veiled message that activity in promotion of the FAA would not be tolerated; "I understand that my employment is not for any definite
term and may be terminated at any time without advanced notice...and that my employment is subject to such lay-offs as my compensation to such adjustments as Ford Motor Co. may from time to time determine..."(151)

In summary, this chapter has examined the activity of employers in the period following the rise of the FAA. Employers’ responses to the FAA had encompassed initiatives ranging from the restoration of material differentials in terms of pay, employment conditions etc., to the attempt, through recruitment and training programmes, to convince foremen of their place within the management team and thus reestablish the distance, in terms of prestige, status and ideology which had traditionally separated the foreman from production workers - a distance which had been seemingly reduced to a dangerously narrow margin as evidenced by the popularity of the FAA.

The search for an answer to what had become popularly known as "the foreman problem" had provided an opportunity for a range of agencies to promote a human relations based schema of selection and training for foremen, aimed partly in ameliorating the effects of general unionisation, but mainly at reorienting the foreman's goals and job content. The application of human relations management techniques to the role of foreman, and the training of foremen to disseminate these techniques was, by the 1940s, an idea of considerable lineage. The original movement promoted by the work of Mayo, Scott, Munsterberg, Tead and others, had generated an initial phase of widespread interest following World War I and in response to increasing industrial unrest revealed in unionisation, turnover and
absenteeism. Human relations techniques also had a strong appeal during the period when welfare measures were popular. A large number of companies, including many of the automobile manufacturers, had shown an interest in the system which, by virtue of its behavioural psychology base, had placed a primacy on understanding and modifying the role of the foreman, seen as the key figure in inducing industrial harmony. Terms such as "human engineering" and "humanics" became commonplace as foremen were to be trained to abandon "driving" methods of supervision in favour of maximising production through engendering notions of team spirit and responsibility. What became widely known as the "new foremanship" was to utilise the tools of behavioural psychology on the shop floor, fitting workers temperaments to tasks, understanding and counselling workers though immediate problems - whether work related or domestic - and generally promoting positive attitudes to work. The foreman was in short to become the workman's friend and mentor, no longer a figure to be either feared or resented. Given the impracticalities in selecting a complete new strata of foremen, existing foremen were to be retrained in human relations. This training itself utilised the techniques of human relations and the conference method, based on the practice of group therapy, became the predominant mode of foreman training. Personnel skills replaced job related skills as the major proportion of these training programmes.

Human relations based training for foremen was promoted by a number of organisations and individual firms. Government initiatives such as the Federal Board for Vocational Education encouraged local state programmes. Many universities and colleges drew up courses
either for remote learning or for direct implementation within factories. Organisations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA, manufacturers associations and independent consultants all established courses in this area or promulgated information.

Many of the larger firms were to set up in-house schemes administered by their own personnel departments. Foremost among these was General Motors who, by virtue of their leadership in this field, and their ultimate success in resisting the efforts of the FAA, present an interesting contrast to Ford, where driving foremanship prevailed in the inter-war period and where the FAA achieved its most notable success. Under the guidance of Sobey, GM implemented a series of measures designed to enhance the role of foremanship. In addition to guarantees of the foreman's pay related status, GM enrolled their foremen on a range of courses which were heavily human relations influenced. Into the 1930s, as the threat of unionisation among the production workers increased, a shift of emphasis in this training occurred in line with a new level of commitment to establishing closer links between shop floor supervision and the rest of management. This reflected Knudsen's determination to bring foremen into the management team, both to aid in the resistance of unions like the UAW and to ensure that the idea of unionisation should not permeate the lower ranks of management. When the UAW was established management at GM continued to protect their foremen through continued wage related benefits but also by ensuring the foreman's position relative to the power of the shop steward. The ultimate success of GM in resisting the recruitment drives of the FAA, in contrast to Ford, cannot be solely attributed to human relations training for foremen however. In spite
of an earlier capitulation to the UAW than other firms GM was foremost in limiting the extent of union influence in general and the FAA in particular through available legal channels. The material attention they paid to their foremen's status and managerial position from the early 1930s onwards ensured that GM had a firm base from which to resist the FAA. Ford by contrast had shown no such interest and had accepted the FAA on a wave of capitulation in 1941, the year the UAW finally secured recognition.

Interest in human relations management techniques in general had declined into the 1930s under the impact of economic constraints on welfarism in general, lack of tangible results and a more pragmatic view of shop floor managerial practice when faced with the reality of production workers' unionisation. Following the emergence of the FAA a resurgence of interest was shown in this form of training, this time almost exclusively in response to the "problem" of the foreman. Government, the education system, manufacturers organisations and private consultancies once again produced a flood of courses and literature designed to promote the human relations foreman and as a means of enhancing his identification with management and nullifying the appeal of the FAA. For their part the interest of academics tended to be more introspective than during the previous phase of interest and several objective studies of the efficacy of this type of training were undertaken. Despite some reservations from this quarter and the continued criticism of some sectors, human relations training for foremen experienced a considerable renaissance during the 1940s among many of the automobile manufacturers and spread to encompass even the Ford factories. Aided by a change of higher management with the
replacement of the Harry Bennett regime by that led by Henry Ford II, Ford adopted a newly confrontational approach to the FAA and began a range of initiatives designed to salvage the foreman from the perceived neglect that had resulted in the spread of a union consciousness. A series of measures into the early 1950s reestablished material differentials between Ford foremen, and status and prestige were further enhanced by extensive selection and training programmes which borrowed heavily on the programmes undertaken at GM in particular, even to the extent of recruiting GM specialists.

The overall effectiveness of the initiatives aimed at recovering the foreman is difficult to assess. Certainly the FAA was in terminal decline after 1947, a point at which such initiatives were being most vigorously applied, particularly at Ford. Other factors contribute to the FAA's decline as outlined in previous chapters - disabling legislation, the return to normal production and labour market conditions, the rejection of the FAA by the wider union movement, the loss of the Ford agreements and so on. The role of tangible factors designed to enhance the notion of separation from the general workforce - salary levels and benefits, offices, distinctive clothing, separate facilities etc. - no doubt also had some impact on the foreman's identification with management and dissipated some of the need for collective action.

The part played by human relations training and counselling, and the considerable resources spent in this direction during the 1940s remains problematic. Managements were clearly ready to try anything which might offset the appeal of the FAA and, if nothing else the human relations school had for a very long period been stressing the
centrality of the foreman and had ready made courses of action available. Given that the current stage of rationalisation of production was deemed to be irreversible (no one in the 1940s was suggesting the breakdown of extensive integrated production lines, nor were there flexible enough control mechanisms available) a set of solutions which dealt with adapting either the worker or the foremen to function more effectively under existing production configurations had many attractions. Some foremen undoubtedly responded to the exclusivity of special training involving periods away from the shop floor, and such training was at least another indication that management had no longer "forgotten" the shop floor supervisor.

Thus in achieving the aims of convincing foremen that they were part of a management team and subject to special privileges and consideration, the human relations conference programmes may have achieved some measure of success. In terms of the impact of such programmes on the style of everyday foremanship under the pressures of production however, serious reservations must be made. We have seen how individual foremen tended to forget the intricacies of what they had been taught within a short period of their return to the shop floor. Human relations champions such as Roethlisberger had confirmed this as the main problem for such training. Whereas Roethlisberger was to criticise the content and application of the courses, in reality the aims of such training, given both the background of foremen in educational terms, their continued selection on non rational grounds, the uncertain response of workers to amateur psychology and most importantly the failure to adapt production methods in order to facilitate any degree of interest or identification with either firm
or product, meant that such attempts to turn the foremen into the guiding spirit of a new industrial age were, to say the least, ill founded.
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Conclusions

An historical study of this particular group of workers, the foremen, in the formative stages of twentieth century mass production, reveals a complex and shifting set of experiences and relationships, both to other workers and to the labour process.

Initial shifts towards intensive rationalisation of production - the development of, and predominance of the 'Fordist' system - and accompanying shifts in skill levels and worker origins, generated a new form of foremanship, significantly different from its nineteenth century predecessor. The 'traditional' realm of foremanship, now reshaped by vertical and horizontal sub-divisions and the establishment of specialised hierarchic and departmental functions, was nevertheless not reduced in terms of some immediate elements of power and control. In many aspects the foreman on the shop floor found his power enhanced. Accepting the reservations placed on this interpretation by the shift in control of the overall direction of production which extensive integrated factory methods entailed, within the sphere of the shop floor elements in the labour market and the nature of the new methods of production combined to create opportunities for foremen to set up a system of arbitrary and unilateral controls over workers and the labour process.

Fordism - the machine solution to control of mass production - as actually implemented, can be seen, in the case of the automobile industry, to generate a number of contradictory trends in terms of control. Extensive division and the predominance of deskilling (disproportionate to the amount of reskilling on the factory floor)
and the nature of work which resulted, reduced commitment levels among the workforce. Added to this the increased vulnerability of fully integrated production systems placed a high cost on individual interruptions. Furthermore, even the most highly rationalised system of production was tempered by uneven levels of applicability as areas of the labour process remained impervious to redesign. Workers could also continue to regulate aspects of work, by group or individual methods, even in those areas which seemingly left little room for discretion. These compromises on control were compounded by developing market pressures to reincorporate flexibility into production with the advent of Sloanism - the annual model change. The chosen response of automobile manufacturers was to increase the intensity of supervision, both in purely numerical terms, and in terms of the parameters of authority available to foremen to enable them to push production. The 'driving' method of supervision thus emerged as the typical means of securing output levels, intensifying as greater productivity was sought into the 1920s and 1930s.

The changing nature of the labour markets surrounding the industry served to enhance further the power and authority available to shop floor foremen during this period. The influx of workers to the relatively high wage/low skilled work in the industry, many from rural America or Europe bringing 'pre-industrial work habits', led to both a highly unstable labour market and distinct ethnic and racial divisions and groupings. Foremen came to occupy a central position both in terms of the acquisition, security and quality of jobs, and in the reproduction and continuation of cleavages within the workforce. The developing seasonal and cyclical nature of automobile production

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served to further enhance the power of foremen in the labour market, with the result that many foremen were able to use their position to exert considerable pressure on workers either to conform to various informal supervisory demands or in support of unequal treatment of particular ethnic, racial or gender based groups.

In the division between personnel and technical supervisory functions in mass production it has been noted that care must be taken not to place too much emphasis on the enhanced role of specialised personnel and welfare departments during this period. Developments at Ford, and the short lived success of the Sociological Department highlight this assertion. Instead we must make a wider reference to the continued dominance of foremen over the experience of workers - their pay, security, work intensity etc. - in all automobile factories, and this needs to be balanced against assertions, drawn from numerical analysis of the spread of specialist departments and the idealisations of a prolific secondary literature, that personnel specialists and bureaucratisation shaped the nature of work in any period before the late 1930s. The shop floor foreman remained a powerful and central figure in the determination of most workers experience on the shop floor.

In terms of overall managerial strategy, the period up to the 1930s is clearly typified by a rapid switch from either direct entrepreneurial control or the Balkanised hierarchies of the nineteenth century internal contract systems. Beyond the formal implementation of extended managerial systems however, considerable autonomy was granted to the foreman. In return for guaranteed levels of production, a general abdication of further responsibility for
methods of supervision was displayed by employers. As long as foremen obtained sufficient output, their methods went largely unquestioned. There were periods when voices were raised in protest, in particular during the periods of high and costly labour turnover rates. These protests often originated amongst those promoting human relations approaches to management. The impact of such advice was minimal overall however and, while it is true to say that General Motors perhaps took greater account of such schemes, the drive method of supervision continued to enjoy informal sanction from the majority of employers.

We can use the developments outlined so far to construct a general model of division on the shop floor between supervision and worker which emerged in mass production industry. Elements of this division comprised power over workers and the labour process in addition to more tangible prestige and status indicators such as pay levels and working conditions. Again developments throughout the industry were uneven, Ford for example displaying a seemingly low commitment to the prestige of foremen in terms of the countervailing pressure of the Servicemen's department and lack of symbolic indicators such as offices or administrative trappings. Generally though a distinct cleavage between those working and those supervising develops in the period up until the 1930s. This cleavage was no longer based on intrinsic job skills, since the level of technical competence associated with supervision became diminished in proportion to the general division of labour among those supervised. Rather this was a division based in less tangible factors of occupational prestige and power, and the complementary ideology which developed placed foremen

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in general (although with some exceptions) beyond any broad sympathy or class cohesion with production workers. It is important to recognise this cleavage in terms of ensuing developments in unionisation. Explanations of the dynamics behind the movement to unionise foremen must take account of the polarity between foremen and production workers on the eve of the CIO successes of the 1930s. Although twentieth century mass production methods had superficially driven the foremen into a common process of deskillings and division of labour, the countervailing enhancement of control and power outlined above had more than compensated in producing a distancing, rather than convergence of experience between the two groups.

The unionisation of production workers had a profound effect on the structure of authority surrounding foremen. Indeed the appeal of union protection against the arbitrary activities of foremen can be seen to be an important factor in the success of industrial unions like the UAW in the mid 1930s. Foremen had previously been regarded as central to the inhibition of the spread of unions through their general surveillance and administration of blacklists, and had enjoyed continued power during the brief interregnum of the company union movement of the early 1930s. With the establishment of bona fide unions however, new structures of power were ushered in in the form of formalised procedures and agreements. Beyond the initial difficulties of the transitionary phase, when many workers and committeemen displayed understandably vigorous reactions to many years of arbitrary foremen's control, unionisation meant that seniority provisions, grievance procedures, negotiated pay and conditions etc. formed the basis for new levels of job security and job quality, to the exclusion

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of the foreman's intervention. To be sure, foremen retained considerable levels of power beyond the advent of unionisation - in the continued manipulation of seniority through the various "preferred employee" loopholes for example - but in general there was a marked diminution of their general range of discretion. This diminution of power was also characterised by the parallel rise in importance of personnel and employment departments to formally administer union contracts, and led to the further, much commented upon, marginalisation of foremen.

The other major effect of unionisation among production workers was that of stimulating unionisation among foremen themselves. Unionisation of the general workforce is an obvious precondition for the spread of unions into the ranks of supervision, and yet the effect of unionisation, rather than the support of the union movement is probably the key factor here. Direct support for the Foremen's Association of America was not forthcoming from the leadership of unions like the UAW, who, beyond tactical support to further their own organising and bargaining efforts, lent only token assistance to the foremen's organisation efforts - perhaps understandable given building employer opposition to both union movements, and the perceived danger of accusations of the widespread extension of union control of industry. The FAA was seen as more trouble than it was worth in terms of the settling delineation of established union power. The rank and file of the production workers unions, in developments reflecting hierarchical splits in the union movement, were, in contrast, more supportive of the FAA.

Unionisation of production workers provided other stimulants
beyond institutional support, whether at national or local level. The
demonstration of what unionisation could achieve, particularly in
terms of security and pay levels, had a strong effect on many foremen,
as wartime production conditions further exacerbated existing
problems. The decline in differential pay levels, for example,
coincided with new pressures on foremen in terms of both labour and
production restructuring. Wartime also brought a flood of new recruits
to the ranks of supervision, bringing their union background to a job
now typified by long hours, relatively declining remuneration, the
need to cope with a greatly increased and often inexperienced
workforce, and the breakdown of many traditional forms of labour
process with the shift to arms manufacture. Many foremen, both newly
promoted and established, sought protection of the kind demonstrably
achieved by production workers’ unions, especially as the end of war
production, and consequent large scale demotions threatened.

Security and an instrumental, economistic outlook probably
typifies the general stimulus for many foremen to enrol in the FAA,
although a broader strategy was propounded by the leadership of the
union, which certainly had far reaching ambitions in terms of eventual
recruitment levels. Like their British counterparts in the National
Foremen's Association, however, the FAA leadership were to fall back
on an avowed position of "neutrality", increasingly difficult to
define and implement in the face of pragmatic imperatives and
employer reaction. The union leadership and general membership did
exhibit a real degree of militancy, surprising given the wartime
circumstances of many strikes, and achieved high rates of core
recruitment, but, without support of the wider union movement,
consolidation of initial gains was inevitably difficult.

The strength of reaction to the FAA from employers, with the notable exception of Ford, certainly influenced the reluctance of unions like the UAW to forge closer links with the foreman's unionisation movement. This reaction took place at a number of levels including various forms of direct action by individual companies and employer's organisations. One of the principal long term strategies used by employers, under the leadership of GM management, involved attempts to work through the legislative structure to restrict the rights of foremen to organise. Initially by seeking anti-FAA interpretations of the Wagner Act and ultimately by obtaining the amendments in the Taft-Hartley Act which clearly placed foremen beyond legal protection in organisation. There is no doubt that employers saw the FAA's rapid growth, following so closely the successes of the production workers' union, as a real threat to control on the shop floor. Allowing for the alarmist nature of some of the extreme rhetoric of many management statements of the period, a significant degree of real apprehension existed within the ranks of most employers. If unionisation of production workers had to be tolerated, or could be viewed in a positive sense, a limit could, indeed must, be placed on its spread to the ranks of supervision. The foremen were to be the boundary over which unionisation must not pass.

Success in resisting the FAA through the machinery of state regulation, notably the National Labour Relations Board, followed an undulating path. The series of contradictory and vacillating judgements handed down by the board reflect both the imprecise definitional nature of the law, and various shifting political
configurations in the make up of the board itself. As such the activity of the NLRB, and National War Labour Board during its brief jurisdiction over the issue, provide a useful example of the working out of the relationship between state and capital, defined through the prism of politics and pragmatism. In the long run the employers got what they wanted from the state, but the intervening period had shown how a state agency could promote developments which employers viewed as against their interests.

The intervening period of ups and downs in legislative support had also shown that the FAA's growth did not necessarily follow the contours of state support. Indeed unfavourable decisions by the NLRB were responsible for the intensification of industrial activity by the union on a number of occasions. Such developments clearly demonstrate the problem of interpreting the relative success or failure of the union purely in terms of legal sanction. While state support is of course one of the central features in retarding or inhibiting the union, other immediate and long term factors must be aggregated to provide a full explanation. The immediate circumstances surrounding 1947, a pivotal year in the fortunes of the FAA, include not only the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, but also the withdrawal of Ford's FAA agreements, and a new managerial stance there resulting in the costly defeat for the FAA in the strike of 1947; final unequivocal withdrawal of support by the UAW; the reversion to peacetime automobile production at high output levels and normalisation of the labour markets of both workers and supervisors; and the resolution of pay and conditions problems with the lifting of wartime government restrictions.

Conclusions
The range of dynamics leading to the growth of the FAA form the obverse of many of the above elements of decline. To eventual, albeit fleeting, state support must be added immediate factors such as the influence and effects of unionisation of the general workforce and the specific support of many UAW locals and individual members; the problems and pressures of war production; the prestigious agreement at Ford; and the temporary tactical success of FAA leaders such as Keys. To these must be added longer term dynamics, particularly effecting established foremen in terms of the erosion of their individual levels of power and control. We have seen how these came to be formed in the labour markets and production methods which emerged through the 1920s and 1930s, with the tacit acceptance of higher management. When that acceptance was replaced by a new system of industrial relations in the late 1930s, managements in general had seemed to abandon the foreman, not merely foregoing his levels authority and discretion, but failing to provide adequate substitution in the form of training and preparation to deal with the new imperatives of a unionised work environment.

When the dust had settled by the early 1950s the foremen had not been restored to their original position of authority but rather a new balance of power and control of shop floor life had emerged. In many ways the arbitrary power and control left in the hands of shop floor supervisors for much of the pre-war period had represented an imbalance - a system of highly rationalised labour processes overlaid with an anachronistic system of personal, arbitrary, confrontational and direct authority wielded by the foreman. Such a system was seen by employers as the solution to implicit problems of a largely unskilled

Conclusions

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and potentially recalcitrant workforce, employed in conditions which did little to foster enthusiasm for the job in hand. The drive system, once installed, delivered the goods in terms of output levels, and indeed was vital in obtaining the increased productivity and speed up which intensified into the 1930s. Unionisation finally produced a realignment however as procedure and agreement forced through the bureaucratisation of many areas of foremen's power.

The rebuilding of foremen's prestige and status in the post-war era was in reality confined to superficial areas such as pay differentials and administrative trappings with a view to reinforcing the divisions in the workforce which unionisation had momentarily seemed to bridge. The resurgence of interest in human relations solutions by the new alliance of Ford and the other major manufacturers, and its recurrent limited success in actual practice, represent only a token, if widespread, attempt to work with the only "solution" readily available to the "foreman problem". The human relations answer, to remould the foreman's outlook and behaviour by the use of psychology, had the perennial added attraction of being promoted as a useful instrument in offsetting the appeal of unionisation generally. In reality the "foremen problem" resolved itself. The foremen of the 1950s were largely a different set of workers to those who had ruled on the shop floor in the 1930s, or if they were not they had had time to grow accustomed to new methods of working. A realignment had finally taken place between the nature of factory work, the type of worker engaged in that work, and the structures of bureaucratically administered and collectively negotiated regulation of many aspects of factory life - discipline,
wages and conditions, grievance procedures, job security and so on. To be sure, informal work methods and regulations persisted, and the foreman continued and continues to play a central role in such activity, but the level of dominance over the experience of factory life exerted by the pre-war foreman has been obviated by the limiting background effects of modern industrial bureaucracy.
Appendix One

Extract from the job description of a Packard foreman as outlined in Brief of the Packard Motor Car Company Before the National Labour Relations Board, Case No.7-R-1884, 1944, pp23-32.

"A foreman must be a good leader and be able to get along with the workers. He must have sound judgement and use good common sense, be level-headed, even tempered and impartial. Conditions are very unusual at the present time and situations arise which are difficult to handle. It requires a lot of common sense to handle grievances of workers today.

The foreman must set a good example, show an interest in the employees, develop team work among his workers, show appreciation for their efforts and maintain uniform discipline standards. He is supposed to lead instead of drive; to avoid being authoritative or belligerent or assuming unwarranted authority; to be cooperative with all other departments and to be willing to call for specialized advice where needed from the various service divisions such as industrial relations, mechanical, plant engineering, time study, metallurgical, material control, etc.

It is his duty to interpret the duties to higher management to the workers with respect to welfare, safety, adjusting grievances, wages, etc. It is the duty of the foreman to develop and maintain morale by placing the right man on the job, adjusting complaints, seeing that workers are given the right classification, by taking a personal interest in the worker, carefully training the workers on the...
job, and encouraging the workers to do their best and to see that workers are promoted and transferred on ability. The foreman acts for the company in the first step of the grievance procedure provided for in the workers UAW-CIO contract.

It is also the duty of the foreman to plan the work in their departments according to the work schedules; to requisition additional help if needed; to transfer workers from one group to another to promote efficiency; to see that production is gotten out on schedule; that the operations and the process are performed according to the procedure established and to suggest improvements in operations and processes; to see that the proper number of people are placed on the job; to use judgement in distributing workers through the department; to see that materials, when completed, are accounted for and moved.

It is the foreman's duty and he is responsible to management to maintain quality and to see that the parts are made in accordance with standard specifications.

It is the duty and responsibility of the foreman to control the costs of the operation by proper training, selection and placement of workers and by maintaining proper working conditions; to see that machines, tools and fixtures are properly used and are maintained in good working order; that the plant is kept clean, and in a safe condition; that scrap is eliminated and that the right amount and type of machines are used; that unnecessary help is avoided.

It is also the duty and responsibility of the foreman to analyse and know the requirements of the job to be assigned to a worker and to advise higher management as to the qualifications required; to introduce the workers to the job; to take responsibility of
instructing the men or delegating this duty to someone else; to insist upon accuracy before speed; to follow up instructions to see that they are carried out.

It is also the duty and responsibility of foremen to see that the workers are properly rated and to recommend changes in rating; to see that the worker gets paid for the time he works and does not get paid for the time he does not work...to recommend promotion of rank and file workers subject to union contract; to maintain and enforce discipline. Foremen have the power and duty to discharge or recommend the discharge of workers for inefficiency, failure to produce or breach of company rules, and to enforce discipline by assessing penalties fixed by the rules and, if no rule covers the offence, to use their discretion in fixing the penalty.

It is also the duty of the foreman to see that his department receives the material and parts from the other departments, to check and report stoppages, to see that proper containers are used between operations, to maintain a steady flow of the parts, to see that proper tools are used and to see that defective tools and equipment are replaced and to report any and all conditions requiring attention promptly to the proper service departments.

It is also the duty of the foreman to see that the worker does good work and his share of the work; that his attendance is regular, that he follows instructions, and that the right employees are recommended for promotion or transfer. In case of chronic absenteeism the worker may be reprimanded by the foreman and if he does not improve the foreman may recommend discharge. He exercises his discretion in these matters.
The recommendations of the foreman and of the general foreman are almost invariably carried out. If not they are informed why it was considered inadvisable to carry into effect the particular recommendation.

The general foreman does not usually overrule a foreman as the foreman runs his own job, but the general foreman might discuss the matter - say the removal of a man from the rolls - and suggest the worker be given another chance.

Foremen are required to initiate and prepare various reports and recommendations...Foremen also record transfer of labour from one group to another; issue passes to employees to go to other parts of the plant; prepare time exemption records to be used as a check against the time clock and to make certain that the workers put in full time and do not have someone other than themselves punch their time cards. Foremen also grant requests for leave of absence on a form prepared for that purpose. Regular forms are issued by the foreman in ordering tools and other materials needed by them. They approve and sign the layout plan of their department as set forth on plans, and also the process routing sheets.

Recommendation for tool or operation changes in the layout of the department and in connection with the operation of the department are made on forms prepared for that purpose...Foremen also make out trouble reports, shortage reports, and progress reports.
# 145 Typical Topics
## For Foreman Training Meetings

Selected (the first 124) by the Department of Manufacture, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and published as part of a survey made in cooperation with 90 separate companies that have had experience with foreman training. These 124 topics have been supplemented by others that are suggested by present-day economic problems.

### Selected Reading

**The Art of Leadership**

**Foreman Training That Works**

**Personal Leadership in Industry**

**Practical Foremanship**

**The Technique of Executive Control**

**Psychology for Executives**
Elliott Dunlap Smith, Harper & Brothers.

### Appendices

1. Analyzing Yourself
2. Development of Personality
3. Effective Leadership
4. Importance of Observation
5. Investigation before Conclusions
6. Decision vs. Snap Judgment
7. Tact and Diplomacy
8. Resourcefulness
9. Originality
10. Inventive Ability
11. Imagination
12. Enthusiasm—Is It Contagious?
13. Adaptability to Conditions
14. Does Ambition Produce Initiative?
15. Openmindedness
16. Willingness to Accept Suggestions
17. Systematic or Haphazard
18. Physical Fitness
19. Mental Alertness
20. Example of Character
21. Forming Habits
22. Utilizing Time
23. The Foreman's Responsibility
24. Analysis of Job
25. Knowing Men
26. Developing Men
27. Developing Interest
28. Training Workers
29. Starting the New Man
30. Getting Teamwork
31. Labor Turnover
32. Safety and Accident Prevention
33. Maintaining Discipline
34. Attendance
35. Orders—Directions—Suggestions
36. Securing and Using Suggestions
37. Coaching an Understudy
38. Service—What Is It?
39. The Working Force
40. The System and the Worker
41. Labor and Production
42. Loyalty to Management and to Men
43. Honesty and Square Dealing
44. The Foreman and Labor
45. The Foreman and Management
46. The Foreman and Industrial Service
47. The Foreman and the Social Order
48. The Foreman and the Law
49. The Foreman and Inspection
50. The Foreman and Stockkeeping
51. The Foreman and the Inventory
52. The Foreman and Costs
53. The Foreman and Waste
54. The Foreman and Production
55. The Foreman as an Instructor
56. The Foreman as a Supervisor
57. The Foreman as a Leader
58. Knowledge of Position and Job
59. Basic Factors in Production
60. Methods of Getting Production
61. Flow of Work
62. Departmental Relationships
63. Loss through Spoiled Work
64. Keeping Equipment in Order
65. Records and Reports
66. Improving Workmanship
67. Receiving and Storing Material
68. Issuing Material
69. Movement of Material
70. Care of Material
71. Fabricating Material
72. Our Labor Policy
73. Employment—Right Man on Right Job
74. Wage Policy
75. Wages and Incentives
76. Non-Wage Incentives
77. Time Study
78. Setting of Rates
79. Rating Employees
80. Promotion
81. Discharge or Transfer—Which?
82. First Aid
83. An Attractive Place to Work
84. Man and Materials
85. Man and Machine
86. Buying—Storing—Producing
87. Management's Responsibilities
88. The Art of Management
89. Organization of the Company
90. Products of the Company
91. Making the Organization Effective
92. General Factory Equipment
93. Working Machinery to Capacity
94. Providing Machinery with Power
95. What Is Purpose of Planning?
96. Manufacturing Costs
97. Selling Costs
98. Industry Yesterday—Today—Tomorrow
99. Industrial World, a System
100. Trends in Organization and Specialization
101. Labor-Saving Machinery
102. How Is Business Financed?
103. Sources of Material
104. What Production Is and Who Produces
105. Factors in Production
106. Production and the H.C.L.
107. What Is Included in Overhead
108. Problems of Distribution
109. Law of Demand and Supply
110. Business Enterprise and Profit
111. Economics of Our Business
112. Competition and Monopoly
113. Price, the Basis of Industry
114. How Our Product Is Marketed
115. Credit and Banking
116. Thrift—Investment—Personal Finance
117. The Source of all Capital—Savings
118. Why Banks Are Indispensable
119. Stocks—Bonds—Brokers
120. Speculation vs. Investment
121. The Ups and Downs of Business
122. Governmental Regulations and Requirements
123. Labor Movements
124. The Foreman's Place in Industry
125. Wages and Profits
126. The Share of Labor
127. How Business Begins
128. The Funds of a Corporation
129. Off the Gold Standard
130. Stabilizing the Dollar
131. War Debts
132. The Tariff
133. Poverty and Prosperity
134. Unemployment Compensation
135. Old Age Pensions
136. Health Insurance
137. Share the Work
138. Standards of Living
139. Mechanization
140. Obsolescence
141. Technological Changes
142. Alternatives to Capitalism
143. NRA
144. Collective Bargaining
145. Can We Have Overproduction?
'Qualities That Win Or Lose', from Towson C.R., The Man Next to the Men, YMCA, 1922, pp. 5-6 :-

"Successful Foremen

Note that three fourths of these relate to the foreman's attitude, and one fourth to personal and technical skill.

Pleasant manner  Has studied men
Leadership  Ability to teach men
Ability to plan work  Ability to develop men
Ability to place men  Technical ability
Ability to cooperate  Prompt at work
Initiative  Good judgement
Pleasing personality  Shares information with men
Approachable  Practical
Good mixer  Firm character
Friendly  Tolerant
Thoughtful of his men  Decisive
Unselfish  Pride in his men
Believes in his men  Progressive
Thrifty  Firm
Keen insight  Executive ability
Warm heart  Encourages initiative
Self-confidence  Mechanical ability
Confidence in others  Tactful in correcting men
Frank and 'above board'  Self control

Appendices  -562-
Gives credit for suggestions
Loyal to men
Eager to learn and teach
Appreciative
Enthusiastic to develop work
Keeps men contented
Gives men a square deal
Understands men and their needs
Ambitious
Heart and soul in work
Pride in company
Discerning
Treats men as "men"

Loyal to superiors
Puts quality first
Pride in work
Foresight
Keeps men interested
Discharges every responsibility
Holds respect of men
Attention to business
Instils men with right spirit
Pride in department
Considerate
Instructs men
Moral fibre...
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