MANAGERS' STRESS AT WORK

Volume One: The Text and Bibliography

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Christmas 1971

In memory of Leslie William Fletcher

1914 - 1967

a craftsman who loved the world

ABSTRACT

A large corporation, 'Profit', took over two electronics firms, Mersey and Midland, in 1961. In 1969 all Mersey and Midland managers were interviewed and completed questionnaires.

The research problem is to describe and explain stress in managerial work. To do this, stress is made an extensive, or general, variable and three similar variables are made to explore the manager's position. They are rank as power and prestige, responsibility as the contents and duration of work, and identity as the evaluations managers invest in their tasks.

The variables are properties in a theory of occupational crises and, though they are largely consistent, the predicted relationships do not hold. So, in conclusion, the study is criticised for its mechanical and unhistorical construction.

The text is a presentation of reasoning, results and allied observations. The supplementary footnotes discuss the relevant literature and further criticise the style and content of the study.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge kindnesses. Many friends have helped me through my apprenticeship.

I embarked on a Ph.D. course designed by Derek Pugh. The work began with a bibliographic essay; continued to a replication and culminated in the research reported here. This course has taken me five years to complete and I think it was worth the extraordinary effort.

Somehow, I was attached to the Industrial Administration Research Unit. Here Professor Derek Pugh supervised my work from 1966 to 1968, sheltering me and teaching me to order facts for thought. Professor David Hickson, Roy Payne, and Kerr Inkson bent their minds to my problems with careful criticism. Professor Gerald Hage visited the Unit and taught sociology courses. I owe to Professor Hage my research design. He fired my imagination with theorising big enough to contain it. I also worked with Dr. John Child whilst he was 'in the Unit'. He practised a scholarly sociology that was a pleasure to learn. He also gave the contact with the firm 'Profit' in which the study was conducted.

In 1968, at Easter, I visited Profit to discuss studying two of its companies. I went away, encouraged, to devise my measures; hoping to be back the following Autumn. The measures took six months to operationalise and a further four months to put into interview schedule and questionnaire form. I returned, then, to 'Mersey' in February 1969 with two interview schedules and four questionnaires for each manager. In May I moved to 'Midland'. The following September my weeks were spent 'chasing' incompletions. Throughout this fieldwork Profit provided a desk, storage space, a telephone, midday meals, travelling and hotel expenses. The firm gave every practical

encouragement and enabled the research.

Meanwhile the Unit had changed. Now Diana Pheysey and I worked as its staff. Diana helped me through crisis after crisis. Immediately after the fieldwork I felt only hostility towards the approach, the methods of analysis and my recent journey of hypocrisy. We talked long of managers as men and all that I had seen done in the name of management. Diana helped me to fully leave this experience and thus return to it. At the same time Ruth Goodkin and Pat Clark were collating the great mass of data for analysis. As I fitfully shaped the next operation they firmly handled it through the necessary stages. I left the Unit with my work in order and in order to write this thesis.

I came to South Wales and employment in research on Medical Sociology. In between the pressures of making a home, starting a new job and finishing an obligation, I failed to make completions in any of them. Then, in November 1970, Dr. Gordon Hilton spotted an error in my programme for computer analysis and all the data had to be re-analysed. It seemed that this thesis would crumble to sheaves in a filing cabinet. But in January 1971 I was encouraged by co-workers, Drs. David Robinson and Peter Parish, to 'get the thing done'. I suppressed the guilt of ignoring my job and worked until a first draft exhausted me. Mrs. Pat Clark was still willingly, and ably, working the computer for me and I discovered a new helper, Lyn Fletcher.

Lyn took the trivia from me; tabulating results and proof reading out many an incomprehensible expression. I learned, too, the joy of creation from the child that was within, and then with, her.

From 1968 Professor Ian Gibson had patiently lent an ear to my thoughts and made this belated submission possible.

I thank you all.

Llangennech, winter 1971.

INTRODUCTION

My thesis is about managers and its theory is necessarily about life. It opens with some glimpses of the recent history of two firms that have been taken over; who had been 'gobbled up by a hire and fire organisation'.[1] The following chapter elucidates stress. This is the phenomenon that the theory is directed to explain. But the theory comes at the end. Before saying what it is, I say what it is made of. And, as the theory holds that stress is made by circumstance, it is preceeded by three ways of explicating that circumstance; namely, rank, responsibility and identity. Finally, the theory is told and 'tested' and the thesis finishes with a criticism of my whole approach.

The criteria for a Ph.D. are, I believe, to make an original contribution to the literature and to know the context of such a contribution. Unfortunately I have not read enough to manage regular referencing. Primarily this is so because I took the opportunity to 'invent' my measures from scratch. Secondarily I was busy finishing another thesis (Fletcher, 1967), teasing a paper out of it (Fletcher, 1969c), practising on a project (Fletcher, 1969b, 1970a), and writing a letter (Fletcher, 1969a). Consequently the footnotes are extensive and contain arguments on the literature. The text is wholly an account of my reasoning and results.

The reasoning is long-winded. In a short breath I hold that to be a manager[2] is to live in stress[3]. The thesis, or argument, is exaggerated. I labour the stress of management because it is there and because the contradictions reveal much about managerial work.

Exaggeration is also a defect of understanding and style. This is a one-sided book. In addition, the book is incomplete. In the second interview and two questionnaires I asked of career, family and social life (see Appendix III). But I bit off more than I could chew and am still masticating.[4]

The results take many words to discuss. They involve illustrating the predetermined measures and then relating them in mathematics.

I have written, in my own words, for everyone I have met. My framework is social scientific and largely sociological. My subject matter is management.[5] I would like managers to find a mirror for themselves. I would like social scientists to criticise my use of social science. The markets, I am told, are different. I hope that the wish to learn more of oneself and one's subject show in my work and that they interest others, whatever their reasons.

CONTENTS

VOLUME ONE

DIAGRAMS

In this thesis diagrams are to portray reasoning: as if making pictures with lines and words. Tables are to present results made up as numbers. All tables can be found serially as Appendix One in Volume Two.

Setting the Scene

Chapter One is intended to convey some of history and consciousness of the two firms in which the study took place with particular emphasis on their harsh, unrelenting qualities.

Chapter One

FRAGMENTS OF A CULTURE

Introduction

This study reports the methods, finding, and discussion of the stresses to which 76 managers were subject. Little of this study is original. It is not new that managers have problems with which they cannot deal and that inoperable responsibilities strain the wit and will of man. The identification of stress is a compound from other researches, and the ways in which relationships are established between stress and features of the job and those of positivistic social science. Further, it is most certainly not novel that there are two necessary themes to this book: I hold that managers as men are good and that as managers they are in a largely, but not wholly, bad situation.

Most of this book is an attempt to penetrate the problems in the situation of managers. What is this situation that is bad and why is it so? Perhaps it is that the 76 managers studied are in big business. That is their job for a corporation: not so much a firm, more a way of life. Business is big and in comparison the manager is small. The manager is in the shadow of his firm, and this shadow belittles the manager. The corporation is big business.

Corporationism is capitalism in the current situation.[1] Capitalism began in the early 19th Century with small men investing small sums and hard work in some machines. It has undergone innumerable mutations since such small beginnings. By corporations we mean many things. Basically we mean by a corporation a massive enterprise employing many men using few basic skills; many machines; with myriads of clerks; tier upon tier of managers; absentee owners and a mass production mentality. All this adds up to an attrition of employees. For when man's work is expressed as a labour cost, the goal of the corporation is to eliminate its labour. The elimination of labour is through machines; is through the diminution of the value of the particular skills of particular men and through the use of more and more means of mechanised control.

Some of the themes of corporationism, then, are reasonably clear. First the supremacy of the 'profit motive' in parallel with a prime concern with mechanisation: making an ever-decreasing concern with the humans that work within the corporate machine. To those who benefit this means an ever growing size of the corporation and simplification of the product.

There are further themes to corporationism. Corporationism and paternalism have very close links though they are not necessarily simultaneously exercised. There is always a possibility that a corporation will begin to control socially a land which it controls as an employer. There are many towns which might be said to belong to the corporations which employ many of their citizens. Corporationism to date, however, does not automatically include its options of paternalism and local feudalism.

Corporationism was fostered by the long war, experienced in chronic and acute forms between 1914 and 1945; which ended entrepreneurship

as the major form of social exploitation of the economy. This war provided the basis for the international development of monopoly. Obviously a war demands a very large production of weapons and uses its war products at a very rapid rate. Obviously, too, a war provides the basis of conscription of labour either directly or indirectly involved in the making of that war and as such diminishes the problems of controlling labour. Further that labour is inspired by a fear, an enemy outside the state, and as such is drawn more closely and less critically together. There are technological developments in the processing of war that mean the cheaper production of many domestic products.

These then, are some of the bases of the development of monopoly. In brief, there are big products that can be processed by big firms with a large basis of immediate consumption and obsolescence and a tacit and tied labour force, which in part is controlled by military discipline of the majority; in part is controlled by the minor beneficial domestic results spinning off from the military technology and in part controlled by the myth of the external enemy made real by the death of a minority.

The end of the entrepreneur is in large measure the end of the man with the idea; the man who invests a small sum in his own intelligence; the man who recruits other men to work with him in the development of his ideas; the man who is in continuous, close and important contact with his work force. What is important in the 1970s is not that this man exists any longer, but that the story of his life continues. Entrepreneurship is finished, but the memory lingers on. The entrepreneurs, now, are either those who take the technical development out from a large firm on the basis of sub-contract or those who work

distributions for large monopolies, or those who do the servicing for the obsolescence of the machineries the large monopoly creates. The entrepreneur as a productive individual can no longer 'get off the ground'.

Thus corporationism is in the simple terms of this study, 'big, bad business'. It is held that corporationism opposes two basic necessities in the life of man (in this case in the life of the managers who man the corporation). These two beliefs are first that a man must have self respect, and, secondly, that a man must have respect for others. It is argued that being a manager, in the two companies studied, necessitates neither of these respects and, in fact, undermines any basis for their development.

Over all this study of managers is to deal with their stress; to relate the stress of their jobs and the stress of holding down the jobs. The account indicates that everyday stress is chronic (chronic stress can be felt as distress and be experienced acutely). The trials of the job are in addition to, and in relation with, the tribulations of the firm. These three themes will be developed. First, the stress of being in particular jobs. Secondly, the developments sustaining of this stress into distress within the holders of these jobs. Thirdly, and most importantly, in this introduction, a relationship between the microcosmic basis of stress in the job and the macrocosmic bases of stress in the firm in the employing organisation in the monopoly.

1.1 Profit takes control

The 76 managers studied comprise the management between managing director and supervisors of the two companies named Mersey and Midlands. Their names indicate the social and geographical location of the factories.

Both companies made the same products. They made telecommunications equipment for purchase and usage by a state corporation. That is, they made a specialised quality product for a captive, expanding, guaranteed market.

Mersey is sited two miles from the city centre in a decaying area. It is approached by a dual carriageway. On either side there are factories making different products. On one side there is a confectionery factory that fills the air with fumes of warm chocolate and on the other side an engineering factory and then a pools firm. The buildings of the Mersey factory are firm, dense and tall. They are old buildings with little space between them. The architecture is functional. The main entrance is one three-storey, red-brick building. There may be little concern with appearances. Mersey is one amongst many firms and factories in the same area. It employs 15,000 people.

Midland is approached by rail. There is a station solely devoted, it seems, to the factory. It lies on the edge of a village five miles from a small city. Beyond the factory there are marshes and fields. Midland has largely small, low and compact buildings, spread out across a large area of land. At the front there are pieces of post-war prestige architecture; a five storey office block; an entrance and managers' section of considerable merit. In the main entrance of this section is a case displaying an elegant pre-war product and a roll call of old, long standing employees with a specimen of the 25-year certificate awarded to these men. Midland is on its own. There are 8,500 employees.

In the early 1960s a growing electronics corporation bought out both Mersey and Midlands. The corporation has been called Profit both to disguise its identity and indicate its interest in the operation

of Mersey and Midland. The account of this history is not taken from any formal writings but from the 'living history'. This account is taken from what managers said during 1969 about their memorable past.

For many, the onset of the 1960s was when the cowboys ambushed old-stagers. Profit was known as a hire and fire organisation. Mersey and Midland had some pride. Mersey was rumoured bankrupt but more likely was over-capitalised and over-committed. Midland had an excellent record but not much growth. It was a subsidiary of a European corporation, though it seems they were almost wholly out of touch.

The truth of the matter probably is that the managements of both companies were engineers playing with their engines. But whilst Mersey had no commercial skill and policy, Midlands had a good commercial policy, probably consisting of 55% profitable contracts, 15% publicity gimmicks and 30% solid loss. Both Mersey and Midlands were clubs with security and nepotism. The managers were largely considered as both gentlemen and engineers. There was obviously, then, the indignity of a mass production corporation seizing two quality firms. There was also, which is more important, considerable apprehension as to what would happen next, for clearly Profit was set on making some changes.

1.2 Profit brings in controls

The owners of Profit had no intention of living at either Mersey or Midland and supervising the work personally. New levels of management were created in both companies and group and central managers were made the indirect bosses that latticed the new direct structure of administrative control. Having complicated the inter-personal aspects of control, Profit clarified its impersonal aspects.

These controls work, and also worked to produce frustrations in Mersey and Midland managers. As this thesis is devoted to the stress of management both the controls and specimen frustrations are given to illuminate each other.

A major area of control occurs in budgeting. And budgeting is an art that Profit has spent considerable time developing. Budgeting means that the manager works in harness with an accountant. In a way, the manager answers to his accountant. Managers complained that their accountant blocked some of their projects and did not report what they told their superiors. The accountant may be ignorant of the work in hand. According to one manager, 'They asked for more information in support of a purchase I wanted to make. I wrote back giving reasons. I got quite a few enquiries like this and I replied every time. They did not question one of them. I do not believe they understood any of it. I sent a report for something we needed but the reasoning was bullsh. It could have been true, but it was double dutch. Not a peep out of them.'

Capital budget committees were established to control expenditure. They control it and delay it. A manager got angry over his prolonged wait for vital equipment and wrote to the managing director stating that the purchase was imperative. He received a note: 'In the light of urgency proceed to purchase. Your application will follow the normal course.'

Budgeting also takes the form of cost reduction programmes. These programmes demand 10% cuts in expenditure or the like: implying more work from less people. Cost reduction programmes are aimed at 'slicing off margins to contribute to greater profitability'. Quality control is considered part of cost production. Quality can be treated

as a cost. For example, there can be an instruction to buy cheaper packaging. Less and less is spent until the boxes regularly break and then the next higher costing package is considered appropriate. This process is good business, but it demoralises those who are doing it and those who are handling the delays and damaging of poor packages. Cost reduction programmes primarily effect those who are not directly engaged in production. For those in production, the main form of budgetary control is that of output targeting. The following account gives an indication of how an output target is set, negotiated upon and not met.

> 'I make an estimate and calculate it in terms of the work in hand, labour, and the available days, then I add a bit to overreach and forestall anybody making an increase. I submit the target. I watch the target being increased by 10-20% and then I attempt to reach it. Afterwards I argue that the achievement was realistic. Because I have failed to achieve the target I say there were hidden costs. I tell them there were less days worked, proving that we have already got more for less labour. But the problem is that we no longer have a backlog of fat from which to draw. All jobs are nearly completed and we are left only with work in hand. What is more, I take responsibility but I have no authority. For example, hiring of labour and setting of rates is done by personnel. This means that pressure to produce forces me to sub-contract outside. This is difficult as they have no idea how to do it. If I send to other sites I have no control of the work. It needs immense detail. There is nothing I can do when someone says my parts have not arrived. I just send more. But I cannot claim it as part of my work and there is immense loss in my profits. What I fear is that penalties are likely to start arriving here for just this. How long can you keep missing your target?'

Budgeting is continuous control. All other problems are deemed as being beyond the need for immediate control. Profit brought in the philosophy of 'management by exception'. They believe that you leave everything that is working and concentrate on crisis. It is unlikely that this is humanly possible and it also makes managers continuously aware of their mistakes; it increases their awareness of that which is wrong and it makes 'fire-fighting' a normal managerial activity.

Managers are expected to spend time only on that which goes wrong. So there is no credit for checking the variance on that which is good as well as on that which is bad.

Working on things that are wrong means that there can be no interest in making structural changes, but rather only interest in working on functional problems. The manager cannot try to redesign his staff. What is more, he must work with the staff that he has. Some managers complain that the jobs in their department have been provided for production 'drop-outs'. Their methods teams are 'foremens' graveyards'. Further, managers say that men incapable of routines in other departments have been put on routine tasks in their own.

> 'They have had an incompetent supervisor for years and all the staff were rejects from everywhere else. That one over there is an Asian, he's a communist, he's got four children and he takes me to the unions over every little thing. This one is a 22 year old clerk. He left one day at four minutes past four, saying he was going and turned up eight days later and just sat at his desk. There's an orders clerk who only knows a bit about the job and messes most of it up. Then he cries and goes to the medical centre. Whenever I tell him off for this he goes to cry again. Worse, though, he partly reports to the supervisor who now sits in the office next door to me. I have to go and knock on his door if I want to use the telephone and he comes to tell me if there is anybody there on the telephone for me. He ignores all these labour relations problems and takes the credit for all the work I do. There's the project leader who works furiously for output but does not supervise. Just look at the rest, they are slow, old staff.'

Management by exception sounds good. It sounds obvious that you should only tackle problems but what it means is that things must appear as a problem before you can deal with them. A department can simply be out of condition for the work hoped for under the regime brought in by Profit. There is a legacy pulling against the new regime. There are large areas of incompetence that are being tackled; exposed by increasing demands for greater competence.

1.3 Profit standardises for rapid change

Profit purposes change, all on a grand scale and most designed to standardise work to facilitate easier measurement and more change. First, each task is examined. Then recordings are made from these examinations and these recordings are used to compile the means of measuring them. Having devised means of supervising tasks, then tasks are done and recordings are made of each task done. Simply put, surveillance doubles the work. You work and watch your own work. In addition, there is the development of manuals for everything; job definitions, terms of reference, vast administrative and clerical computations of all operations.

1.4 Profit makes ever changing change

Profit does not intend to leave anything standing still. They have designed two major forms of organisation for the control of production. The two major forms are divisionalisation and functionalisation. By divisionalisation is meant that each division within production is a self-contained and self-controlling profit centre. There are accountants responsible to management and working with them. By functionalisation it is meant that there are central facilities provided for all managers specifically for accounting. Each one of these forms has its drawbacks. Divisionalisation encourages the development of empires and empires need to be crumbled. Functionalisation encourages forms of irresponsibility ('it's not my patch') and these, too, need to be overcome. As a consequence, Profit makes the organisation pendulate between divisionalisation and functionalisation. Whilst I was there, there was a functionalisation process taking place. As I was leaving divisionalisation was being suggested and thoughts were being put forward. The pendulum is pushed, however, by the

directorate. Managers are to invest as much as they can in either divisionalisation or functionalisation whichever is currently preferred. They are to undermine either their own empires or to underpin the development of their own responsibilities in such a way that they gain the maximum benefit from either divisionalisation or functionalisation - and theoretically the minimum costs. This pendulating power structure is the context of change. The pendulation implies that there is ever changing change; even though it is change from one accepted form to another accepted form and back again.

There are, however, lasting changes. These lasting changes are the forms by which departments are described. There are changes in the languages and labels used for administrative control. Inspection becomes reclassified as quality assurance. Inspection is what is done and quality of assurance is a possible optimal reason why it is done. Personnel becomes reclassified as manpower. Personnel has an impression of a 'nanny', welfare, function whilst manpower packs a punch. The impression of change here is that of image-conscious imagery. Departments are having their names changed in order to change their image and ultimately to change their actions.

Broader still there is the hope that the definitions and practices of Mersey and Midland become to look more like each other. There is a conscious policy of banging the managers' heads together, especially those of the managers from the two factories studied. These meetings serve to break restrictive practices. They expose their particular dodges and resolve a problem in one factory in such a way that it can be transposed to the other. Such visits and meetings are intentional heartsearching sessions. They encourage the manager to account for his own actions and prepare to change them.

The ever-changing changes that Profit has in mind and that Profit pushes into practice, those of divisionalisation and functionalisation; those of changing the labels by which departments are described; and those of transporting the managers from one factory to another to explain to each other what they do, means that the fortune of every man in every job is touched. As an experience this means that nothing is normal, nothing permanent, no man is secure. Security does, of course, not necessarily mean that a job is secure or permanent; rather security means that through changes the man is secured. This is not necessarily the case. Profit's intentions are to shake out as well as to disturb.

1.5 Profit's impact

I have no clear, general picture of the impact of Profit upon Mersey and Midland. The chapter title is of fragments of a culture and culture is fragmentary: fragmenting the understanding of the actions within its domain. Obviously Profit has no simple, single, clear, identifiable impact, but the overall impression is that of two companies dragged into the second half of the twentieth century and still screaming. That is, two companies Americanised; two companies that were very English firms prior to Profit's takeover.

There are, however, some specific points to be mentioned. For both companies there was a new royalty and a vast retinue of central and group staff. As a royalty there were new princes to respect, as a retinue there were highly paid executives that looked to the ordinary working manager rather like spies and busybodies.

Overall there was a new economic awareness. Profit made the debate between profitability and humanity crucial in the decisions

that affected everyone's lives. There were to be no exceptions to this debate and there was a constant criterion - be a success - make a profit.

There were by-products to these two features. First, in terms of royalties and retinues, whiz kids began to have meteoric careers and growing empires. The career patterns of the past, those founded on seniority and merit contrasted with an irregular favouritism in the present. Secondly, the 'spy function' of central and group staff made contact between managers in Mersey and Midland take the form of 'meetings'. There was an actual decline in informal contact and an increase in the formality surrounding contact.

The by-product of a new economic awareness was that Profit expected to pay for everything and pay well. This raised problems for some Mersey and Midland managers. Do you do anything you are not paid to do? Do you do everything that you are paid to do? Profit had brought an explicitly mercenary element to Mersey and Midland and this disturbed many managers.

Profit's influence was, of course, continuing as well as proven. The least explicit of these influences was to bring Mersey and Midland together: bringing together two companies that were previously competitors. Mersey and Midland see themselves and the other company. Mersey and Midland managers were struggling to reconcile themselves to Profit's takeover, and to see it as a personal and organisational success in the light of what was happening to their new neighbours.

1.6 Mersey now, Midland next

So far in this account of the fragments of culture, the culture itself has been implicit rather than explicit. There is now

to be accounted the imagination and reality of ideology. Ideology is not unitary. There are many thoughts involved in thought. Ideology is a patterning of beliefs invested with factuality. Beliefs held as true beliefs are, therefore, facts. The views and opinions that constitute ideology are suffused with emotion to which men adhere and which unite and separate them. There is no single ideology.

The ideologies given here are constructed in composite terms. They are the weaving together of an outsider ofvarious threads given to him by insiders to help him understand what goes on. Perhaps only an outsider could construct these ideologies. Certainly only an outsider could be held answerable for their construction. They may, then, not be altogether true. Then again, they are not concerned with truth. They are concerned with the way in which things are seen to be true. What follows is my account of managers' views. It is my account of the way in which managers relate their past to their present.

First, I outline what the firms think about themselves and each other. This, of course, is not attributing to the firms a mind, but attributing to the managers in each firm, definite areas of definite agreement. Secondly, the significance of these thoughts is discussed and thirdly it is hoped that their prophetic quality is clear, though it is not accounted for in any separate form. By prophetic quality I mean that the ideas provide an understanding of the current and future apprehensiveness of managers in both firms. They indicate what managers think will happen.

The ideologies knit together what the firms were like before Profit's takeover, what Profit has done since the takeover;and hint at what will probably happen by saying what is happening now. But the futuristic content of ideology is small. Futuristic thinking is

not a characteristic of ideology. Ideologies are primarily reflective, they primarily put together the past with the present, making one explicable in terms of the other. We begin with a discussion of Mersey ideology. First by accounting for what Mersey thinks of itself.

Mersey of itself

Mersey was a disgrace, a mammoth mediocrity, a trundling progress. Mersey managers were unintelligent men and gentleman farmers popping in and out to sign letters.

Now, since the takeover, there has been a staggering rate of progress. Mersey is buoyant and bustling, there is regular fire-fighting, but the flames are under control. There is even a hint of a silver lining. There is a new and better tomorrow after nearly a decade of struggle. Men and management are beginning to produce results. Mersey is still hampered by the past, but waging a war on those features that hamper the present. Such features are pockets of poor management, supervisors who have defected to labour, who are dull, corrupt and in league with militant workers. Most seriously, the work force is at best sullen and at worst incorrigibly aggressive.

Midland of Mersey

Their past was a catalogue of failure. They only survived because of an easy order book.

As for the present, Mersey is staggering from bad to mediocre, clearing up the odd anomaly, but not tackling any basic problems. Its management is aggressive, mean-minded, cocksure, error-prone, vicious in internal politics and subservient to the outpost of Profit that is camping in its midst. Mersey makes big noises about small achievements but it is not a patch on Midlands own smooth way of handling radical

change. Merseyside is a horrible place to work in. It is a poor organisation in a dirty city.

Midland of itself

We had excellent working relationships and an unfailingly profitable performance. The management was charitable and efficient. The top had a succession of brilliant engineers who really knew their job. Profit may have been a godsend for Mersey but they were an unnecessary intrusion here.

Now we are making the best of Profit's presence. Some resent it and a few welcome it.

At present Midland is efficient and confident, bedevilled largely by chronic local labour shortages and harassed by increasing militancy of a previously loyal work force. It is harassed by Profit's group and central staff. These men visit the firm, plugging unnecessary procedures as if panaceas and insisting on alien control patterns.

Mersey of Midland

Their past is much ado about nothing. They had a ridiculously easy life. They had a stupid, docile, work force and a paternalistic management which mollycoddled the efficient and the inefficient alike. Really there is something suggesting that the Midland was rotten to the core. This great weakness of theirs was masked by an easy time with employees, clever marketing and a lot of prestige jobs. As for their present, they are proud, bombastic, change-resistant, insular, and self-satisfied. It is a dull place to work in. It is a backwater, a cul-de-sac that is the end of the road. Once a manager gets there, he never gets out.

Observations on these ideologies

Both companies deprecate each other's past and present. That is, neither is seen as being much of firm once, nor much of firm now. It is interesting to observe the way in which the same features are given opposing interpretations. For example, Midland's labour force was described as loyal and happy by its own managers, whilst to Mersey managers this labour force was an antique and inefficient entity.

What is consistent, however, is the way in which Mersey is seen as a laboratory for Profit's experiments to produce the desired management structures and the desired management mentalities. Midland has been visited rather than redesigned. Obviously Mersey managers are angry at this and baying at Midlands. 'Give it to them' is the cry, 'take the heat from us. They're ripe for ravaging and it would shake them up good and proper.'

There are then divisive and unifying functions of the two ideologies. Between Mersey and Midland there is little direct co-operation. There is jealous guarding of secrets, there is little encouragement at promotion between the companies, and in all the two companies are antagonistic enterprises. This probably helps Profit to control both by feeding the antagonism of either. The restructuring of Midlands will be the active advocacy of Mersey.

These ideologies are not claimed either to be generally held or held with vehement intensity. They are rather the working canvas of the managers studied. To put it another way, they are the subsoil rather than the soil of the stresses under consideration. In sum it may be noticed that Midland's past was considered glorious and Mersey's past considered best forgotten. Mersey lives in the present, whilst Midland can be said to live at least with one foot in the past. This

offers the chance of further reflection on ideology. Profit has taken territorial control, but the battle for 'Profitisation' - converting the hearts and minds of the managers - goes on.

1.7 Adhesive amongst the fragments. A rounding upon relevant themes in Mersey's and Midland's cultures

Both firms are tense. Mersey more than Midland. The new bosses are tough. They are tougher than the old. The big criterion is profit maximisation. This criterion withers woollier humane wishes. There is also a glare of surveillance over managers. There is very little trust. Further the top is changing daily. Central and group staff, executives within the company, are promoted; their jobs are changed; their job titles are changed at frequent intervals. The quality of this top executive is changing too. Some are career executives with very sophisticated understandings of functions of social conflict. That is, they believe that conflict amongst junior managers is beneficial to senior management. They discuss in erudite terms the principles of divide and rule. They relate positively to Machiavelli's principles. For example: if there is a dirty job to be done, then promote a man many levels above his previous job to do it. When he has done this job to the disgust of others, sacrifice this man for their pleasure. The job is done, the man is broken and the populace is appeased.

Such executive tactics are likely to make managers insecure. Managers are insecure. There is now no style available for the managers to choose. There was once the style of the foreman, the man with the blocker, the man who commanded respect, the man who had the right of hire and fire, the man who knew the job. Then there was the technocrat, the man who knew all the skills of the machines, and

could advise as an expert on these things. Then there was the pragmatist. The pragmatist says, 'What the hell, do it.' The pragmatist has no wish either for respect on the basis of his skill with the job or his skill with the machines, but Profit as a company does not wish any of these styles. To that extent managers cannot develop a style. For what Profit wants is results and it does not matter whether the manager is a foreman, a technocrat or a pragmatist. What will get results is extroversion, and extroversion is difficult to manage for some and difficult to stomach in others.

Managers fight amongst themselves. There is bickering, back-biting and scapegoating. But more important than fractional disputes and interpersonal quarrels is the fact that no job in management is now held as a right. One executive said, 'If you can survive two years with Profit, then you have no problem.' A secretary of another executive said that she was 'phoned by other secretaries when they were on holiday to see if their bosses would still be there when they got back.

Insecurity is real and made all the more real by the difficulties of developing a style and the irrelevance of this style to the company. But further managers are also the victims of facile and foolish wisdom.[2] One manager quoted with hollow laughter a statement made by a transatlantic management consultant in a journal he had been reading, 'What you have here is a hierarchy that thinks it is a squirearchy. What you really need is a firearchy.' Glimmers of truth are gained by such statements, but little guidance and certainly very little reassurance.

The work force, too, grows more restive and troublesome. A manager said, an older manager, 'Profit pays better but it's not as

happy as it was when we were Midland. Midland managers managed and yet had personal contact. It was a very happy place and yet it was the worst paying telecommunications organisation. People came back and stayed. Now there is ever-increasing pressure and pace. It's happening everywhere. We've got a lot more labour troubles.'

Pressure and pace. Profit has shaken and stirred and neither Mersey nor Midland has settled, but settling is expected. A Mersey executive said, 'There have been some fantastic changes over the last two years. There has been an era of change from loss to being the most profitable group in the company. Most executives are looking for improvements in working conditions soon. And most of their managers are doing the same.' But though it is expected, it is not coming and has not come. The pace has, rather, for ever quickened. Managers no longer expect to be slack, though what they do seek is periodically the going being a little less than flat out.

The pace has flattened out and a number were near exhaustion. This has meant a drop in general efficiency, but this drop in efficiency is concealed by the impersonal controls that the managers have so recently helped to create and install. Machines are doing aspects of their job and they are feeding the machines. Having unloaded their expertise into a memory bank they can now continue to be less efficient, for more of their job is being done by more machines.

Overall Profit has encouraged the past of both Mersey and Midland to be viewed as ignoble and irrelevant. Profit want to know only the next month's figures; at the most, the target for the next accounts year. The future does not stretch out before the management. It is a treadmill that streches the managers out. It may be that the irrelevance of the past and the non existence of the future has not greatly affected some managers, but obviously older managers feel the

loss of their pasts enormously, and younger managers really do wonder where their future lies. Profit has made such considerations unimportant and one tension that will pervade this book is the contrast between what the company wants and what the manager cannot help thinking about.

1.8 A shape for the fragments of culture

This chapter introduces the working situation of the managers studied by loosely organising gossip. There is no true account of the owners' motives nor any mention of clerical and shopfloor perspectives. All that is mentioned of the work force is their growing militancy. The chapter is one of managers talking about management. Their words have been shaped into a slight sociological history of their circumstance.

The managers were also keenly aware of the economics of their situation. Profit expanded in many directions simultaneously throughout the 1960s. By 1969 Mersey and Midland were two companies in one of Profit's five divisions. Both companies had been overshadowed by Profit's growth and then brought into the 'big league' of Profit's interests. A manager could ponder the intangibles of his contribution to Profit's current share price. And Profit did make a profit; never an enormous one, in part, because it bid for, and bought, smaller profitable companies.

The managers were also aware of the nature of the economics of their own production. Mersey and Midland had the same prime market. They were neither competing with anyone else or each other. The problem was simply to produce. The product was pre-sold so the bigger the output the greater the profitability. A peculiarity, however, was the presence of the buyer's inspectorate permanently accommodated on each site. There were too few inspectors; generally their competence

was regarded as low; and they had relatively poor remuneration. In brief, the inspectorate was open to deceit and corruption. This aspect of the company's economics was disliked. But the watchword was output. For Profit had realised the simplicity of Mersey and Midland's situation: keep growing with the market.

This theme of Profit's motives has now been progressively simplified from culture, through ideology to goals.[3] A diagram serves to summarise this simplification (Diagram 1A).

Diagram 1A

A GUESS AT THE GOALS OF MERSEY, MIDLAND AND PROFIT AT THE TIME OF THE TAKEOVERS BY PROFIT THAT SUGGESTS THE SUBJECTS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE OLD CULTURES AND THE NEW OWNERS

Subject	Strength of Interest		
	Profit	Mersey	Midland
Company:			
Growth	High	Medium	Medium
Profits	High	Medium	Medium
Risks	Low	Low	Medium
Product:			
Quantity	High	Medium	Medium
Quality	Low	Medium	High
Innovation	High	Medium	High
Employee:			
Morale	Medium	Medium	High
Loyalty	Low	Medium	High
Development	Low	Medium	High

The broadest impression I wish to convey is that of the changing context of the scenes that follow. Both companies had been through, and were going through, upheavals. Substantially the managers were still adjusting to new owners and the owners were making much to adjust to. Profit were known as a hire and fire organisation; its owners were hard men to work for. There is the tone of this struggle, the harshness of the managers' experiences in dealing with it. And for all that has been observed on the culture, for all the fragments picked up and examined, there is the nobility of the men who manage in Mersey and Midland. And if this nobility is difficult to detect in the section that follows, it is because the combination of culture and job so bloodied those men.

Setting the Sights

Chapter Two is about stress as I chose to look for it. Similarly, I looked for rank as power and prestige; then responsibility as the content of work and identity as loyalties to work. All ideas have been made easier than they are; yet all ideas have proved difficult to use.

Chapter Two

THE STRESS OF A POSITION

Class 5: Volition

Division 1: Individual Volition

4: Antagonism

1: Conditional

704: Difficulty

Introduction

A man takes on a job, and, after some months of 'getting into it', it becomes his own. The man can still see the difference between himself and his job; it is his property and a problem. On appointment he collected a tool kit; a title, a set of instruments with which to operate and a densely populated space in which to act and react. When the man has got into his job, his initial explorations are over. He has settled somewhat and knows the 'trouble spots' (the 'hot potatoes') as well as the fetch of his influence. From this point onward the man may be aware mainly of the troubles he has inherited. And it is these inevitable, private troubles that I have called stress.

Stresses and strains are generally regarded as part of life. Each man is subject to the characteristic pressures of his job; his

family, his town and his country. Life, we might say, makes demands on us. There are practical demands for skill, time and effort. There are emotional demands of love, loyalty and service. It is, however, a painstaking task to be more precise about these demands, their pulls and pushes and consequential stress.

The seed of stress is the sociological paradox that there is a person in a position. The person is bigger than position and yet belittled when he occupies it. The person is total and the position is partial, yet their powers can be reversed. The person is progressing through life and a position is a constraint - it is a station in life at which the person has alighted. The person is alive and the position is dead. The seed of stress comes in the 'bolting down'[1] of the person in a position.

There is pushing and pulling between positions which the men within positions make and experience. The man enables himself both to be subject to stress and to feel it. For the man is still a man within a position and bringing his faculties to bear upon its events.

In this chapter I am trying to get at something worth explaining. I put together a little of what man brings to work with the act of doing something whilst in the position of manager. Types of stress are constructed that are synthesised by the meeting of the man's senses and what he is to do. Stress is imputed in this peculiar way. It is said to be present when a manager notes conflicts and ambiguities made for him by others, and made for them by him. When these types have been discussed and related, there is a short note on what is not encompassed.

2.1 Stress as conflict and ambiguity

Following Kahn and his colleagues (1964), stress is a compound

of the conflict and ambiguity sent to, and from, a person in a position. They are among the products of the relationship between a person, his job and other people in other jobs with whom he works. Work is both a personal and shared experience. Conflict and ambiguity are individuating and isolating.

Kahn et al. (1964:19)[2] stipulated that conflict occurs with 'different prescriptions and proscriptions when compliance with one makes more difficult compliance with the other'. Operationally I have taken this to mean that the extent of conflict is the degree to which prescriptions and proscriptions sent to, or held by, a person in a position demand incompatible responses to how or what should be done and when to do it. Conflict is over, or about, action: being felt before, during or after each act a person makes. Ambiguity is the sensation contingent on inadequate expectations; it is the degree to which means-ends knowledge isinadequate for job performance. Ambiguity pervades an action, as if working in the dark. Whilst to be in conflict over an action is to be aware of sanctions, ambiguity is sensed indirectly. Ambiguity means that sanctions might be applied as the action could be either right or wrong. If conflict is a confrontation with concrete, ambiguity is a confine of candyfloss. Conflict carries the person forward to where he does not want to be. Ambiguity traps the person where he is, immobilising him when action is expected.

At this stage it is a digression to say that conflict and ambiguity have their opposites in consensus and clarity. But the experience of work is the simultaneity of these four feelings over a number of actions. The latter two sensations are the roots of the round peg in a round hole: being in agreement with what you do and knowing how you are expected to do it. Stress is the accumulative immediate

effect of conflicts and ambiguities. Compatibility is the concurrent effect of consensus and clarity. This tributary joins the main stream when I have related the role context of stress and accounted for its measurement.

2.2 The role context

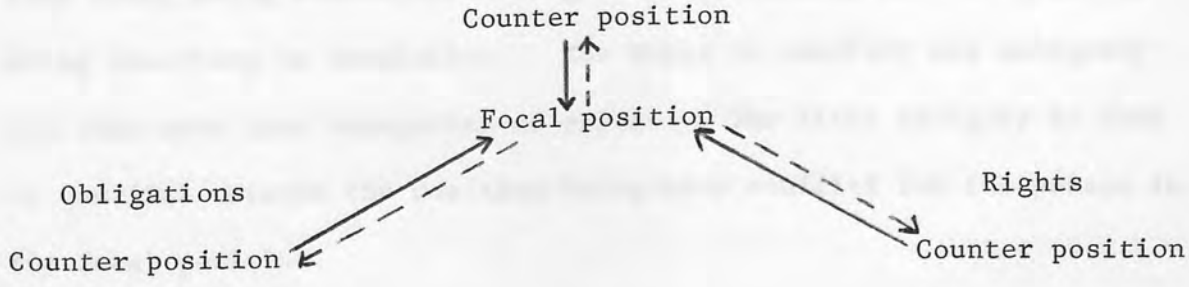
Conflict and ambiguity have been put in the context of role and treated as role terms.

Role definitions usually hinge on the description of communication as expectations. Expectations are a shorthand for the geometry of social control. They describe the channelling of power and influence by being a neutral link term between form and content; between who expects and what is expected.

A constellation can be drawn for each person putting him at the centre of his universe - the focal point. Other people with whom he reciprocates expectations are his counter positions. A focal position is held to be subject to pressure; to incur obligations from counter positions. A focal position is also deemed to contain forces, to have rights as well as duties - to have the right to a number of actions and the right to oblige others to act. Diagram 2A illustrates this analytical device.

Diagram 2A

A ROLE PICTURE FOR A PERSON AND THREE PEOPLE WITH WHOM HE WORKS



A role picture depends upon the social space in which the person is seen. All social spaces have structures. Democratic social spaces give star-shaped role patterns. Authoritarian social spaces give hierarchical patterns. Work is hierarchically organised. Managers have a number of people stretching above them, a few at the same level and a great number stretching out below. Each one of these people can be a source of stress for a focal position. An exhaustive enquiry would involve questioning about each, some and all these positions, ranging from the specific to the general generation of stress. I chose to restrict myself to two sources, a specific one above the person - the boss with rights over the person - and a general sweeping 'the people with whom you work' - the people with duties different from the person. Both sources, the individual boss and the generalised group, are theoretically important. Nevertheless, such a restriction cannot be a refinement, it is an economy that permits more elaborate measures of the types of stress. The questions were put on the fourth, and final questionnaire which the managers completed.

2.3 Stress as a syndrome[4]

In this account stress unfolds. A device is used to give the unfolding a logic. The device is called a unit of action. By this it is meant that an action has been cut up into stages and each stage has been related to a type of conflict or ambiguity. In other words, expectations are enlivened. A unit of action is assembled from an idea about doing something, through its expression, then to actually doing something to completion. The types of conflict and ambiguity are thus made into categories of stress. The first category is that of conflict outside the position being made conflict for the person in the focal position.

(i) Intra-sender conflict and inter-senders' conflict

Does the other person make sense in himself? Does he expect one thing then another? Are you expected to travel in two directions at the same time over the same problem? Each person around you can contradict himself. He is probably passing on contradictions he is subjected to, but he is passing them on to you. His conflicts become your conflicts; his headaches are your dilemmas. Table 2.1 gives four questions and answers when the other person is the immediate boss. It also gives the number values found in this research. The range of responses indicates the lowest and highest scores recorded. The mean is the average score and taken together with the standard deviation gives an impression of the spread of scores.[5]

I must ask you to refer to Volume Two whenever tables are mentioned and hope that this inconvenience soon becomes an acceptable habit.

Questions 1 and 2 askthe person to role-play (to think how someone else would feel in his shoes) and generalise. The other two questions are more personal and they ask for the usual experience over a month - a finite period of time. Questions 1-3 are of a general nature with Question 1 asking the opposite, asking about consistency in orders.[6] This incompatibility can be between the quality of finish and the number of finished products; between the amount of thought and planning and the execution of a project; between the number of jobs and the number of jobs done well. The question assumes that there is only so much time in which to do things and some choice over exactly how it is spent. Conflict is usually a term reserved for contradictions, where mutual antagonisms produce a new state of affairs. I have weakened the concept by including inconsistent

expectations as well as those the person finds incompatible. This extension of the concept's meaning is repeated in the format for inter-senders' conflict. (Table 2.2)

When we compare the different expectations others have of us, it is sometimes difficult to accept that they communicate with each other at all. There can be, it seems, as many images as there are people to imagine. These people stand in various relationships to one's position, some close and some barely in contact. The first four questions try to vary the perspectives from colleagues (1) to others (2 and 4) to atmosphere (3). The second group of four questions restrict others to regular contacts. The background reasoning here is that a person in a position probably has direct experience of three levels, his boss; his peers and his subordinates. The construction of the question (and the fact that questions asked directly about the boss in the same questionnaire) means that the managers either generalised to those with whom they worked or restricted themselves to either peers or subordinates.

The questions mix together inconsistency (4, 5 and 7) and contradiction (2, 6 and 8) with duties expressed as responsibilities (1, 5 and 6) and more specific problems of image (2), time (3 and 7) and style (8). This mixture of levels of generality and specification of others with whom a person works is some indication of the breadth of conflict involved.

Intra-sender and inter-senders' conflict are relatively limited types of stress. The unit of action begins with some objective, some impression of what is involved in a person's job - a reference to what is to be done. Intra-sender and inter-senders' conflict refer to internal consistency and consistency with other communications on the same or similar issues. Inconsistency is not necessarily conflict,

there may be room to manoeuvre, bargain or exploit variations in instructions and wishes. It is the work situation that makes inconsistency stressful - the object of communication at work is seldom to initiate manoeuvering, bargaining or exploitation by the person.

In the beginning a communication need not make sense in itself or in terms of other communications from other people. This problem and its stress may have to be resolved before a communication is translated into action. For the next problem is that of principle, the moral elements of duties.

(ii) Sender and senders' illegitimacy

Duty has a moral tone and each duty involves a person in a moral issue. This is a duality of action; the obligation to act by virtue of position and the right to act virtuously. Each potential action can trigger this dilemma, though in practice habit can make any tension tolerable. Nevertheless, there is a matter of choice, to fire a person, or to run the same risk oneself. There is the sharpening of the contrast between the person and the position and there is the nagging centrality of self. Each moral dilemma pulls back the position from the person: the person can choose to expose himself as a person.

Illegitimacy means that the person experiences expectations that go against his own views, standards, values or faith. Simply put, the person sees some of the things he is expected to do as wrong. He has a number of choices from suppression of personal difference to clamorous opposition. Illegitimacy of expectations is a matter of awareness - the person is aware that he is expected to get ready for an action he does not wish to commit. The first phase of illegitimacy is between a person's wishes and other people's wishes. The second phase is between a person's wishes and his actions in the near future.

The third phase is between his wishes and actions. The concept of illegitimacy telescopes these phases; it involves demeanour and stance - the difficulties that a person finds if he tries to be moral. Table 2.3 has the questions asked about illegitimate expectations from the boss.

The word 'values' has moral-ethical connotations whilst the word 'standards' has moral-practical connotations. In effect, this means that values usually imply relationships and standards apply to practices. Both terms refer to a body of beliefs rather than an isolated belief. Consequently the questions contain general statements using the plural. There are general questions dealing with personal values - assumed to refer to interpersonal situations - involving suppression (2), variation (3) and permitted opposition (4). The questions on standards apply to the person's administration of his own work (4 and 5) and that of his subordinates (6). The standards questions also involve suppression (4 and 6) and modification (5).

Three questions ask about the person's position (4, 2 and 5) and three questions about his dealings with subordinates (1, 3 and 6). Thus, operationally, illegitimacy is the contravention of many codes in many ways. Codes that refer to people or performance; the position or its subordinate positions; and contraventions that vary from the outlawing of morals to an expectation of bending or breaking faith from time to time. The questions also contain one statement of the opposite; the institutionalisation of moral opposition when the expectation involves getting subordinates to do something with which they do not agree (1). A smilarly interwoven reasoning occurs in the questions for senders' illegitimacy given in Table 2.4.

Question 2 and 5 ask of legitimacy of compatibility and respect for values and standards. Questions 6 and 7 are very specific on

discipline and palliative action - they, too, are positively expressed. Suppression is the theme of the other three questions; generally stated (1) put in terms of appropriateness (4) or as an interpretation of the firm's morals (3).

It is axiomatic (i.e. a matter of scientific faith) that morals are part of action. This axiom has placed suppression of morals in the same context as opposition to a moral. Throughout, the terms for body of beliefs used have been values about people and standards about performance with things. The implications are considerable. Values are directly applied and involve a simple, if difficult, yes or no. Standards are malleable. Each person can measure what should be done and others can simply ask for a little less. Greater emphasis and detail has been given to standards. That is, in part, an acceptance that even though all action has a moral component, work does not involve all morality. A further part is due to the reasoning that standards are a part of morality; that part which is peculiar to the work context. Questions of the hardness and softness of discipline indicate the way in which people-values are expressed as performance-standards at work. Nevertheless, there is,in a work context, a consideration of that which is practical as well as matters of principle. Standards of discipline and quality are equally within the area of legitimacy. I have argued that matters of value and standard are brought into play before matters of practice.

If we can now assume that a communication is consistent in itself and not in contravention of the person's values and standards we can consider its practicality - the extent to which it makes sense as an intended action.

(iii) Sender and senders impracticality

Practicality is a pervasive, persuasive necessity of intended action. Legitimacy refers to a person's moral sense. Practicality refers to his common sense. Legitimacy applies to the consequences of action. Practicality applies to the completion of action. For whilst a person may agree with the ends he may disagree with the means.[7] In many instances he has been here before, people have tried to do the same sort of thing. Practicality[8] is stored in past experience. We remember how things worked out last time, wonder if things have changed enough to make a difference and hazard a guess at the odds. Each intended action that is not entirely programmed runs a risk, the risk of being the wrong way to do the right job. The risk of banging down corners and botching up the finish - imprecise measurement and inadequate preparation. Practicality has become, in pragmatism, an end in itself. Pragmatism is used as a means of engineering agreement, of pretending that we are all past issues of legitimacy or that there are no such issues. Practicality as a personal persuasion is only really effective if the intended action has passed through the prism of legitimacy. Having agreed why a thing is to be done there can be full, open discussion on the best way to achieve it. This means that practicality can be distilled, rendered potent by reflection on the possibility of a perfect programme - a programme for all eventualities and full of the appropriate warning signals, checks and balances. The distillation is a pipe dream but it indicates the power of practicality in our thinking. Legitimacy is a poor approximation to personality, self and soul. Practicality approximates to the active principle of personality, to skill, knowledge and wisdom. This arbitrary separation of belief and reason is reflected in the impressionistic nature of the

questions. Table 2.5 gives the six questions on impracticality from the single sender - the boss more or less out of touch with the person's practices.

The questions vary in their directness. Questions 3 and 6 deal with realisation, the extent of the bosses' awareness of the person's tasks and job. There is an assumption here that impracticality does not necessarily lead to interpersonal confrontation and that an alternative consequence can be an experience of distancing - the creation and maintenance of weak contact with little detailed content. The day to day practical problems can be left out of conversation. As a result orders - 'directives' - can be unreal (3) and even beyond the person's practical experience (6). The direct questions concern legitimate but impractical action (1 and 4) and the possibility of conflict between practices - of the person feeling opposition to the expected methods (5). These two elements - distance and difficult demand - make impracticality; the former is implicit and the latter explicit. Neither would be present were the bosses' wishes highly practical (2). The two elements or themes and their questions are repeated almost word for word in Senders' Impracticality (see Table 2.6).

Three questions call for comment. First, whilst a person primarily works <u>for</u> a boss he works <u>with</u> colleagues. Impracticality can be experienced in shared effort; a person can join an impractical enterprise (5). Encouragement is an interpersonal energy. It can involve someone telling you how he does his job; or showing you how he works; or showing you what he would do and telling you how he would do it. If the exchange is verbal, practical problems can be fudged. The person is drawing on his experience and relating successful routines and programmes; they work in his job with his circumstances. They

need not suit your position, they are impractical because no one in your department would know where to start. Impracticality can occur with the best will in the world and particularly when the counter position and the focal position are in two different worlds of work (6). Perhaps the other cliche used is too general for any category (4). Once I had thought of it, I could not leave it out. The working of miracles, and the wild effort to achieve just one little one, is super-practicality. A miracle takes thought without words; imperceptible movement; complete concentration on the humane matter in hand and limitless personal power. The limitation of the practical person is his inability to think beyond what he does and the way he does it. For such a person a miracle is illegitimate, beyond his powers of reasoning. To be expected to work one or two is unreasonable. Such an expectation is a slight on his practical prowess, an insult to a practical man. The question suggests how far our practicability can be outraged and how general a feeling this can be. The discussion on practicality began by noting a coolness, a method and rationale in intended action. Expectations which conflict with a person's practical views, however, can be as emotionally laden as conflicts over motive.

The discussion of stressful expectations has so far dealt with what is to be done and how to do it. The action is still on the drawing board. Only the allocation of resources completes action. There are institutional resources - money and machines - and personal resources - the amount of effort that the person puts on a piece of action. Personal effort and conflict over effort are more complicated than illegitimacy and impracticality. The notions of over-load serve to analytically tie them together.

(iv) Sender and senders' overload

A load is the weight that a position, and people in other positions, obliges a person to carry; the weight of responsibility laid on him. Co-operation is the taking of loads from each other. Competition shores up the loads of each position by the jealous guarding of the amount that each person has to carry. Work involves competition and co-operation and when both these processes are involved, there is bargaining. The person makes a bargain with those who hire him to fill and animate a position - so much time, worry and work for so much power, money and prestige. The bargain made between an institution and a person is more easily broken by the institution. In return for keeping its bargain over rewards', the institution keeps the rules by which a bargain is judged - though a fearless person can try demanding more reward at an auspicious moment. In a word, a heavier load can be put on a person than he bargained for and, though he clearly knows this, there is little he can do about it. A person can have too much to do. His personal resources are over-taxed by positional rights and duties.

This reasoning can lead to a concern with the person's capacity (his strengths and weaknesses), and his apportionment of time and his sense of equity or what is a 'fair day's work'. The questions separate out these concerns. Table 2.7 gives the questions for sender overload.

Three sub-categories have been created within overload. 'A sense of equity' is the central or core category. One side of this occupational sense reflects the written and customary 'punishments and rewards' of the job - its responsibilities (1 and 4) and its description (3).[10]

The sense of equity does not involve meticulous calculation.[11] Rather a person feels either his pay is roughly appropriate, or he is being robbed in comparison with others, or that he is 'getting money for old rope'. The rough and ready nature of this rule of thumb in no way deters the person from making the calculation[12] from detailed responsibility through collated description to aggregated rewards. The calculation may produce the feeling of insecurity that occurs when a person realises that he is losing power or not able to gain power that he needs to fulfil obligations. I shall call this phenomenon underload. It is stressful not only because a person is unable to do what he is supposed to do, but also because it could be an omen - an indication of the whittling away of the job and ultimately his tenure.

Time as a feature of work-life and role stress has distinct importance in overload. There was slight mention of time in intra-sender conflict, little appearance in illegitimacy and some significance in impracticality. Overload has been considered the product of a further sense - after morality and practicality comes equity. A person thinks in terms of working so hard and so long at work. Effort can be constrained by duration or expressed by duration, so much can be done in a working day and the day can be extended into the night. The feeling of being forced to put more effort in than is possible in the time is the feeling of being expected to work excessively hard, to be run off your feet and dead at the end of the day.

Question 7 put the point explicitly whilst Question 6 gives a consequence of undue time pressure; the skimping of important things implies that less important things can get lost entirely. Question 5 sums the situation up in another cliche on miracles, the whole resources of the day are half the necessary resources. Question 8 is the second

on underload, this time on under employment - on having time on your hands. This rare phenomenon could have the same fears of a veiled threat and frustration as that of being prevented from using all the available positional power.

The sense of work as an allocation of one's total life time is explicitly mentioned in the final category's two questions. A person can define what is left of the day as that with which he does what he wants (10) and as that in which he rests or converts into play (9). This assumes a delineation, some working distinctions between work and the rest of the time (allocated or simply available).

Three assumptions,then, underpin this construction of overload, a fair job[13] (in terms of an experiential equation between demands and rewards) a fair amount of work in the working day and a fair end to the working day. The same assumptions provide the bases for the questions on Senders' Overload given in Table 2.8.

The unit of action needs some room for action. The acting person needs some institutional resources; positional power, allowance for the effort required (especially in terms of effort required for other actions) and some periods of tranquility in and out of work. Overload is the pushing beyond these requirements by demands, needing to assume more power, having more tasks and working later than the person had bargained for.

At first, the categories of conflict to which the person is subjected looked like simple matters of what is to be done, how and when. Each of these categories involve 'senses'. Senses are complicated. Legitimacy included morals about life and work, people and things, clashes between the person and policy. Practicality was more tenuous, a person's ways of doing things range from flimsy notions through programmes to sacred ritual. Legitimacy and practicality clear an intended action.

Scheduling,priority-marking and resource allocation enables completion. If each action is not given due weight, its activist is liable for overweight. Overload has been woven from a range of personal resources, from positional strength to the right to periods of peace. But the unit of action has only been so far traced through the treacherous complex of conflict. There is still the doldrums - the stultifying feeling of ambiguity.

(v) Sender and senders' ambiguity[14]

The senses that occasioned conflicts were tied to the context and consequences of an intended action. There is a further common sense, an intelligence which prefers intelligibility. The content of an action can be ambiguous, it can defy comprehension. It can be so sparse and muddled as to excite a person's intelligence without any hope of satisfaction. Chronic dissatisfaction has two meanings in this situation. First, a person can feel that if he knew more of what was going on he may well oppose it on moral and practical grounds. Secondly, he needs to know clearly what is wanted, how and when, in order to do it. Clarity on these matters shows the need for tact and persuasion or the deviousness of a short-cut.

Ambiguity is hard to pin down. It is obviously difficult to concretise that which should be absent for things to be concrete. Arbitrarily, then, I have separated out quantity from quality. Sender Ambiguity includes categories of insufficiency and opacity. (see Table 2.9).

Ambiguity is felt as a different perspective on the same problem. The questions indicate the range of problems and the probable feelings. They travel from specific issues of definition of authority

(4 and 5) to the most general sensing of ambiguity in the boss (7). Many assumptions of what a person needs to know in a job are intermeshed. Specifically, he needs tip-offs, indications of when something big is going to come up (1). Then he needs information on how the job is to be done (6) and on supportive situational matters, or how this action fits in with other actions (3) and some reminder of his sphere of operations (4 and 5). He needs to know what his job includes and excludes (2). With sufficient and sufficiently clear expectations the person knows his territory and any trial actions he is to attempt. Without enough and explicit expectations some aspect, at least, of his action is stuck. If he carries on regardless he faces the unnerving possibility of completing the wrong job and of finding himself completely in someone else's territory. Expected actions are usually unfolding, exploratory, sensitive processes. They imply continuous information as the action shapes continuity. Even if actions were hit and run escapades, the person would need to know precisely where to hit and where to run. Conflicts arise from clashes of interests. Ambiguity produces ambivalence; an ambivalence about the ambivalent person and his ambiguous expectations and about oneself and one's reactions to ambiguous expectations. There is a sense of being cheated, of one's intelligence being slighted, of being 'starved of information' (3). This personal hunger is strangely matched with another person's surfeit and gluttony. The other person has what you need; he has so much yet he does not know what he wants (7). Conflict reinforces personal identity with a sense of rightness, even righteousness. Ambiguity confounds personal identity with the resentments of ambivalence. When ambiguity is sensed generally it is likely that its contingent resentment is dissipated. Consequently

one component of ambiguity is awkward to specify in the context of work colleagues. Thus five of the questions in Table 2.10 for Senders' Ambiguity are positively expressed (4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).

Some further assumptions are at work in these questions. Expectations have some things in common with do-it-yourself kits, both are likely to include, in separate ways, plans and instructions. Plans put you in the picture by showing you where each part goes, instructions tell you how to get it in. Plans need to be clear (7) and instructions need to be fully provided (2). Plans include intentions - intentions are plans in the making, wishes currently under construction. To 'take the wishes of others into account' is to chart a plan of plans; to plot a course that uses, or avoids, others' wishes. Without a knowledge of these intentions a decision can be bogged down - stuck with too many unknown factors to be effective (4). With sufficient and sufficiently clear plans, instructions, knowledge of intentions, it is possible to work well with others at work. The more insufficient and opaque expectations become the more the person is on his own; because of others and despite their sustained attempts to direct him.

2.4 Action and stress as conflicting syndromes: a recapitulation

Action has been reduced to an element: a unit of action. This unit has been treated as having stages - with the person in the position finding the next stage barred by his feelings on the present stage. Action begins with a message.[15] The message is unravelled by the person and subjected to his personal chemistry. Does it make sense in itself? Is it moral, practical and possible within the resources available? Are there pieces of information missing and muddy clues as to the action's part with other actions? The asking of these questions, their personal

necessity, and ramifications, depend on senses. Such senses detect nonsense and contradictions in others; recognise pressure to suppress codes about personal relationships or opposition to standards of quality and performance, struggle with distancing and difficulty in the translation of idea through task to accomplishment. In all, an awareness of how much and how long things take, an intelligence that knows what it needs to know.

These are the senses that a person brings to a position. He uses them to make it his position. He feels them coming into play each time an action is intended and intentionally depends upon him. The connections are made between expected action and the refining senses. Habit may dilute the experience of connection(the heightening of the experience is relegated to memory).

The continuous interplay between the senses and intended action doubly reassure the person that he is not an automaton, he is a person because he reacts and his reactions change the action. Nevertheless, these two syndromes are primarily reactive - they spring from the expectations of others. There is the other side of action and its stress. There is the action that the person initiates for others and the stress this makes for himself,in the stress he makes for others.

2.5 Stress from the position to others

(i) Contra-sender and contra-senders' conflict

There is a double-edged stress in getting people to do things that cause them conflict. Morally, it can be against a person's values to manipulate others and manipulate them into a painful situation. Practically, this manipulation can prove difficult and run the risk of retaliation. Positional power and interpersonal persuasion can authorise desires that create dilemmas for others. Nevertheless, these aids

ameliorate the situation once it has begun. It is the first move that is arduous and problem-fraught.

The conflicts that a person creates in others are as extensive as those they create for him. A position does more than hold a person whilst action demands subject him to more or less stress. A position's duties include the creation of one's stress by direct conflict with others. The simple reflection of received conflicts is stressful. The more complicated refraction of received conflicts is stressful. The generation of conflicts is stressful. 'Holding the fort' when in conflict over reflected, refracted and generated conflicts is stressful.

A more exhaustive analysis than this would devote as much measurement to contra-sender and contra-senders' conflict as was spent on the conflicts these senders create in the focal position. As it is, each questions is phrased to refer to a previously defined category and sub-category of conflict. Table 2.11 gives the questions on causing the boss conflict and Table 2.12 the questions for causing conflict in others.

(ii) Focal ambiguity

Whilst received conflicts and ambiguities ask questions of complaint and disapproval, those the person transmits and creates involve questions of self-reproach and the disapproval of others. The questions have been 'toned down' and largely positively expressed to facilitate their answers. Nevertheless, there is a feeling that either one is ambiguous or simply clear and sufficient.

2.6 Stress: a review

It is an obvious feature of questions on stress categories

that they can make the position sound hopeless and be all the more stressful to answer. All the axioms on which the categories are based spread deeply into the 'bolting-down' of a person in a job and the ways in which the person persists in breaking out of his position. An expectation was said to be a unit of communication which more or less initiated, directed and terminated an action. The unit of action has both stages and criteria. The criteria refer to these stages. They are applied to the stage and in simple terms enable the person to move through his positional demands. Each obligation is met and matched by senses of morality, practicality and equity; met and monitored by intelligence.[16] The all powerful question is 'does it make sense?'.

The question attributes stress to the points of strain between the asking person and the answering context. Stress is thus an abstract collective term for the feelings of strain that occur between a person's four senses and expectations. Action and the strain of action are unequal and opposite. Stress is the consequence of their opposition. The action can be created for or by the person. Focal conflict and ambiguity are as likely as counter conflict and ambiguity. Stress is real if one accepts that the translation of ideas into action is not automatic but problematic. People make the ideas in much the same way as they make the problems.

Stress, in this piece of work, is artificial to the extent that the categories are matters of convenience. The syndromes, and their stages, are dependent upon the separation of means and ends. Ends judge the appropriateness of behaviour. Means made the achievement and attest their adequacy. The implicit circularity of means and ends is rendered linear in a work context. Work is goal-directed and action-redirected. The categories of stress are the bench-marks

of redirection. Work is completed because of, in spite of, stress. An action finishes having defined, and been redefined by, conflicts and ambiguities. Once the anticipated action is clear in the other person's mind (clear of intra-sender and inter-senders' conflict) it runs the gauntlet of purpose. If the action is judged legitimate its plans are scrutinised for efficacy and efficiency - will it achieve the purpose and has it a hope of doing so with the available institutional and personal resources? Finally, the idea, and by now ensuing action is enriched and shot through with the intellectual criteria of sufficiency and clarity. There are 'knowledge resources' for, and in, action. Each of the senses a person uses to make sense of his job may house an ideal. Their part, however, in the stress syndrome is because they are real - as an idea threatens the person so he threatens the idea with inaction. The role framework of stress is given in Diagram 2.B.

The role picture was the basis of settling for one single sender, in the form of the boss, and a generalised multiple sender in 'the people with whom you work regularly'. The boss has a different kind of power and 'colleagues' have different kinds of tasks. The person is locked into place by the necessity to establish his own work and exercised by the necessity to work with others. An analytical device was used to bridge the two necessities of personal meaning and collective activity. The unit of action is both a model for a unit of communication and a model for the person's experience of conflicts and ambiguities. Work is ideas in action, purposes, reasons, objectives, plans, detailed plans, practical tips, and the tools and materials. Each is arguably a stage - as the action unfolds, so does the reaction. A person cannot help being involved in his job nor avoid having to do

Diagram 2.B.

THE ROLE CONTEXT OF STRESS: THE FORMS AND CONTENTS OF CONFLICTS AND AMBIGUITIES

Role-Set Characteristics		CONFLICT					AMBIGUITY	
		Obligations				Rights	Obligations	Rights
		Consistency	Legitimacy	Practicality: Effectiveness	Practicality: Efficiency			
Single Role-Set	Single Sender	Intra-Sender Conflict	Sender Illegitimacy	Sender Impracticality	Sender Overload	Contra-Sender Conflict	Sender Ambiguity	Focal Ambiguity
	Multiple Senders	Inter-Sender Conflict	Senders' Illegitimacy	Senders' Impracticality	Senders' Overload	Contra-Senders' Conflict	Senders' Ambiguity	Focal-Senders' Ambiguity

his job with others. Nor does a person often attempt to avoid involvement with his job and the call of 'all shoulders to the wheel'. A person can feel really at home in his job and at one with his work-mates. Points of strain produce stress whilst points of compatibility produce satisfaction. Earlier I observed that conflict and ambiguity are in sharp contrast to consensus and clarity, that stress and satisfaction are simultaneously felt about a job by a job holder. It is now appropriate to account for job compatibility.

2.7 Role compatibility

The experience of stress is not necessarily the basis of dissatisfaction nor is the experience of compatibility the basis of satisfaction. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are general feelings about the work that one does and stress and compatibility are tied to the senses that one brings to work and the way in which one is expected to work. Some managers felt that the stress questions were 'biased'; they felt that they missed some of the points of expectations and actions. Comments appended to the questionnaire included:

> 'Questions seemed a little negative. Little emphasis being placed upon the more pleasant experiences - jobs well performed by subordinates, by oneself, or by one's boss.'
>
> 'The trend of questioning seems to suggest a Victorian or Dickensian set up. Modern management has developed considerably since then and perhaps more particularly over the last decade. In present-day competition industrial management must be efficient or perish.'
>
> 'The questions tend to place one either in agreement or conflict with one's boss or colleagues whereas, in fact, there can be close harmony punctuated by differences of opinion from time to time - these differences of opinion are often of considerable benefit at all levels if dealt with in the right spirit.'
>
> 'At senior levels "your boss" and yourself have a common image and share problems.'

Compatibility, then, can be between images, a norm broken by functional conflict and the product of efficient, competent work. Turning to use the results, it is possible to call scores below average compatibility and those above average stress. The range of responses was almost as broad as the maximum permitted. But in terms of the original design, these managers experience low, medium, or high stress as measured by the instruments. Obviously to call a consistent score of 'never' to questions of conflict and ambiguity 'low stress' is to mislabel the answers. So both the range of responses and the critical comments on the questions indicate that compatibility could, and should, be considered along with categories of stress. This was done by removing the positive questions from each of the categories and making them into a general compatibility scale for the single sender-boss and the multiple senders' colleagues. Table 2.15 and 2.16 contain the question.

These ad hoc instruments mean that the original categories contain less questions and lose the quality of containing questions that consider 'both sides of the problem'. They are also a strange mixture of questions. Whilst sender compatibility has no questions on legitimacy or clarity, senders' compatibility has four on the former and five on the latter. Thus compatibility is weakly measured in comparison with stress. The price paid for an afterthought is high. I judged the price worth while because it may make that which follows more realistic. First, it is possible to see what combinations of stress and compatibility are found and, secondly, the compatibility scales act as a minor check on assertions that 'so and so causes stress'. That is, if there is an increase in stress then there could be a decrease in compatibility or, alternatively, the findings may not

be so neat both stress and compatibility may increase together when considered in the light of a third factor.

Thus the analysis has been complicated by the fieldwork. Having started out to consider what factors make for more or less stress in a job, I found that I could also consider whether or not these factors make for more or less compatibility at the same time. The positive questions in the stress categories made it possible, managers' comments at the end of the questionnaire made it desirable; curiosity about the duality of stress and compatibility makes the exercise interesting.

2.8 Role stress and role compatibility

The categories of stress were established by a role perspective on relationships and the treatment of an expectation in terms of a unit of action. This machination of some of the circumstances of work is a device that can barely be tested. There is no proof that action and sense juxtapose in syndrome form. Nor is there any other basis upon which the existence of a stress syndrome can be asserted. The value of the instrument is simply that it creates a common denominator for different people.

The notion of stress is derived from an engineering analogy (Lazarus: 1968) where stress is a force per unit area and strain the result. Its usage here has been to examine the social conditions of a 'psychological' experience. The terms pressures and demands go some way to describe the mechanics of a job. The metaphor 'little cog in a big machine' gives the sense of location whilst the conflicts and ambiguities indicate dislocations in the machine's operation.

It is sad, but true, that the term stress, and its measurement here, in no sense approach the awesome meanings of anomie, angst[18] and

alienation.[19] For, as the manager has been studied 'in his role', he has not been seen as a full social being. Further worry, anxiety,[20] frustration and distress have not been sought explicitly, even though their meanings seem akin to that of stress.

For some, the relating of stress by the device of common senses and its non-relatedness to concepts of experience well used in social theory may seem to make man too ordinary a being and paraphrase more important ideas with impotency. I think this is true. Unfortunately my brief to push back the frontiers encouraged me to overlook the lore of sociological knowledge.

I could, then, have sought more. I could have directly discussed with the managers their feelings of despair. I did not because, I suspect, that I could not, at the time, muster the manhood. To be sure, some bases for despair are referred to by implication, there are indications of cutting compromise in impracticality and an edge of meaninglessness, in ambiguity. But I use none of these broader ideas. The exercise has involved structuring what might be stressful in the manager's role. This whole exercise is relatively worthless if the created instrument fails to register with variations in the lives and activities of the managers. The acid test, as it were, of all these scores is in terms of their dependency on features in the person and the position.[21] So far the person has been kept out. The making of a common denominator eliminates differences appearing in the instrument. It treats all men in all management positions as equals in its sights. But the broad response ranges and high intercorrelations between items show discrimination that begs to be explained. How does one manager indicate negligible stress and considerable compatibility whilst another reports the reverse, and a third lies in between? What aspects of their past and daily life are related to the extent of their reported

stress? Equally as important, what aspects that have long been blamed for all manner of aberrations fail to show a twitch on the stress instruments?

In the following chapters, stress in the job (intra-role stress) is related to the rank, responsibility and identity of the managers studied - (though these terms may not mean much at the moment they will be put to work to 'explain' increases and decreases in the stress category scores). At each staging point the discussion returns to its point of departure. To what can the variations in the amounts of reported stress be attributed?

The first stage of the enquiry opens with the fact that managers have different jobs. How are these jobs different, and what difference do they make to the extent of stress?

Chapter Three

THE POWER OF A POSITION[1]

> "What are the rewards of management? To any ambitious person it is the satisfaction of controlling staff and making decisions. To others it is the financial incentive of the top management posts advertised in this and other newspapers at £5,000 or £6,000 and more per annum."
>
> A. E. Phillips, "Going into Management" The Guardian, 25th July, 1970.

Introduction

To be a manager is to have power and prestige. A manager affects the lives of the people under him and earns a relatively high salary. Mr. Phillips refers to this right and privilege as the rewards for ambitious and mercenary people. Yet while some may strive for these rewards, they come automatically, as it were, with the job. A manager is 'held responsible for those under his control', he 'exercises authority over his subordinates'. He works 'as part of a team for the good of the company'. A person in a management position may well enjoy controlling staff but he is obliged to control them whether he enjoys it or not.

In Chapter Two rights and obligations were a matter of getting messages through and sorted out, they were the well oiled cogs of action. In this chapter the purpose of rights and obligations is a problem. The problem can be seen as one of the results of rights and obligations, they control human endeavour by making the positions remarkably different from each other. No two jobs are the same. So in what ways are they different? One answer could be positions are distinguished by different forms and amounts of power and prestige. If so, power and prestige are ana-

lytical tools for differences and similarities between positions.

Power and prestige make a position yet it takes a person in a position to exercise power and claim prestige. A manager finds himself unable to calculate how much power he has. He can remember the fortunes of past acts and he can plan his way out of present problems. He has access to the institutional resources of money and machines and he can draw on special personal resources - his knowledge of the whims and wishes of others. He can ground his guess work and quantify it - sometimes calling these hardened hunches 'guestimates'. He can look at the hierarchy pictured in an organisation chart and wonder where exactly it puts him: there are so many people above and below, but there is little indication of what it is like to be in the middle.

Managers have difficulty in talking about their power because the word has associations of the army and dictatorships. Similarly, responsibility is a rather grand term for 'carrying the can'. Whilst the social scientist wonders how a manager uses his power the manager wonders if he has any. A manager does not own or control the process of production, he is part of it. But his position has some power and some prestige and this fact is a useful starting place to consider his job. In order to leave this beginning I have reasoned that power and prestige are two aspects of rank.

Rank implies status, division, class and relative position. It is a term open to definition. How is a manager's status signified? How are managers divided and classified and what makes one position relative to another? Rank impresses the person; his position provides him with tangible and intangible costs and benefits. This provision is made in different ways; by working conditions, pay and perks.

Rank also expresses the position; the person establishes how far and in what ways his position penetrates its milieu. The weight of his position can be felt within a small 'sphere of influence' or 'across the board'. The effect can be achieved by a curt reply or a long-winded request. I have defined the impressive aspect of rank as prestige and the expressive aspect as power.

3.1 Rank as power

Let us begin with some generalisations about working for Profit.

A worker works - he combines his energy with the potential of a tool or machine and makes things. Work takes physical power. A worker can change his job, but he cannot change what he makes in any particular job; his physical power is checked and channelled and claimed in part-exchange for a wage. A worker is told what to do by a supervisor. The supervisor keeps him supplied with work and gives him a rollicking for lateness, mistakes and talking frequently with other workers. A supervisor issues job cards, counteracts materials' shortages and machine breakdowns and deals with complaints before they become grievances. A supervisor's problems and power are initially technical; he keeps work moving through a number of stages, of skilled and semi-skilled operations. He is like the General Practitioner who deals with cuts and bruises and refers extensive damage and intensive pain to specialist surgeons in hospitals (and there the comparison ends).

Not all workers are productive. Others maintain machines; paint buildings; check and pack products; despatch and deliver the goods. But the common denominator of the work force is its physical or manual character. Similarly, supervisors are all technically skilled; they know the job and could do it.

A worker's main experience of the management is his 'gaffer', his supervisor, and through him - somewhat hazily - to a manager. A manager is a supervisor's boss. A worker knows little of the production process, his supervisors know some, and a manager knows most, but not all, about how things work. A manager is at least two stages removed from practical,physical work. The closer a manager is to work the more junior is his rank. The more numerous his supervisors and their workers the more senior is his rank. Whilst a manager is part of management, he is ranked by his distance from work and 'the size of his empire'.

There are junior, middle and executive levels of management. These grades are indeterminate (there is seldom an overall design within a company). The most difficult grade to establish is the one in the middle. Empires are based on types of work; manufacturing; production control; engineering; inspection; personnel; purchasing and plant. These 'departments' vary considerably in size and importance. The larger departments, and those given more importance, are likely to house a number of middle management positions. Meanwhile heads of smaller, less prestigious departments are also likely to be regarded as middle managers. A middle management position is prone to 'rationalisation'; its existence is a sign of a sprawling or declining department. A middle manager is not necessarily in direct touch with either supervisors or executives. His skills are not grounded in either specific practice or general administration. His power resource is the size and task of the department. He controls neither work nor capital. He is dependent upon senior management and relatively secure if his own boss is an executive.

The executive is close to the Board. An executive manages managers. He knows some of the projected future of the company and

can discuss major items of capital expenditure. He has direct access to the chief executive - the divisional manager. His contract includes an element of 'profit sharing' and his prospects go beyond the division or the group; he can be considered for the top jobs anywhere in the company. He can even aspire to the distant Board of Directors. An executive is regarded as part of the company's local aristocracy. Membership of this elite requires considerable social skills; like conversation, dining and graceful sports. The elite is differentiated between local executives; division executives and 'group' executives. The group employees are part of head office - the personal information system for the Board. Group executives come closest to the Board by daily contact but are out-of-touch with production. A local executive can be 'kicked upstairs' to a cul-de-sac in the group. A group executive can be directed into the rigours of local production. The Board of Directors can increase or decrease the rank of their executives by drawing them closer to, or putting them further away from, themselves. The Board is composed of individual and family owners, institutional investors (drawn from merchant banks, insurance companies and pension schemes) and a few, current executives with negligible share holdings and considerable technical expertise. The Board embodies the people for whom the company makes its money, consequently its decision on investment and return are law. These financial decisions are transmitted to executives for their execution. Executive power lies within the translation of a financial imperative. Executives decide how an instruction is to affect the positions below them and bargain over how the effect should be spread throughout the lower positions.

Managerial power, then, is over work and from ownership. Managers derive their power from the corporation itself. They handle

the decisions of the Board in productive terms and the closer they are to the administration of capital, the more overall their effect. There are at least three levels of management from junior managers, through middle managers to senior managers making a small, sharply separate executive. Junior managers occupy a narrow band and supervise a few supervisors (sometimes called 'team-leaders' in non-productive departments). Then there is a wide band of middle managers who supervise a larger number of supervisors or possibly a few junior managers, heads of small departments, and heads of large departments on the edge of, or within, the executive. The executive is the most complicated band; each elite is self-contained, local, divisional and group, and yet interwoven. The Board is distinct from its management, which it penetrates directly by legislation and indirectly by lending weight to its group staff.

A manager is enabled to manage by the commands and encouragement of his Board and the skills, obedience and loyalty of his supervisors and workers. His power cannot be traced to a source; his power is a resource. It is the relatively simple function of an equation between capital and labour of which he is part and from which he is apart. His ability to see what is going on around him is a clue to this puzzle. Visibility, to be able to see and be seen, is indicative of a manager's power and problems.

Weaving through words like this is a characteristic of the chapter. The account of rank takes more space than that of any other concept. Rank is discussed in terms of its constituent ideas, their measurement and the relationship of this measurement to that of stress. The discussion of ideas is lengthy because the experience of power and prestige is particularly involved. Throughout, the involvement is

given as both a stressful property for a man to hold and a property that is riven with conflicts and ambiguities that make a man hold even tighter to that which brings him stress. A man may shrink away from that towards which he strives. It is true that the higher you go the harder it gets?

(i) Rank, power and the organisational chart

The organisational chart is a standing joke in many companies. The 'family tree' is ridiculed because the company just does not operate as a series of lines and boxes: messages come from all sides rather than in a neatly-tied parcel from the boss delivered by hand first thing in the morning. Nevertheless, rare copies of the chart do arouse curiosity; in each box first there is the job title and underneath the current job holder's name. It is not unknown for senior managers and executives to have their own charts drawn up and depict the levels of their subordinates. The chart levels a lot of people similarly and makes a simple point: there can be a difference in kind between a boss and his subordinate - one is over the other.

A complete set of charts were given to me. They told me whom to interview first, his name and job. I worked my way through each department in turn and down through each level. There were three levels according to the charts, executives, middle managers and junior managers. They were scored 3, 2 and 1 respectively and correlated with the stress scores. The only significant correlation was between the 'height' of the position and the overload from others (.328). The general lack of difference could be because the levels should not be taken at face value or the differences between Mersey and Midland are bigger than those between their aggregated levels. Table 3.1 gives the average score for the two companies and indicates how they compare.[3]

The scores are generally higher at Mersey; it may well be a more stressful place whatever the position. But though there is a tendency towards higher stress only, two scores are significantly higher. A Mersey manager has more illegitimate and overloading expectations from his boss than does a Midland manager.

The difference between companies may be more pronounced when 'the levels are held constant', that is, if each level is compared with its counterpart across the companies. Table 3.2 makes this comparison.

It does seem that there is more stress at Mersey than at Midland on the same level. But again, though the averages look clearly larger, they are not uniformly larger. Mersey executives report more illegitimacy from others. Mersey junior managers report more illegitimacy from their superior and more overload from others. There was no significant difference between Mersey and Midland middle managers and their scores seem to vary less than between the executives and junior managers of the two companies. It is possible that the culture of the company exerts a greater influence upon its 'exposed positions'. Junior managers and executives are on the lower and upper edges of management. They deal with positions that are different <u>in kind</u> from their own. They might be said to be at <u>critical levels</u> in the structuring of positions.[4] If so, they may show more extreme scores than middle managers when levels are compared within the companies. Table 3.3 makes this comparison.

The differences between the levels, however, are not consistent. Sometimes there is a slight trend towards either executives or junior managers; sometimes middle managers have the highest average and other times middle managers' scores resemble either executive or

junior managers. Even this, the most detailed analysis possible involving the branches of the two 'family trees', reveals only two tendencies at Midland where illegitimacy from others increases with level, and overload from others decreases with level.

The most simple representation of power has been used and it has produced surprisingly little. Mersey could be more stressful than Midland and there were indications of increases in two types of conflict (illegitimacy and overload) with level and being at Mersey. Being at Midland meant less strength to these conflicts: with increasing illegitimacy and decreasing overload according to level. Of course, the scoring of level by 1, 2 and 3 and using the scores to create groupings may be just too simple. Still, examining the rank by power and placement on the organisational chart has produced some differences. Two scales emerged as sensitive and may do so again. There was some support for the depiction of Mersey as tough and Midland as a little more tender.

Power will now be defined another and more detailed way to pursue the stress related to it. It will be called dominance - a quality of relationships. The Chart locates power as the fixed general property of a position. Dominance considers this property in action.

(ii) Rank, power and dominance

Power is energy; it moves people and things about. Power is also synergy; it is the co-relation of combined action. Managerial power has been called corporate power: the funnelling of resources is a resource in itself. Managerial power lies between cause and effect and is rooted in the energy generated by this relationship.[5]

There is no 'free for all' in Profit's companies. The Board dictates the results it wants. The Board creates dominance, the quick

definition of which is a regime - an institution of rules.

Dominance is pervasive.[6] Managers rule according to rules. They are instructed. They give instructions. Yet they interpret. They 'read between the lines' to figure out exactly how to instruct. Dominance has this quality: a manager is clearly ruled by his Board and yet he has to clarify the rules for himself. Dominance creates control and the dominated seek to be controlled.

A manager has 'freedom within certain limits'.[7] What limits? How do they restrict his freedom? Can freedom be possible if its limits are neither known nor are their limiting effects known? A manager honestly does not know. His standing in his position is negotiated; he has angled, experimented, postured, manoeuvred and refused to budge. But he is still not sure about his job. He finds difficulty saying what he does because any position in a domination structure[8] is incomplete, subject to reversal with little hope of appeal and above all subject to expansion or contraction. Recurrent, incomplete knowledge is a characteristic of dominance: of knowing what will happen but not why; of knowing when something will happen but not where and how. The more structured dominance becomes the more incomplete knowledge is staggered and staged. Each person at each level keeps a little of what is transmitted and a certain amount of his own translation; his interpretation of what exactly is going on, his detection and construction of completion. The amount that anyone knows at any one time is the expression of his position and it impresses himself and others as to the grasp or hold that he has on that position. It is felt that when you go to a particular position with a particular problem you ought to get an answer - he should have the necessary knowledge; by adding the knowledge to the problem, the problem itself should be nearer a solution.

Dominance is an institutional force; the power of ownership felt as a fragment and as a potential fragmentation of position, detectable in defensive cliches and manifest in incomplete knowledge. Dominance also characterises the way in which position holders try to prevent the fragmentation of their position, defend defensive cliches and close incomplete knowledge by guesswork. But these are the passive principles of dominance; these features emphasise what it feels like to be dominated and the acts of adjustment that makes domination tolerable, acceptable, or even desirable. The active principle of dominance relates to what it feels like to be on the giving rather than the receiving end. Dominance, it was said, refers especially to a quality of relationships. The giving feelings are in contradiction to those of reception.

To give orders and rules for the interpretation of rules takes more than being able to use defensive cliches and being able to operate with incomplete knowledge. A ruler[9] 'knows his man and knows that he is a man'. The crucial quality of a ruler is to treat those he rules as officials; they have an office; a station; some responsibility to share; something to be proud of. There is no disgrace in being ruled. Rather the opposite; there is honour - the offical is in the ruler's confidence. The ruler is man enough to admit difficulty (sometimes impossibility): the official commiserates and tries to find ways of helping the ruler over and past the problem. The official is drawn out of his office. The relationship between them is softened; orders are confidences, rules of interpretation are advice. The official is loyal, his relationship with his ruler is as intense as the way in which he relates to his office. The official loves his job and his ruler. The more he loves the one the more he will love the other.

His obedience is planned; he works out how best to express his loyalty. He can discuss plans elaborately or plan a surprise. When an official is loyal he is also obedient.

The softness of this dominance relationship is tempered by the relationships between officials: the plurality of officials makes possible many forms of loyalty, obedience and charm. Officials can vie amongst themselves for favourite but,more likely, they act in concert - they can help each other and avoid gross disfavour. The softness of intimacy is counterveiled by the distance of austerity, the blind spots of unthinking, the personal problems of the ruler are kept discrete to avoid panic among more junior officials; the closest officials cloak indiscretion and talk little, even amongst themselves, of gross behaviour.

The picture of ruler and official is an ordered, even an aesthetic relationship. There is the tragi-comedy of so much performance for so little action, but ritual dominance always has honour; there is enough honour for the meanest official to feel he is a person. A manager operates in profane circumstances; he is not a ruler, nor is there a single ruler. There is the Board, a mass of executives, local executives and levels of management. In comparison with the ruler the manager calculates a little and in the process compromises himself a little. He needs so much obedience from so many subordinates but they still have to be able to think for themselves. He does not want disobedience but rather an atmosphere of obedience - wherein he can feel that his instructions are being worked on - and the propensity for independence that is not beyond his own range of independence. In practice this can feel like a climate of agreement with frequent showers and infrequent thunder. A manager and his subordinates have their

executives and directorate in common; they have common rulers. The manager's dominance is further softened by collegiality; there is a difference in kind between himself and the Board and a difference in degree between himself and his subordinates. Working friendships develop in which the superior relationship can be subjected to shared speculation. Cliques and cabals[10] can form which enmesh a number of managers into the structure despite its structuring. Cliques are groups of managers at the same or similar levels whilst cabals include managers from different levels. Cliques and cabals can function like chains where the good fortune of the manager, or managers, at the top of the chain draws up the chain. Each link can be promoted in sequence following an initial executive promotion. Within departments the executive and his managers can co-operate to the extent that their jobs become relatively equalised. The executive presents to the structure at large the common view of his managers. Day-to-day work is shared amongst them and given collective support. Managers' power is corporate and different from the power of the directorate. Managers do not dominate each other. They find the ways in which corporate power can be used for the directorate's ends. Beyond that they can both leave each other alone and meet regularly to reinforce their executive and his powers of execution.

The term 'superordination' and 'subordination' are of value. Power is not a free-floating, on-off, constraining and controlling of another. Power is simply energy in a context. The context of manufacturing enterprise is authoritarian; the decisions are made by the Board. The creation, transmission and criticism of production is the managerial context. The common factor between the two contexts - that which makes the firm firm - is dominance. Dominance is in part

the dictate of direction, the lore of loyalty and their off-spring of obedience. In other parts dominance can be seen in the attempts to avoid a direct confrontation with its unfeeling, unthinking imperative nature. Managers and executives rule in a semi-official capacity; their relationship with the rulers is tenuous and their relationships with each other warm and mould dominance and make it more a matter of collective concern than one of individual property. Dominance is a subjective relationship subjectively understood; the ends are imperative and impersonal but the means that managers manage to establish are interpretative and interpersonal. Dominance serves to describe the imperative - interpretative, impersonal-interpersonal characteristics of managers' corporate power. At times managers will feel the directorates' direct power and shift closer to their style of dominance. At other times they devise working relations, partnerships, cliques and cabals and soften each other's power considerably. Their power is not simple, naked or obvious because of this built-in potential for movements through moods. The constancy lies within the fact that they can move and sometimes have to move from elitist instruction to shared operation and that throughout their resource is corporate power; they have brigades and companies at their disposal. Dominance makes the notion of power sensible and vice versa. Dominance is between people within their respective positions. It is possible that the nearer a manager is to the directorate the more obvious dominance is to him; the sorts of power he has and the ways in which he exercises it over his subordinates. Consider rank as dominance; the quality of relationships between people of more and less power. Is it possible that the higher you are the more you dominate others and the more directly you dominate them? And is more domination more or less stressful?

A. Dominance as a subject relationship; subordination, autonomy and superordination

Dominance has been given a number of characteristics yet its simplest expression is the power that a subject has over another subject to create an object; or the power that a person has over another person to make something by doing something. As managerial power was defined as corporate power, dominance is expressed as primarily plural; the power over other people towards objectives. The notions of object and objective are slippery terms. Rather than assume that direction and achievement are synonymous or that there is no progressive redefinition of work that takes place whilst working, let me base managerial work on the unit of action invented to facilitate the discussion of role stress in Chapter Two. To say that work means someone doing something is to synthesise a tool, an effort and a purpose. Managerial units of action involve the positional taking, controlling and co-ordinating to some focus of institutional - that is, corporate - resources. In effect, managers work essentially without tools and yet especially with the energy that tools require. Let us accept, then, that the tools of management are the effort and output of others. Let us also note that the manager's effort is directed towards just this purpose - the rationalisation of collective effort and the process of accounting for collective production. The form of the managerial unit of action is, in brief, somewhat circular; to control in order to control, to reason and account for energy expenditure and the issue of this enterprise. A managerial unit of action may well have specific and varying purposes, but its general purpose is invariable. To this extent it is obvious that a manager's work is never done and that he must pedal very hard to stay where he is; he must control to be in control.[11]

Nevertheless, units of action do vary; objectives can be more or less immediate: the call on resources can be great or small, the unit of action can be a recurring control problem and wrapped in a certain amount of routine and the manager can experiment with more or less control over some or all of his subordinates. Monthly accounting returns have a fixed term and so, by date, are more or less immediate; the collection of data is as routine as its presentation and there is no question of its being deferred. An analysis of stock, storage or labelling requirements is a 'one-off' - though the exercise may be in order to establish a routine. This work can be the closely controlled effort of one keen subordinate or a relaxed discussion over a number of years between everyone conceivably involved and generous allowances made when particular people reach a crunch point of incomprehension, panic and passionate protest. Some managers like their subordinates to work it out whilst others 'nip it in the bud': the objection peters out in repetition or is crushed before it gets underway. Managers evolve, develop, establish and contradict their style. So each manager subordinates his subordinates; he determines their actions and deters inaction. His domination could be called his style.

Meanwhile, however, each manager is being dominated as well as being dominant. He, too, is someone's subordinate. As a subordinate he knows when to keep quiet, when to speak loudly and when to delay the discovery of his experimental or dubious actions. As a superordinate he is well aware of the evasive tactics available to his subordinates. More especially he knows that when he is 'under fire' they may well be in their trenches with helmets on and further expose him to the hazards of direct criticism. In brief, a manager cannot let his subordinates go too far for fear that their evasiveness may mean

desertion (when he most needs their support). Yet, whilst feeling that he must know what they are doing because he is responsible for their actions, he can also think that it is bad for their morale and personal development to keep too close a surveillance. Close supervision is also a physical impossibility.

These then are some of the forces that produce a style; the domination structure of ruling and being ruled: the endless task of making and sustaining rules and the practical and personal problems of breathing down someone's neck.

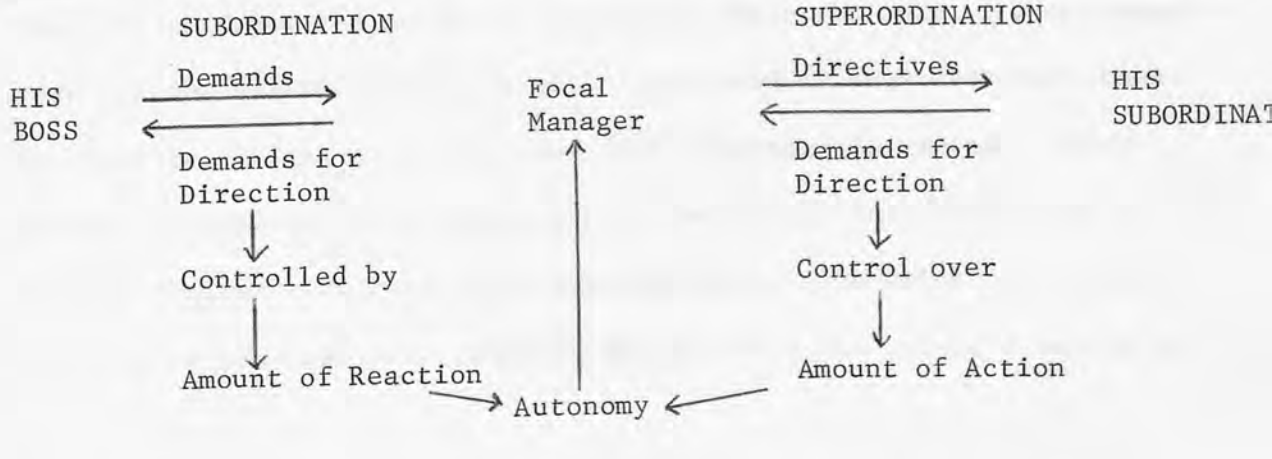
Earlier in the discussion of dominance the emphasis was as a relationship; the two-way process of guiding and seeking guidance. Since then the notion of style has presented dominance as something done to you or something that you do to someone else. These two aspects can now be related. Superordination is dominance to and from a subordinate, subordination is to and from superordinates. This reasoning creates a vacuum in the position itself. If there is so much subordination and superordination then what is left? What is the area that is weakly dominated that does not imply the strong domination of subordinates? I shall call the 'room to manoeuvre', the 'freedom within limits', autonomy. Now autonomy means self-government and is clearly a grandiose term for that which is less specifically demanded and generally transmitted to those under you. Nevertheless, domination structures do contain pockets of 'elbow-room' within each position, where the necessity to act is accompanied by a less limited range of permissible actions, where the manager feels that he has some weight to his words; some weight of his own. This last set of feelings hints at the paradox of managerial autonomy, a manager's autonomy in in part based on the obedience of his subordinates. Their obedience

creates a strength by which he can both meet the demands of a superordinate and defend his freedom by a record of competent management.

Thus subordination, superordination and autonomy are not separate bits of managerial power. They are the interrelated aspects of dominance. Subordination and superordination are processes which produce autonomy in this special sense. Autonomy is both the product of dominance processes and a process in itself.[12] As a product, autonomy is not freedom: it is a carefully constructed licence rather than liberty. As a process it is where a manager can start to do his own job rather than being bossed or bossing: it is what is left from his subordination and what depends upon his superodination. I take superordination to mean that a superordinate has control over the actions of subordinates and that this gives him his slice of action; the things he knows he can do by getting others to do them. I take subordination to mean that a subordinate has his actions controlled; that he reacts on demand. Autonomy, in these simple terms, is a product of how much reaction is built into the position in relation to how much action is also built into the position. Diagram 3.A notes what I mean by rank as power as dominance and shows by arrows how subordination, superordination and autonomy are analytically interrelated.

Diagram 3.A

RANK, AS POWER, AS RELATIONSHIPS IN A DOMINATION STRUCTURE: THE PROCESS OF SUPERORDINATION, SUBORDINATION AND AUTONOMY



If I may summarise in yet another way; dominance relates (by equation) power from others, power over others and power within oneself. Dominance means that visibility and accountability - how far a person in a position can see and how much they are liable for - are best defined by reference to above, below and within the position and the outgoings and incomings in each of these interpenetrated spheres. Dominance carefully emphasises the two-way aspect of the process, the seeking as well as finding, the asking as well as being told. It shows how the acceptance of one's position is the active affirmation of others' positions. Rank is not accepted tight-lipped and resented, domination is expressed and openly sought.

B. Dominance as a subject relationship: supervisory style

Dominance has so far been seen as a general and necessary exercise of a position. But it is obvious that managers dominate different subordinates in different ways. Some managers talk of being firm; the need for control and the unavoidable subjugation of their underlings. Others talk of talk: of the value of decisions collectively taken and thus collectively binding. It is easy to make subordination a matter of either 'authoritarian' or 'democratic' approaches to subordinates (the former demands whilst the latter discusses) but both are tools of domination and create and sustain dominance. Some managers, it is true, are 'softer' than others; they calculate that they can engineer the power of a group to their own ends. Some managers need all the distance they can get; they need to know that they have at least been clear as to what and when something is wanted. There is then, something of a choice open to managers - they can choose to be more or less boss over their subordinates. The existence of this choice of means has led to endless debates over the relative merits of

the two polar styles of 'tough' and 'tender'. These debates suggest that you need to be liked to have dirty jobs done or that a firm grip on the 'whip-hand' produces the necessary compliance of fear. In fact, all the managers interviewed advocated - and thereby justified - their own styles.

Some related it to the job in hand. The department was there to create change - so the best way to do this was as a team. Or the department was there to get results (i.e., to make a profit), and the best way to do this was to keep people on their toes and 'jump on those getting out of line'.

Despite the reasoning of style and task, many managers felt the need to make exceptions. Some people needed tougher handling than others, they were conniving crooks or cowards who, in either case, could not be trusted. Other subordinates were 'bright': they complied, had the department's interests at heart and kept a tidy section whilst producing new ideas. This latter group were to be encouraged: they were to be let into secrets and given as much inside information as was necessary to make their suggestions stick. This latter group were referred to by others as 'blue-eyed boys', as favourites, or in simple military terms the 2.1C (second in charge). That is, each manager was tough, distant, demanding and damning, but there were variations in the extent to which he thought this a normal or desirable condition and the extent to which he made exceptions for some or nearly all his subordinates. His style was an amalgam of general and specific manner: some subordinates he talked <u>with</u> and a few he talked <u>to</u>. Superordination as a subjective enterprise is riddled with frustration and speculation; how far can you push a person before he pulls out? How far can you let a person go before you no longer know where he is going? How much

should you 'tow the party line', 'bully as you are bossed' or lead as your are led? Should your style be a reflection of your boss's style or does your personally different approach make more sense?

These questions of style face the dilemma of subordination and superordination. The way you are bossed in large measure determines the way you boss. What should determine the rest? If you decide yourself to work with subordinates as equals to what extent is this bound to be untrue; to what extent is leadership incompatible with a team? These questions are seldom asked in the industrial context and cannot be answered by it. There are no rules for which variation of style a manager adopts. His style is his own calculation, his own compromise between his boss's dictate and his subordinate's appeal. Consequently a manager makes up his style as he goes along and is none too sure of its rightness. Naturally those who are tough make tender exceptions and vice-versa. Naturally, too, those who try to blend two styles get in a mess; they do not have the authority to punish, or the aura with which to plead. In matters of superordination, then, managers extemporise. They patch together a style, aware of their boss, their subordinates, their job and their personal wishes. This view, of course, makes superordination largely a matter of circumstance and whim.

Do you get tougher the nearer you are to the top, and does this make things rougher on yourself? Tougher means more of a boss, more of a bastard, breathing down subordinates' necks while they are doing a job and spitting fire when they have done it. We begin with the experience of superordination, with the experience of being a boss. Then the account continues to the feeling of being underneath a boss and concludes with autonomy. All three apply if you are both controller and controlled.

C. Superordination: the closeness of supervision

Superordination is the experience of being a boss; it is the condition and consequence of being in control. The act of being a boss is not that of being an ogre for people need bossing in a hierarchy, they need direction, redirection, reassurance and reward. Subordination seeks superordination. So the closeness of supervision that a subordinate is subjected to is a mixture of how much he seeks, how much the boss looks over him and the form of subordination taken by both to be appropriate. For the boss, of course, this is how he perceives his subordinates; the way in which he expresses, anticipates and accepts their bits of freedom. Table 3.4 gives the categories' questions asked on superordination.

In the first two sub-scales, subordinates as senders and receivers, the ideas of 'crisis' and 'routine' underpin the questions. Crisis has a number of meanings: trouble in the sense of breakdown of machines or stoppage of labour, critical in the sense of involving political matters where 'other departments are likely to be affected' and non-routine in the sense of demanding thought or needing adaptation rather than application of normal procedure. Thus a trouble is a fusing of managerial mechanisms, a critical incident is one in which inter-departmental relations demand delicate diplomacy and a routine problem is one which can be solved by a rearrangement of routine. This is not to say that these definitions are known and rigorously used: they are rather the prevailing mode of interpretation used in interviews.

In addition to these differences in the circumstance of subordination there is also a continuum of intensity of subordinate seeking subordination.

Sub-scale 1

Question	1	4	2	3
Keyword	all decisions	non routine	critical	wait

Sub-scale 2

Question	1	4	2	3
	frequently	non routine	trouble	let check

Sub-scale 3 asks of the freedoms in style (4), speed (1), and the chances of contradiction and argument, even privacy. These are rights granted by a boss usually as a reward for good behaviour - because the subordinate has proved he has the right interests at heart (i.e., self-interest structured by the profit-maximising situation) and can conform largely without error. Insubordination is being cheeky: is taking freedom. Inevitably work methods are largely standard, formal procedures. The work pace is geared to going faster and faster. Consultation secures binding agreements. Being left alone is virtually out of the question. Thus a superordinate can strive to make these freedoms a little bit true for a subordinate; in the process he makes himself a less demanding boss. He gives most of his own freedoms and nearly equalises the positions.

The average scores are of interest. It is rare for a subordinate to wait until his boss shows up. The onus is upon the subordinate to find his superior. Yet the boss feels that the subordinate has 'a great deal of say in the way they work' even though it is unlikely that they 'can set their own work pace' or 'are left alone unless they want help'.

Sub-sub-scale 2 has consistency in its scores (see Appendix II) whilst generalisations about how subordinates seek or experience

dominance are not consistent. It is convenient and interesting that the manager indicates consistency in himself but not in others.

To rephrase the hypothesis in terms of the available measures: is an increase in the conflicts and ambiguities with others correlated[13] with the closeness of supervision? There is no significant correlation; though conflict between others and illegitimacy from others increase (.150 and .129), whilst compatibility with them decreases (-.234). These weak correlations do suggest that the more you see the less you may like.

D. Subordination: the closeness of the boss

A boss can only be as liberal as his boss allows.. Super-ordination is limited by subordination. The same facets apply: the circumstances vary from crisis through trouble to non-routine and the same shades of intensity are to be found. The questions are given in Table 3.5.

The boss is referred to by the term superior. The term implies deference, the demeanour of an inferior. For the manager is an official, the more servile his expression the more authoritative he is. In observably, paradoxical terms the more he is on his knees, the more upright his bearing. The term superior avoids that which is brash and refers to the subtlety of being a subordinate - more subtle, that is, than being a boss.

The averages on sub-sub scale 1 indicate considerable separation between the manager and his superior. Substantially the manager only turns to his superior for exceptional matters though like his subordinates, he does not wait to be called. In sub-sub scale 2 it appears that a thorough check by the superior on past work is rare.

In sub-sub scale 3 the manager observes that generally he does have a 'great deal of say' though he has a little less say on work methods and less still on the pace at which he works.

There is as little consistency between the answers as there was in sub-scale 1. The consistent sub-sub- scale is the second; the manager has reported consistency in dealing with his subordinates and consistency in being dealt with as a subordinate. The question to be asked is whether closer control correlates with more conflict and ambiguity from the boss. No correlation is significant but there are tendencies of interest. The closer the superior's control the greater his illegitimacy[14] (.201); impracticality (.160); overload (.182) and ambiguity (.120). Also the subordinate manager reported more conflict made by him the closer controlling superior (.130) and less compatibility with him (-.142). Though the correlations were not significant they do suggest that the closer the control exercised by a superior, the more the stress from and to him.

E. Autonomy: delimited freedom

To recapitulate: being a boss means that you get things done by others. Subordinates may be willing, obedient, sly or deceitful, but the form and extent of the closeness of their supervision lies within your hands. Meanwhile you are bossed, you are directed, cajoled, jolted, threatened, enamoured, and surprised by your boss. He is your superior. By some quirk of birth, experience or luck, he is better than you. Because he is your superior it is easier to obey him. If he were the same as you there would be occasions when you would tell him what to do with his iron will and whimsical wants.

Nevertheless, subordinates work for you and the boss gets you to work. Between these forces you can negotiate room to manoeuvre to get a fair swipe at the problem. You affect yourself. Autonomy in a hierarchy then is the product of power over the actions of others and the preponderance of reactions demanded by the boss. Action and reaction can be equally felt and separately treated. Table 3.6 gives the questions on autonomy.

Two themes are contained in the statements on action: the general ability to be at the centre of action and the ability to act through a problem. Each statement involves my own, my, I or me. Questions 1 and 6 seek general ability and general control, whilst Questions 2-5 relate to the stages of a problem. The notion of stages of a problem statement (2); problem searches and reference (4 and 5) making the decision and seeing it is put into practice (3).[15] Questions 1 and 6 clearly ask more than this; they ask for the extent to which the manager is free to act, has the resources to act and experiences action rather than reaction (6). Thus question 6 comes close to the substance of the second sub-scale concerning the amount of reaction.

For reaction statements the manager was asked to role-play to make the statements a little less personal. Metaphors and metaphorical situations characterise the experience of reaction of being an aunt sally (1), a puppet (3), of being pursued and hunted (5) and overrun (2 and 4). Question 6 seeks the opposite - of peace, tranquility and a head above the storm. When the first question was asked it was met by an outburst of laughter. Each department, it seems, has its natural enemies; production versus inspection; production versus production control; production and production

control versus purchasing; engineering versus production with plant and personnel the natural enemies of all those who take their service. Each departmental manager, therefore, told of his opposite number the manager who put pressure on him; kept him on his toes with devastating criticism and intransigent demand. His opposite number had wants and views which opposed his. So everyone has his dug-out and tin-helmet: his means of arming himself against attack and his defensive holes in which to shelter 'when the shit is flying' and some means of making sure it doesn't stick on him.

By the time the interview reached the sixth question many more rueful observations on reaction as a mode of experience had been made. After question 5 some managers gave the details of where they went to hide: in another manager's office, in the library, or simply took everything home in despair. By this time, too, an important paradox had been expressed. It is your job to be in demand; 'on tap', available to anyone who wants to see you. The job of the manager permits delay in seeing someone but not refusal. Moreover, seeing someone is being busy. Being wanted is being important. Obviously the opposite is also true; when no one wants to see you it is time to worry. But when you are being seen you are doing your job. Going to committees is doing your job and getting in the way of doing your job. You need to find out what is going on but while you are there you are thinking of all the jobs that have to be done. Report-writing throws this paradox in sharp relief. To write a report you need to know the problem, to have talked over alternatives; reached some suggestion and have assembled some arguments to support it. To actually write a report you need an uninterrupted patch of peace, without even the threat of intrusion. But to demand the break to meet

this priority would cause enormous offence(though perhaps the sympathy of a friendly few) and possible retribution. So, by the time the interview reached question 6, the manager was ready for open laughter. The statement is a joke, a state of perfect management as idyllic to managers as a school without children to some teachers.

Referring to the averages, most of the autonomy questions were answered in the same way by most of the managers. Many said that they had plenty of action, that they 'could get things moving when they had a problem'. Some said they were caught in reaction; that they were sitting targets and had to hide to get any work done. These two questions triggered bitter laughter, full snorts; sad agreement, vehement protest or simple seriousness. Replies talked of caught in the cross fire, aunt sallies, trenches and tin helmets (the full reflection on comments comes in the next section). These two statements are so sweeping that they can be related to stress from both the boss and others. The rest of the questions are unusable either because the managers all said the same or because there are no consistencies between the remaining questions. The responses to being a sitting target and having to hide did significantly correlate with some stress scales. The manager was more likely to feel like a sitting target with increasing ambiguity from his boss (.346) and overload (.234) and ambiguity (.267) from others. Being a sitting target was also correlated with a decrease in compatibility with his boss (.278). 'Having to hide' was almost fully correlated with stress scales. An increase in having to hide was correlated with an increase in illegitimacy (.343), impracticality (.285), overload (.269), and ambiguity (.255) from the boss. 'Hiding' also increases with illegitimacy (.301), and overload from others. Like being a sitting

target hiding is negatively correlated with superior's compatibility (-.265). If anything, this string of correlations point to the possibility that the superior may be a key source of stress and the stress that managers particularly feel are those of legitimacy, overload and ambiguity.

F. Power as a subjective experience: dominance and exceptions

The feeling of power has demanded considerable illumination. Clearly the exercise of corporate power means control over subordinates and subordination to a boss and through him to the company's elites. There is a sense in which each manager develops his own style his closeness of supervision. There is also a sense in which he is to both act and react. His reactions could be to get others to act. This would be a neat solution but it would mean that he was not actually responsible for anything himself. As he is responsible for things himself, autonomy is both inevitable and inevitably a problem. 'You cannot have everyone doing what they want' says the addage. 'You cannot control everyone all the time' goes another addage, 'you would be doing his job'. Mindful of this contradiction, managers develop their style and negotiate their territory.

Each person is speculating what the boss is up to, what he really means and what he really wants.[16] There is the strange insistence that one likes the boss. This is a modification of loyalty and respect discussed earlier. But friendship here undermines being a boss. The boss can feel that the subordinate is trying to get round him and that friendship is a delightful compliment.

The subordinate can feel that he is much safer as a friend than as an underling but that now he has all his eggs in one basket; that he has put all his fate in the hands of his boss and that his hands are tied for other chances.

What makes dominance stressful is the need to calculate the incalculable. How do I stand? Am I being independent or am I a coward in someone else's pocket? What am I doing telling others what to do? How do I keep control and what on earth do I do to regain it when I have lost it?

This is not to suggest that every manager feels like this all the time. There are at least two groups of managers that turn the knife's edge of dominance into a motorway on which they travel freely at speed. Some younger managers are largely involved in projects, making of future products and controls with a very small number of intelligent aides. The resources of the firm are at their disposal and their prospects ever brightening. Dominance is not an explicit problem because they are made leaders by the company; young Apollos bringing home the future's bacon. There are genuinely no routines that apply to them. Secondly, there are some older managers that are the gentlemen of the firm. With thirty or more years service they are a part of the company's history; often holding the same job but moving their department through many changes in size, skills and fundamental methods. These men are given respect and seldom realise it. They practice being thorough, conscientious and up with the times. They have no cause to panic or to be panicked by a small clot in the system. They work methodically through both slack and strenuous times and enjoy a moment's jollity with anyone in the department. Their departments, like the young project manager's

work, are a long way from current production. They both work on the edge of the firm, training, despatch, plant, test development and so on. (One question this research cannot fully answer is whether or not production is the hub of the stresses of dominance. Observation would suggest this is so and there is some attempt at an answer in the next chapter.)

So far I have tried to show that dominance involves all but a few managers in some tight contradictions by its very nature. Now I will try to show how this works out in practice. To do this I have organised the many comments made by people as we went through questions and answers in the interview. This is necessarily a fastidious and lengthy exercise, so I will begin by relating what happened to make it so.

(iii) Rank, power and dominance: views of oneself as manager[17]

As this is the first time in my account that my subject managers have been 'allowed' to speak, it is appropriate for me to write how their words are organised. Every manager commented on some questions, no manager commented on all questions. By comment I mean the first thing that was said and said rather than replying True, False or a bit of both. I wrote down this comment in full. I take all these comments to be the product of sincere attempts to fit the sentence to experience. I would like the reader to be able to gain some impression of what was said but I need to organise these replies to account for my impressions of them. These, then, are some alternative forms of presentation.

1. Give every answer to every question.
2. Give the typical answers and not how often they were made.
3. Pick choice answers which express best what many implied.

4. Select answers to illustrate the theme that stress occurs within the experience of power (seen as dominance) as well as because of it.
5. Construct explicit patterns or types of dominance from all that was said and enter a direct discussion of their confusions and contradictions.

The method of approach is shaped by the problem. As I wish to show how managers exert and contain dominance, alternative 5 seems the most appropriate.

I wish to show how managers develop an ad hoc, flexible to the point of ever-shifting, philosophy towards a central aspect of their work. In everyday language, I hold that these philosophies do not make sense - or are nonsense. I do not mean here that these philosophies are not true, accurate or appropriate. Nor do I wish to argue that managers are fools. I would suggest that dominance is in large measure inexpressible and un-analysable as a personal experience. It is part of the acceptance of incomplete knowledge that contributes to dominance that oneself and one's situation should be accepted rather than understood. I believe that most managers accept this condition and argue that it should be so. The philosophies are held to be unimportant because the manager knows he is dominating and dominated anyway.

A. Superordination

The replies contain two major styles of domination. They are given as if a conversation. Then comments are made upon them.

Practical Authority

There are very few routines in our area. It is our job to work out routines that apply right across the place. I expect my men to organise their own departments. They are qualified professional men. Delegation is an art: otherwise you are keeping a dog and barking yourself.

They know my attitudes and take account of them. I am only autocratic on policy and I set overall objectives. They can self-motivate but I have to motivate: to push them along that bit more. We have planned action programmes and regular reviews. There is some popping into offices but I like them to get on with as little interference as possible. It builds up their personality and helps them develop. I like to set an example, starting at 8.00 a.m., keeping the desk clear, that sort of thing. The crux is that they produce results that they work at a pace acceptable to me, within parameters, in their own way to achieve agreed objectives. You know, if I leave them alone they will fall asleep. Everybody wants to be monitored.

I regard myself as a parish priest. To avoid complacency I issue pats on the head and kicks in the backside. I am the link in our operation.

Contrast this philosophy with that of:

Practical Democracy

We work within the firm's policies and procedures as far as we can. I am as democratic as possible. My attitude is to tell a subordinate to try, or ask whether he has tried. Analysis of personality is the key management skill. You have to know your men, their weaknesses as well as their strengths. Some are

independent but others need a lot of attention. They are often coming for approval as much as decisions. You have to distinguish between their qualities and take an interest in anything they do. I am constantly in touch; spot checks if you like. I encourage consultation on all issues. They have unlimited access provided they have done their bit of thinking to start with. Some jobs are obviously politically important. Regular daily discussions iron them out before they get to be a problem. But I do not believe in frightening people. I like to point out the errors of their ways. Overall they have established routines to go by. I do not discourage innovation but I like things done properly. On the whole, if they stick within the system complaints won't stop at their door. They must follow a reasonable pattern.

I see myself as the captain of our team.

These two philosophies are sincerely held.[18] In fact, the outlines are raw representations of the many sophisticated ways in which they are expressed. In all probability they suit the managers who have developed them and fit the problems that they face. I do not see it as part of my work to criticise managers for holding these ideas. My concern is with the ideas themselves. I shall try to show how the complex of stress that is dominance is to be found in the ideals and ideas of being a boss.

Both styles have been termed by the political notion the managers themselves used and by the qualification that their actions be practical. The political notions occur in the phrases 'I am only autocratic' and 'I try to be democratic'. The qualification that these efforts be practical is that they work:

they get others to work. I begin my comments, then, by discussing the practicalities of dominance in slight detail. I relate these comments not to any view that the philosophies are wrong, but rather that they house confusions and contradictions that tell us a little more of dominance.

Both philosophies are practical. They are of use to keep subordinates going. Both present a view from the boss that it is either me or them. I am on my own and they are wayward. If I don't get them to work for me, they could easily work against me. They can work against me without malice and even with the best of intentions. Basically my subordinates are weak willed (authority) or they lack confidence (democracy). The philosophies of authority and democracy are not held because they are especially important to me. They are a means to an end.[19] So is the subordinate a means to an end. His job is to achieve my objectives (authority) and make sense of the firm's system (democracy).

The shape of the crystal is the idea that it's either me or them. Either the boss assumes leadership and then grants freedoms or he assumes comradeship and then stays on constant alert. These working distinctions made by the boss between him and his subordinate create conflicts of interest ('off you go - but what about .....', and, 'tell me about it' - 'I'd rather wait and see') that are worsened by emphasising the means by which they were established. In each case the rule that the style be practical shows the way in which the boss may have to contradict it by being friendly or getting tough. They can move towards the other style under duress and try being 'one of the boys' or 'making sure they know who is the boss'. This right of practicability to determine whether the boss is tougher or more tender when 'something important

crops up' points to a constant conflict within each philosophy. And it leads to the seed of the crystal: to the fact that both philosophies are based on crises of trust.

The crisis of trust is the belief that the boss can only trust his subordinates so far and that they must trust him fully. In practical authority this appears as 'I don't mind how you do it but what I want is .....' And in practical democracy in the injunction that 'I'm sure you are capable of doing it, so I think we'd better do it this way to get it right first time'. Practical authority entails separate lives but 'joint objectives' whilst practical democracy works within joint procedures and guided lives. Both are on the lookout for failures. Both have built-in alibis for failures - insufficient effort and insufficient confidence. These may be the defects the boss suspects in himself. In any event a circle has been constructed whereby the boss anticipates failures and can appreciate them if expressed in terms of his philosophy ('I'm lazy', 'I'm wary') and then he can boss again by more objectives or more guidance.

There are, then, two contradictions in the philosophies of superordination. In their construction being practical can mean an 'authoritarian' becoming pals and a 'democratic' taking off his gloves. At their core neither authoritarian nor democrat trusts his subordinates - as is said 'if you give them an inch they'll take a mile'. Neither authoritarian nor democratic in these terms mean more than practical processes of subordinate control that the boss finds pleasant. Obviously a manager can regard himself as a good and successful manager with either philosophy. Both get results. The implicit contradictions I

have overdrawn to make explicit(indicate)why even the feeling of being a successful boss can lead the manager to uneasy feelings. He wonders whether he is being too hard or too soft. Obviously, too, I have suggested that these two philosophies coexisted in the managers who phrased them. The next matter of stress, it follows, would be between managers holding these opposing philosophies. Managers in the same firm, it is well known, can oppose each other's methods. Diagram 3.B puts briefly the areas in which practical authority and practical democracy are diametrically opposed.

Diagram 3.B

STATEMENTS ABOUT WORK AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT SUGGEST A CONFLICT BETWEEN PRACTICAL AUTHORITY AND PRACTICAL DEMOCRACY AS PHILOSOPHIES OF SUPERORDINATION

Practical Authority	Practical Democracy
WORK	
Our job is largely non-routine.	We work within the policy system.
We have weekly meetings, monthly reviews and action programmes.	We have constant contact and close consultation on all matters.
RELATIONSHIPS	
I lead my team.	I'm as democratic as possible with my colleagues.
I grant freedom and independence wherever possible.	I check most things most of the time. I like to keep in touch.
I treat them the same and avoid favouritism.	I watch some more than others and see who needs help.

What are the grounds for conflict between the two philosophies that would bring the styles into sharp dispute? Basically, they are neither authoritarian nor democratic in the customary rigorous usage; both are a bit of both with appropriate emphasis.

They are analogous of two perogatives of power: subjugation and surveillance. The tragedy, and hence the topic of interminable dispute, is the working relationship. The subordinate is friend, comrade, ally, skivvy and slave. The two styles differ in their approach to this volatile mixture. The authoritarian is cooler and tries to be consistent with subordinates. The democrat warms to the relationship and tries to have a special relationship with each subordinate. The authoritarian might be addressed as John and the democrat as Jack. They may feel that the other is too distant or too familiar with his staff. But there is a broader base of disagreement still. John looks upwards to his seniors to their interests and commands; his loyalty is to the company above. Jack averts his eyes from that which he cannot fathom: he looks downwards; his loyalty is to the depar tment. They genuinely disagree over the ends to which their authority and democracy are put. To John the company's accounts are the clearest and cleanest indication of purpose. Profit is a sure and finely calibrated yardstick. To Jack the atmosphere of reason and the absence of strife is the subtlest sign of his purposes achieved. John, of course, is not averse to the odd show-down with 'difficult' customers. Jack abhors 'letting off steam' and does his best to prevent the contagion spreading to his department. In obvious ways they defend their work from the influence of each other. In hard times there can be endless, fruitless complaints over 'being out of touch' and 'spending too much time with his brood'. John is, at best, a big, elder brother and Jack a kindly uncle (this family metaphor is some indication of how long these philosophies take to develop).

Many young managers are best described as nascent 'authoritatively practicals' or 'democratically practicals'. They show affinities with both philosophies but less resolution, than one who has settled his ideas for a while, and is filling out its style.

A further style practiced by a few is that of Janus.[20] This style professes neither authority nor democracy. Instead there are bitter words about subordinates; complaints of their complicity in undesirable practices, the feeling that they have defected to the side of the workforce. Janus pleads with, and threatens,his subordinates. He appeals for a new era, a new bright beginning in their relationship and he seeks the power to dismiss as many as possible. Janus is probably an 'authoritatively practical' out of his depth. He would like to be a leader and may well have been a successful leader in previous times. But his seeking of every conceivable cane and carrot in the armoury of management signifies that he has lost control. So whilst appeal and abuse may figure somewhere in his style as a boss, his reliance is upon technical impersonality. The machine does his minding. He insists on machine perfection, on his subordinates knowing every technical detail of their operations; of their keeping the closest watch on their workers' fiddles. Systematically he has withdrawn his personality from the relationship. He holds close and undisclosed his positional knowledge - his findings from committees and corridors. It is possible that his last desperate vestige of dominance lies within the effect that this 'non-communication' has. Strangely his path to better times, to being more like John or Jack, is blocked. Fear has

made him shut his mouth on the subjects which interest and affect his subordinates. Janus's purpose and ideal is military discipline.

The stresses of dominance in superordination can now be summarised. Two major styles have been outlined, those of practical authority and practical democracy. Both these styles contain contradictions. They are undermined by their priority of practicality and unsettled by their implicit crisis of trust. Some managers have achieved a working relationship with these styles in which case they come into conflict with each other. 'Newer' managers are achieving these styles and uneasily oscillate between their purposes and practices. Three types lie beyond these styles. Janus has lost control and seeks orders rather than objectives, machines rather than the men. Janus is rare. Rare too, are two types that have risen above the practicalities that make the problems. Young project managers and old department managers are literally on their own. They have distinctive work and, by inference, very supportive bosses. Both these rare types are regarded with pride by their superiors. As rarities that epitomise new style and old style management; of wizzardry and reliability.

I turn now to a consideration of being bossed; to relate the philosophies of superordination to the nature of subordination.

B. Subordination

Subordination has no easy patterns.[21] Instead there are broad themes shared by most managers and handled slightly differently by each. Being dominated is a more complex experience.

Each works out his acceptance of control. Each makes his yoke comfortable and thus desirable. Each cannot imagine life without control and fears his fantasies of failures in control. Subordination is reassuring and weakening - it is this second aspect that provides the first theme; the feeling of vulnerability, the sense of the treadmill.

Let us consider this feeling of exposure, and the futility of composure, in the light of comments on the statement: 'Being in my position means I can set my own work pace'.

'Anybody can set their pace. Or rather you can - if it's high enough.'

'I'm subject to pressures and supposed to be self-motivating.'

'My immediate reaction is that I can set my own pace but there's a heavy time imposition on my freedom.'

'I'm subject to pressures like all of us.'

'If I fail I get my backside kicked.'

'You're dragged along with it.'

'We have to conform overall, but the details we work out ourselves. There's more and more stereotyping and regimentation.'

'The job takes you along.'

'I'm controlled by the nature of the job.'

'I'm driven along. I'd love to be able to do it my way.'

'I'm driven by the very volume and weight of work pushed at me.'

'Normally the work pace is there. I'm paid to do a job. The pressures are inherent in the job and I have to accept them.'

'The factory programme sets my pace.'

In these reflections each manager gives his 'global representation' of that which dominates him. The experience

is objectified and personified by each manager. He is pushed by pressures, pace, constraint (in all, conformity and attendant punishments). Most managers would agree that these are the ingredients of being a subordinate. Few would agree what makes it so. Each manager has his own word, a phrase that he uses to describe the locus and nature of power over him. The more this power is objectified the more the manager believes he copes with it. The 'objects' which control him are the product; the job; the limits; the established patterns. The more the manager personifies power the more fearful and resentful he seems to be with 'my executives; higher-ups; group and central staff and top management'.

Group and central staff 'descend from time to time'. Their strength is that the whole system is sensitive. 'Management by exception' applies to describe the preferred subordination style - leave that which conforms and concentrate on correcting non-conformity. Many managers commented that they would not wear a sports jacket, that a public school accent did not fit in or that one of their peers was over anxious for new office furniture. They 'told tales' on each other, resentful of someone getting away with it and reasonably convinced that their complaining would not fall on deaf ears.

'The system' is sensitive; it encourages mutual criticism; it encourages a group to cast out an individual. Managers are sensitive towards each other's impressions. Sensitive is how most managers see the system and especially when they see it in terms of leading personalities. Sensitive, in any case, means the necessity to tread warily in extra-departmental matters. A

crucial but obscure element of subordination, then, is the impact of the maxim 'divide and rule'. The managers are divided into rival departments and are suspicious of each other. And the euphemism for suspicion, intrigue, conspiracy and feudis 'politics'.

Ten managers immediately redefined important matters as political matters and many more included the notion of politics on reflection. Politics is a word often used with scorn in industry. It refers to what aspects are disliked. Continuous irritation can be felt about malicious gossip. A manager took over a section that had 'broken' a number of managers during the previous three years. On his arrival a book was opened on how long this one would last. He felt other managers enjoyed this speculation and talked of it amongst themselves. After five months in his position he was convinced that other managers were more interested in the book and its odds than they were in him. After six months he was moved to another site.

Suspicion of gossip can escalate to detection of plots. A manager's position is secure and precarious. He certainly has the job today and should act as if the job matters to him for ever, but he should also be prepared to welcome the unending changes that affect and even end his job. Rumour is the reminder, in part, that his competence can be faulted, or his career thwarted, by a change of heart - his colleagues grow cool, freeze him out and appear to enjoy each other more. 'It's just a matter of time' they say. 'They've seen the writing on the wall.' They're writing him off. Rumour is both a cause of disfavour and its accompaniment.

Beyond rumour and particular plots there are vendettas. Some executives get it in their heads that a particular manager has got to go. Their problems, it seems, stem from this character. They need someone more amenable, less defensive or simply less dull. The offending manager is a vital link in a chain of change; somehow or other despite his value; despite what he has done well, his removal solves a burning problem. Politics, in this instance, means a full blown plot, a war of attrition whereby over a number of months, or years, a case is constructed and supported and protractors split irrevocably apart. On occasions these vendettas are unsuccessful simply because they take so long to achieve and the problematic manager's position has altered considerably.

Gossip, plots and vendettas constitute immediate politics. The general politics involve reading the minds of the board and speculating what their wishes mean.[22] The general politics shades into the problems of dealing with anyone with more power: that their ideas have more authority and that their foibles are often more important than their main job. Political matters are where you may offend someone more powerful and be answerable whether or not disturbances were intentional. What matters, then, do managers and executives take to their immediate superior?

'I take political matters.'

'There can be political overtones.'

'I need to raise some issues to sound them out.'

'I take those decisions that will affect other departments.'

'I take those matters where there is likely to be a come-back from higher levels.'

'I keep him advised of the general trend and anything out of the ordinary - which could involve him with his superior.'
'We have an agreement that I let him know when other departments or top management might be concerned.'

Politics as a cliche is more than shorthand; it is a calculated understatement. Politics in industry, it has been said, are generally disliked and distrusted. Politics means acts achieved by underhand methods; loaded gossip; conspiracy; threats of coercion and turning a blind eye. The dread of politics comes from the capacity of the power structure to turn men into machines.[23]

Politics in this context is a periodic and potent surfacing of power. It makes managers aware of the need to be astute. As politics are always something of a threat, the immediate boss is also someone in one's defence. The boss, your boss, is not a damnator; he is a defender. There are good practical, i.e., political, reasons for being close, for being loyal to one's immediate superordinate. A boss can share the fate of his subordinate and clear his future actions. You get the boss on your side because he needs you. The group - yourself and your boss - can come to represent the purpose of work as loyalty and loyalty to each others' purposes:
'I don't work for the company. I work for "X". He is the company to me. I have a flair for knowing what he's interested in. We're blood brothers. We've cut our wrists.'
'I do not delegate upwards. We make decisions like touchtypists. I know clearly what he should know. I never give him anything embarrassing. I always give him two avenues.'

But such expressions of devotion are rare. Most managers feel dissociated from their superior most of the time. The boss, the superordinate, is set away in the distance.[24]

A whole range of feelings are associated with being on the receiving end of this distance. 'It's Japanese management here. I inform my boss of the decisions I have made. Eighty per cent of my decisions he never needs to worry about. I do a process of delegating upwards, otherwise he comes to me.'

'This job is like the engine room. Messages come down from the bridge, we keep a full head of steam, while somebody says where we are going. We hope!'

'I've never really had a boss. I had one once. He was a bit of a boffin. He came in once a fortnight. You might call it management by remote control.'

Some gave reasons for their boss's distance.

'I'm a bit of a lone wolf in this respect. I'm an expert in my area. He personally couldn't do it. We have to work together. I don't ask for any decisions from him because I am the master in my own sphere. Other decisions come down and the real pieces of work go on.'

'The less I see of him the better I do my job. I see him about four times a year.'

'My executive leaves all day to day work to me. It's possibly confidence, or it's possibly lack of time.'

A further and final manager was annoyed at distance.

'I've not even seen him once a week. About a year ago I asked for half an hour a week of his time, and even now my request for a meeting is refused.'

Distance is countervailed. Managers say that when there is trouble there is no difficulty in finding the boss - he has already found you. Worse, they say, their real bosses are committees. Committees smoke screen the boss and choke him off, the man becomes famous by being told by the Tannoy that he is wanted at a meeting. For the manager, his committees are too many men meeting for too long, to discuss too many subjects and smoke too many cigarettes with too few results. Corporate power diffuses and evaporates in committees; they serve to seal promises publicly and make a dressing down a lesson for all.[25]

It may be that the concern with subordination to a boss in this research has too narrow a focus. It is possible that the experience of being bossed is the experience of being within a sphere, the experience of being gripped rather than led; of being encompassed rather than spot-lit. I might have sought subordination less specifically.

C. Autonomy

No manager is free, everywhere there are claims of command. Action is restrained by the system and reaction is acquiescence to that restraint. How free does the manager feel within his limits? How mechanical does he feel?

More responses were given to autonomy statements than to subordination and superordination statements. These replies have been organised in a composite rather than a typological form. The stresses of autonomy are more readily evident than those of subordination and superordination. The statements have a tone of manoeuvre, of angling for a place in a sea of positions. They sometimes ring with the resignation with which they were spoken.

The action statements are taken first. These,it may be remembered, are statements of, for example, 'Being in my position means I can get things going when I have a problem.' The first group state that there are types of problems with which the managers cannot deal.

'There are decisions involving politics, superiors, staffing, and pricing with which I cannot deal.'

'I rely on people around me, above and below, but I have a say. I'm allowed sometimes to develop my own ideas.'

'There are shades of grey in all of these statements. Some decisions obviously stem from higher management.'

'There are quite wide parameters here. We haven't got complete freedom to play around.'

'Within the parameters we are given, I'm the boss, but I can be overruled.'

'Generally speaking I can deal with my own problems. With matters of salary, no.'

'Many decisions are taken elsewhere. I have no complete authority, but I can bring them in from time to time.'

'Decisions can be made elsewhere.'

'Technically I make my decisions, but the development of personnel is fully controlled.'

Nevertheless, or perhaps of course, the manager has his patch; his department is his own. Departmental issues are the manager's prime area of action.

'I can enforce decisions with subordinates. Other parts are more difficult.'

'Strictly speaking, it's true I can get my decisions going, but even they are subject to being acceptable to my superiors.'

'I can make decisions from below, but with above I have to prove them.'

'My priorities come from above, but I can indicate my own priorities as well.'

'Meet your budget and they leave you alone. Managers and operators are on piecework.'

'I want more freedom. Unit managers are the little boys of the outfit. At times my arms are tied. I have some freedom but not as much as I would like. We're not tough enough around here; management is not held in respect.'

'We have a commonsense attitude here. We take decisions when they are not contrary to company policy.'

'They are the frustrations of inertia in a big company.'

'My place in the hierarchy means I am dependent on all the people above. It's like being on a draughtsboard, wanting to get to the other side, across or around all the obstacles.'

The manager is given the ends and must work out the means.

'I can affect the solution but not necessarily the problems statement.'

'I am always subject to the necessary support from above. I decide how, not what, should be done.'

Or, more broadly,

'I have no authority in this position. I use my personality.'

'I have little authority as such, but I use the authority of trust and friendship.'

'My successor will find he has no authority. Profit's system creates puppetry.'

In summary, the managers, when asked of their actions, when asked of their freedoms, mention especially their blinkers. They mention the constraints set upon them, the lines on which they are put to run and the pace at which they are chased. A few revelled in this and worked hard at what freedom there was and made it more and more of their own freedom.

Most said that their actions were departmental, the priorities set and some decisions being made for them.

Turning now to reaction, I seek the extent to which the manager thinks he has become one of Pavlov's dogs. The first statement was:

'A person in my position would feel like a sitting target.'

Virtually every manager responded to this statement. Two managers attributed this feeling to the level of their positions.

'I am a sitting target by virtue of my position, but I don't feel it personally.'

'I am responsible for this outfit, so I am, I must be a sitting target.'

Next, some managers said they were sitting targets by virtue of their responsibilities.

'I am, just by the nature of my job.'

'Inspection is the whipping post, but I expect this and am mellowed to this now.'

'It's inevitable in my job, production is basic, their characters are always looking for alibis on why things are not being done and service departments are always brought in to support them.'

'You are open to criticism but I don't mean that anybody is trying to stab me in the back.'

'It is my job but it doesn't worry me because I expect this.'

'Anyone in the hierarchy is a sitting target, but I have no persecution complex.'

'You can't always win and sometimes you can't make a draw. We are all in that position.'

Being paid for it helps.

'But the target can usually stand up. I don't object to it. The salary still comes in.'

'In so far as I am responsible for all the work, it's what I am paid for.'

'You are a sitting target for anyone who wants action from you. As head of department you are ultimately responsible for it. You always get the brickbats and never the bouquets, but it's what I am paid for.'

There are more active forms of accommodation. There are those who take what might be called evasive action.

'I can manoeuvre by passing the buck on. There is an art to avoid it.'

'Management gets pressures and shot at, but we're not quite as immobile as the phrase indicates. You can duck.'

'We're vulnerable, but we're not a sitting target. We move about too quick.'

There is also retaliative action.

'You're right in the firing line and when the bullets start coming no one else wants to know you. They all duck for cover, but I'm used to it and fire them back.'

There is also collective defence, dumping the load, deflecting the bullets, passing on the problem.

'To some extent that's true. If they're going to hammer someone they start with me, but I might delegate the hammering.'

'It could be. But my boss is behind my back and in case of unfair sniping he would make sure that I survive.'

'When under attack we form a thin red line with the team. We close ranks and get some sort of spirit.'

There are still those, however,who feel a sitting target; clearly; fully; without any defence; without any impression that their job defends them - the job sets them up.

'I feel like that and very naked at times.'

'It comes from above, below and across. I get advice, help and demands.'

'In certain cases, I am vulnerable.'

'Yes, it comes from up, down and across.'

But stress is a paradoxical phenomenon. There are ways in which stress is a compliment. If it is true that the higher you go the harder it gets, then the harder it is the more important you are. Further, it is possible to believe that being a sitting target, not simply conveys importance, but also conveys possibly future importance. Stress can be sought as well as felt, the man promotes himself. He can feel that unless he is under enormous

pressure, he is beginning to stagnate.

'I am a target for criticism and condemnation and should be for motivation.'

'Everybody says I am a sitting target, but if you feel you are you shouldn't be in the job. I accept the hazards of promotion and firing as part of the job. I grow into the job and accept the ever intensifying pace.'

'I'm responsible for this outfit so I am a sitting target. I must be.'

'A production control manager can never completely win. Virtually any problem ends up there: the ultimate of nutcrackers. But I enjoy it nevertheless.'

'I accept it and wish to be.'

Managers are moving, rather than sitting, targets. They weave, dodge, cover themselves in protective clothing and fire back. Some enjoy 'being shot at'.[26] It might be expected, then, that managers believe 'a person in my position feels that he ought to hide in order to get any work done.'

For some hiding is a good idea but difficult in practice.

'It's impossible to hide here.'

'They don't let me.'

'It's not true that I am free of responsibility or work. I like to get ten minutes now and again, but it justcan't be done.'

'I have very little time to myself. I wish it were so. There are times when you have to work with all the interruptions you get.'

As before, there are evasive actions; ways of hiding successfully.

'I hide to plan, but I am afraid my job entails meeting people.'

'I make a conscious effort to avoid meetings and walking around.'

'You get so inundated at times. This is where delegation comes in. You have to resolve your own problems without any help, so I think aloud to my first lieutenant.'

Evasive actions, or reactions, entail having somewhere to go. For some production managers, this was a production conference room when vacant. For other managers, it was each other's room. For one manager it was the company library. Some leave the telephone off the hook or instruct their secretaries that they are not at home. Visits outside the factory can be drawn out a little. On occasions managers said they felt guilty asking their second in charge, or their secretary to lie for them. But they felt that the benefits that they gained for these people justified their lying.

Hiding is not simply from other people and their many demands. Hiding is also from the level of noise that occurs in the factory. Most managers said they took their more important work home. Their real hiding was at home. At home they were safe from work.

'My most productive time is spent at home.'

'The physical environment here means that detailed reports have to be done elsewhere and home is the best place.'

'I hide not to do the job but because the physical environment and noise level mean paperwork is better done elsewhere.'

'For paperwork, but not brainwork, I hide at home.'

'There is a bit of hiding. I have to take things home.'

Few managers felt they were literally hunted. Most managers felt they were able to do their jobs whilst at work; but not to do all of their work whilst there. They take work home to avoid noise and interruption - to be able to think clearly for a long period of time.

The final reaction statement was 'a person in my position would feel that most of his time he has to himself'. The responses to this statement provide a general basis of understanding the evasive actions that are normally taken.

> 'Ninety percent of this job is a matter of selling innovation. There is a shortage of money, staff, space. I am against a lot of vested interests, so 80% of my time is spent bargaining.'
>
> 'Most of my day I am dealing with people.'
>
> 'I'm afraid not.'
>
> 'I will tackle the most important jobs at a given time and am to that extent not my own master.'
>
> 'It's negligible in your own office. My work is spread all over the factory.'
>
> 'Contact with others is the way I do my job.'
>
> 'Less than 50% I have to myself.'
>
> 'Most of your time is spent with your own people. You circulate and discuss.'
>
> 'It couldn't be further from the truth. 95% I am with others, so it's after hours and at home when I do my work.'
>
> 'I have no spare time.'
>
> 'I can't imagine that anyone in industry could agree with that.'

It is conversation with other managers that makes a manager's job reactive. It is rare for managers to make decisions and it is rare for managers to write their decisions <u>because</u> it is rare for managers to clinch a decision quickly. When a problem is nearly exhausted a decision is made upon it; alternatives have been closed and action is imperative. Managers deal more than they decide.

D. <u>Action and Reaction: a summary and an observation</u>

Action was discussed in terms of the way in which the managers' thoughts are controlled. It was suggested that managers

have their problems stated for them and work on the ways in which to solve problems made their own. There are many problems with which managers cannot deal and these are the crucial ones. Managers do not have the right of hire and fire, they do not have the right of pricing their own work. Their rights are the rights of negotiation.

Reaction concerns control of time. The job of managers is meeting people. There is little unallocated time. There is negligible time in which a manager can determine what he does. The control over thought complements the control over time. Managers are blinkered and fettered. When they do need some control over their thought and time they have let-out clauses between themselves to cover their independence. There are places to go, acceptable half-truths and the sanctuary of home.

'I am not in control of my destiny.'

'We all come to work to do as we are bid.'

'I supply my own codeines.'

A few managers thrive on limited areas of thought and limited amounts of personal time. Some statements indicated an obvious glee when faced with this level of demand and this sort of demand. They feel that the more their action is limited, the more they are to react, the more they are doing.

These managers hold this view for good reasons. They hold that power is not there (power is not granted), power is seized, then exercised. The more power you seize, the more power you have. Four managers expressed this idea clearly, with commitment. They quoted more senior managers in their support. They believed that their job was to make power, not to take power from other managers, but

to take whatever power they needed to do whatever jobs, and then to do whatever jobs they thought made more power. These managers had developed an entrepreneurial mentality in a managerial context. They had ignored the rule of corporate power, and exercised a prerogative of personal power. Each was engaged in project work, outside the mainstream of management work. Young Apollos roam free, other managers try to make the rules work.

Apollos can be found in both Mersey and Midland though the two companies had different general response patterns to the statements of action and reaction. At Midland there was a clear understanding that each manager had a distinct patch and that each intrusion into this sphere must be met with a definite compliance. That is, each manager felt that he had a precise area of responsibility and distinctive powers within it. Each manager also felt, however, that when ordered from above he should move and offer no resistance. At Midland the manager is both the tower of strength and dusty rubble. On his own he is to be very strong and when there are demands he is to be very weak. The contradiction of a Midland manager is the contradiction of his enormous strength when permitted to act freely and his enormous weakness when he is taken over.

In contrast, Mersey had not such clear distinction on 'sphere of influence', nor any clear deference towards intrusion by seniors into that sphere. Rather at Mersey there was continuous dealing, diving, disappearing and fawning. Managers at Mersey make their patch rather than run it, they are making it and remaking it. This means that the managers at Mersey were on more equal terms with senior managers. The distinctions between senior

managers and junior managers, the distinction between executives and managers, so obvious at Midland was in no sense so evident at Mersey.

The Midland's pattern of precise responsibility and deference produced a comprehensive power structure. The power lines were exclusive and exhaustive. Mersey's pattern consisted of considerably smaller spheres per manager with the insulation of neutral zones between them. The zones maintained distance between managers and meant that some work activity was not under any direct control. Dealing between managers could be over these activities. In one manager's words, Mersey was 'wide open'.

Superordination, subordination and autonomy are 'soft' aspects of power. There is no indication of the tasks that they involve. The following section turns to the harder aspects of power, to the content of managerial work and power defined from this perspective.

(iv) Rank, power and duty

Domination dealt with power over subjects. We turn now to duty; to power over objects. The objects are the outcropping of corporate resources. Managerial power has been defined as corporate power. As duty, such power has to do with the resources that are made and used by the company.

Two perspectives have been combined to relate duty through resources to task. Initially, the idea of system is used to map resources and then the work of another is plagiarised to specify activities. Task, then, is general term for the relationship between resources and activities. Duty is what is done.

The company can be seen as a system, as a machine which processes production. Resources are drawn in and pushed through and emerge beyond as products. Technically the process is one of input, throughput and output. Sociologically the system has a setting which adds a fourth category of interrelationship with the system's environment. The scheme of seeing the company 'as if' a system distinguishes resources in a more or less exclusive fashion. The resources are men, money, equipment, raw materials and ideas.[26] The 'career' of each resource is traced from its recruitment to its employment and productive consequence. In detail the scheme is not as neat as it might be. Activities do not always fit into single categories. It does not matter, though, that the scheme is mechanical and incomplete. Its value is that of a collating principle for the many activities in which managers are engaged.

In a system[27] inputs and outputs are reasonably clear. Throughputs are more complicated. They resemble the man of physics' 'black box'. He knows what goes in and what comes out. He can only imagine what has happened within the body of the system by considering what has happened to that which went into it. The black box of the company's resources entail both their allocation and their subsequent control. Within throughputs there are these two sub processes. Diagram 3.C depicts the reasoning so far.

The diagram shows how the scheme fills out into 'job areas' that roughly correspond to their system designation. The scheme has a number of unfortunate weaknesses[28] but its main strength is secure. It affords a framework for specific activities.

No manager's job is analysed. All managers were asked

Diagram 3C

CATEGORIES OF MANAGERIAL ACTIVITY VIEWING MANAGEMENT CONTROL AS A SYSTEM

Dimension	Resource	INPUT	THROUGHPUT		OUTPUT	Dimension 6. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS
			ALLOCATION	CONTROL		
1.	PEOPLE	1. Staffing	supervision 2.1 Allocation of tasks	2.2. Training 2.3. Discipline	conflict containment 3.1. Preventative 3.2. Palliative	1.1. General Public 1.2. Charities 1.3 Government Bodies
2.	CAPITAL	1. Capital securing	2.1 Allocation of Finance	2.2. Financial control	3. Profit Making	2.1 Direct Competitors 2.2 Business Associations
3.	MATERIALS	1. Purchasing	administration 2.1 Paperwork 2.2. Information Control			3. Consumers
4.	EQUIPMENT AND LAND		2.1. Planning Production 2.1 Land Utilization	2.3 Reviewing Production		
5.	IDEAS	1. Connecting with idea sources		2.1. Analysing ideas		4. Ideas Centres

about the same activities to see if they were 'in' their jobs.[29] All activities needed to be put in such a way that managers could relate them to what they did. Consequently activities, even now, are referred to in somewhat abstract terms.[30]

Following the conceptual convention of this thesis, each resource has been called a scale. Each category or subscale, within these scales will be given in turn to show what is being asked, discuss why and to look at some preliminary results. Table 3.7 gives the questioning and activities about staffing.

The question asks 'how often do you have the last word or decision in this area?'[31] Power in object relations is sought in a colloquial fashion. The five alternative answers grade from never to always. Always having power will be called power; infrequently to frequently having power will be called influence, and never having power will be called powerlessness.

Two main principles are woven in the six areas; they involve either policy or procedure and continuity or change.[32] A policy sets a company wide rules. When policy rules are refined to regulations governing particular acts they become set procedures. Policy is a higher level of power than procedure. Policy can change direction whilst procedure can modify interpretation. Similarly, change is a greater order of power than continuity. Evidently, policy and procedure, change and continuity are the space of time of law. Policy alters through sets of procedures to a procedure; from 'change in recruitment policy' (2), to 'change in the size of the labour force' (5), to the recruitment of new employees (4). A similar continuum from the general to the specific can be realised in activities 1, 6 and 3. Activities 1, 2, 5 and 6 mention change,

and activities 3 and 4 deal with continuity. The construction of activities has been through a combination of policy or procedure, change or continuity. Each area or activity refers to two of the four alternatives, making four alternative combinations in each subscale. All power subscales for power in object relations have the same combinations in their patterning.

Three staffing activities were answered differently by Mersey and Midland managers. Table 3.8 gives the numerical count for each of the permitted alternatives.

Midland managers profess more power than Mersey managers in all three activities and show more slackening of influence. Though there is no satisfactory test for this hunch, activities that do reveal distinctions will be similarly examined in the hope of an emerging pattern.

The resource of men (or more simply, people) is, next, a throughput. Men are allocated and controlled. The general term for this throughputting is supervisory activity. Supervision can have at least two meanings. It can mean super<u>vision</u>, or better sight in the sense of seeing more of what is happening throughout the company. A second meaning is that of <u>super</u>vision, of overlooking the activities of others. The second meaning has the desired implications of activity. Managers' duties entail keeping an eye on the productive pyramid that spreads out below them. Supervision as allocation means giving out jobs and as control it means training and discipline. Table 3.9 gives the lists of supervisory activity under those three headings.

Policy activities are the first two in each sub-subscale. A distinction has been made between subordinates and employees.

Subordinates are the manager's direct responsibility; employees are all managers' subordinates.

Allocation of tasks is both the allocation of whole jobs (2, 5 and 6) and the allocation of particular work (1, 3 and 4).

Training is both hard and soft. In hard form training is directly related to the work being done (1, 3 and 4), to actual operations that need skill in their execution. Training is also soft, it is counselling; encouragement rather than instruction (2, 5 and 6). Long term training of employees is encouraging them to identify their own development with that of their jobs and the company. The softness of counselling is an appeal to the making of this sort of identification.

Discipline also comes in hard and soft forms. Appraisals police an employee's movements. Discipline judges and sentences indiscretions or inadequacies in such movements. Appraisal is urging on an employee and discipline is telling him off.[33]

The laying off of workers (7 and 8) are more than simple acts of discipline. They are included here by virtue of their quieting effect (fear engendering) upon the workers that remain.

There is similarity between the duties of staffing activities at Mersey and Midland. Table 3.10 gives the frequencies per alternative for six activities.

All but one activity are supervising subordinates. Generally few Mersey or Midland managers have power over or influence upon change in employee appraisal policy. This is a reminder that executives have influence and managers are powerless in matters affecting all employees. It is a reminder that executives and managers are primarily employees themselves.

In dealing with subordinates, managers have either power or substantial influence. But even over subordinates managers do not have 'absolute' power, their subordinates can be trained, transferred and assigned by others. For some managers even this power is not clear cut. And if this power is not absolute, it is most unlikely that there will be power over the allocation and control of other resources. At Midland, assigning, transferring and training subordinates is more a matter of influence than at Mersey which is consistent with the dominance patterns noted previously.

Duties involved with the outputs of people have been titled 'conflict containment'. 'Dealing with people', managers say, is their big problem. Such dealings are in terms of potential or actual conflict. Agreement avoids the likelihood of conflict, disagreement nurtures conflict. The manager's duty is to get others to do things; conflict is created by the final necessity of force.[34]

Conflict containment separates into conflict prevention and conflict palliation. There are duties designed to minimise conflict and duties to staunch it once it has become explicitly expressed. Table 3.11 gives the activities under these two headings.

Conflict containment entails acts designed to increase morale and acts designed to increase togetherness between different levels of employees. Long service awards provide bench marks for indicating a high level of morale (3). Pep talks encourage morale (4) and (5). Sports and social facilities encourage a healthy, happy, harmonious, harmless atmosphere (2 and 6). Welfare

activities[35] (penny in the pound, sick visiting, outings for retired employees) serve as a safety net, not large but definite, for individual misfortune.

Conflict is contained by the resolution of particular conflicts. Particulars of these conflicts are over pay, conditions and are with individual employees or groups of employees and usually include their representatives. Grievances refer to working conditions (1, 2, 3 and 4) whilst agreements refer to conditions of earnings (5). Employees are separated into clerical staff and manual labour, those paid by wage (4 and 7) and those on salaries (5 and 8).

There have, of course, been attempts to institutionalise the experience of conflict. Industrial relations managers, executives and directors have been appointed for this purpose and regular meetings are held with a view to ironing out differences 'before they get serious' (9 and 10).

A comparison of Mersey and Midland reveals a prevailing powerlessness on conflict prevention activities with Midland managers having more influence than Mersey managers. Table 3.12 gives the frequencies per alternative on five conflict prevention duties.

Midland had a highly developed sports and social club with over sixty subsidiary clubs for hobbies and a sports ground 'worthy of international competitors'. Midland also had two other aspects of paternalistic authority in a close involvement with each employee and a dignified ceremony to reward long service. Midland managers have more influence than Mersey managers in these conflict prevention activities. More marked differences between the firms can be seen in the extent of power and influence upon conflict

palliation activities. (See Table 3.13)

Although most Midland and Mersey managers are equally as powerless in dealing with disputes, some Midland managers have consistently a little more power and influence in each activity. This is particularly so in dealing with grievances. Generally speaking, then, Midland managers' duties involve a little more power and influence in dealing with people. Midland has a more personal way of dealing with the problems that people constitute.

The next resource is that of money, or capital. The purpose of work for the company is to turn all resources into profit and in one sense this means that some money is taken and invested to make more money. Consequently money is both an actual property and an actual evaluation. Every managerial activity could be said to involve money and monetary calculation. Capital as a precise resource really means funds at the point of acquisition. Capital is first secured, gained or acquired for the company's purpose. Table 3.14 gives four activities of inputting the resource of capital.

These duties inadequately cover capital securing. Six Mersey managers and eight Midland managers had influence in dealing with institutional investors' representatives and the processing payment to the company. No manager had power in these duties and almost all managers were powerless to affect them.

Capital is either gained or lost. In financial terms any expenditure runs the risk of being a potential loss. Consequently the allocation of resources and control of financial activity is most rigorous, the more rigorous perhaps than the allocation and control of other resources. Table 3.15 gives

the activities for throughputting capital.

Allocation of resources is about budgeting (1). The budget specifies labour costs (2, 3 and 8), costs on equipment and costs that invest capital in capital equipment (4, 5, 6 and 7).

Financial control activity is in terms of production, expenditure and of Profit's objectives. Those connected with production must relate their costs to the costs of production. Those less connected with production must set their profit objectives in such a way that they relate to the overall profitability of production. Profit objectives are a means of controlling costs before profits are established. For once there are outcomes, there are actual profits to be discussed. (See Table 3.16)

Though profit is an output, it has a past, present and future. It has been made, is being made and will be made. There are postmortems and projections. Postmortems involve studying figures for gaps; for estimated excess (6 and 8). This scrutiny may well lead to increasing controls in expenditure (2 and 6). Clearly all profits and lack of them require justification (5 and 6) for at stake is the shareholder's receipt of profits (4). The duty towards profit is also a problem of future performance. Companies, like progressive nations, draw up plans to secure both their short term and their long term future. These plans are intended as yardsticks for future performance. They are intended to offer objectives, to offer specific points of direction and levels of achievement in such a way that there is obviously an increase in profit (1 and 3).

Four Mersey managers and five Midland managers influence the preparation of the annual statement. Generally again, neither Mersey nor Midland managers approach the higher levels of dealing with capital (either as an input or as an output). They justify their past inadequacies. Managers are in business to make a profit and they do not see it once it is made.

Managers do, however, see what is being made: they work with materials. The crudest view of the company (as if Profit are wholly a machine) would be that it chews up metals and plastics and churns out finished telecommunications goods.[36] And, in fact, a weakness of the input scale dealing with raw materials is that it takes this picture too seriously.[37]

Raw materials are located, priced, delivered and checked. Buying is not as big an expense at Profit as is their labour, but supplies, service and quality are held to be important. For just as buying can be seen as fixed cost with the more variable costs of machines and labour, so buying can be seen as a competitive cost and one that can be successfully reduced with slight detriment to the product. The problem, as Profit sees it, is to get the right quality in the right quantity from the right supplier at the right time, and with as little trouble as possible to put it through the processing production and out into a product. That is, buying is also related to storage. The more stock is carried the more space is occupied and the less productive space there is. In the less than halcyon days of current capitalism competitive price and the cost of stock storage is forcing an increasing interest in competitive buying and by this Profit means rock bottom cost.

The throughput of raw materials is the administration of

production.[38] Table 3.18 lists administrative activity.

Administration has been seen as the making and handling of paperwork. Paperwork is the generation of paper control over the information processed and over information processing machinery. Allocation, then, goes from really bread and butter tasks, like drafting letters (5), through the more public tasks like drafting agendas (6), and the preparation of contracts as far as the preparation and arrangement of manuals (2 and 8) that constitute major pieces of production in the company's administration.

Meanwhile, control in administration means sustaining surveillance and the machineries which process its findings. And in two surveillance activities a small difference appears between Mersey and Midland (see Table 3.20). More Mersey managers have power in both making their own reports and examining those of others.

The next resource is that of capital equipment.[39] In the scale devised, the allocation and control of capital equipment includes that of a companion resource, namely land. (See Table 3.21)

The allocation and control of technical activity has no clear distinctions between them. Allocation has been taken to mean scheduling; the arrangement of priorities, and the general maintenance/production flow. Whilst review has been taken to mean of more general aspects of inspection. However, if the classifications are weak the specific tasks incorporated under them are not, though it is possible that the complexities of these activities are somewhat obscured by the simple statements that are made.

Both Mersey and Midland managers are predominantly

powerless over these activities. Technical control is the centre of advisory control. It is control over work, and through work control over workers. On five such activities more Midland managers have both power and influence. (See Table 3.22)

Table 3.22 is the penultimate comparative use of power in activities data. There has emerged an incomplete pattern. This consists of many Mersey and Midland managers being powerless in the systematised activities and more Midland managers having power and influence over some of them. As such the comparison does suggest that the 'parent' company Profit has made more inroads into the Mersey firm and any 'equalisation' of Midland to Mersey would result in some Midland managers losing some of the power that they hold. In brief, Midland is a little more self controlled.

The final resource is that of ideas. Ideas are relevant to all resources.[40] Clearly managers are expected 'to have ideas', on each of the resources discussed so far. To put this another way, managers are expected to use imagination in the design and consideration of all their actions. Thus dealing with ideas as a resource has a restricted meaning. It means connecting with the 'ideas centres' that are available to managers. These 'ideas centres' are formed by companies for their own use. They produce media from which managers can take novel forms of managerial practice. (See Table 3.23)

The activities separate into those that involve techniques in managerial control (5 and 6) and those that involve contact with the ideas centres themselves (1, 2, 3 and 7).[41]

The throughputting of ideas is the analysis of ideas and

the analysis of production in terms of these ideas. There is a direct relationship between diagnosis and prognosis. Analysing something that is wrong is the basis of recommending ways in which it might work right. But though these activities have a specific context they are in continuous operation. Table 3.24 shows the open endedness (the unendingness) of five such activities.

The title of this subscale may now seem misleading. It is not ideas that are analysed. Production operations are analysed in terms of ideas. The ideas are to change what is made and how it is made.

Meanwhile dealing with other organisations has been made a separate scale. The system connects with other systems. For in system terms, there is a spreading out of the company to meet its environment.[42] And for each resource there are systems beyond the company. The first resource was that of people. It groups into the general public, charities and government (see Table 3.25).

The public may be general but the company's way of relating to it is specific. Advertising is indirect and public relations is direct. The product is advertised and the company's image is painted. As Profit's products are already sold, the company concentrates on its image. Image making varies from public speaking (6) frequenting with journalists (5) and feting VIPs (4). These activities are more than 'mere public relations exercises' by virtue of the preparation, tact and precision which they demand.

Relationships with charities are also, in part, public relations exercises. The company is asked for charity and seeks to give it. Many local concerns include the welfare of its poorer employees and Profit gives annually a lump sum to a political party.[43]

The task of relating to government bodies is more delicate. Local authorities have an interest in the employment figures and their future. Their representatives also enforce regulations (for example fire regulations), police the perimeter and grant permission for developments. Further the national government is also Profit's major consumer. There are many mutually beneficial reasons for collaboration. It is not so much that favours must be sought. Existing favours have to be maintained.

Next there are businesses investing capital in similar ways to Profit. These business groups have been simply separated into direct competitors and employers' associations. (See Table 3.26)

Nationally, Profit has a virtual monopoly for its product, but internationally Profit does engage in competition. So the investigation of a competitor's activities makes the manager a member of the jet set. These investigations are primarily concerned with developments of a product and the developments in the technology of production. In the latter category the contact need not be with direct competitors. There can be a usage for machines that have been developed in other areas of light, medium and heavy engineering. And clearly, even with direct competitors, there is a value in knowing the productive capacity of each other's machines.

Business associations are many and varied. The spread from local chambers of commerce through to confederations of the engineering industry to the British Institute of Management and to the Employers' Federation. The task of relating to these bodies has both a hard and a soft edge. There are ways of comparing

employment of managers and ways of establishing styles of management. On the harder edge there is a need for consensus; a firm strong line between them and employees. A relationship with an employing federation is both a membership of a club and also a membership of an army platoon. There are ways in which this relationship is chummy, and shared with good friends, and there are ways in which this relationship is vital for collective defence against the collective onslaught of employees.

Profit's problems with consumers are not so much finding consumers or establishing a market but ensuring that the consumers take the products in the way in which Profit manufactures them.[44]

The consumer has its own inspectorate on the site. This peculiar phenomenon of having an area on the site in which no employee manager, executive or director may enter presents Profit management with some considerable problems of surveillance. Profit's managers kindly adapted their answers to these questions in the light of this experience. (See Table 3.27)

Finally, there are innumerable bodies keen to advise the manager on doing his job. There are also bodies which can be used by management for their own purposes.[45] Table 3.28 gives but five of the multitude of sponsors and encouragers which managers are in contact with.

The five activities hardly approach the range and complexity of contacts that managers can make. Nevertheless, the list is of the more immediate ones and others were occasionally written in by managers themselves.

On contact with other systems, the clearest differences between Mersey and Midland appear. No Mersey manager answered that

he had power on any of these activities and only six noted that they had slight influence in dealing with the general public and business groups. Twelve Midland managers answered in terms of power and influence across all the subscales. Mersey managers' control stopped at the factory gates whilst some Midland managers slipped out through the railings and others drove out in style. It seems particularly relevant that some Midland managers deal with other businesses and their consumers. Midland is more independent of Profit. Some of its managers do have near directorate activities. Mersey managers are more like Mersey workers - they have their powers and influences within the factory walls.

(v) Rank, power and duty: the relationship of power, influence and powerlessness to stress

One hundred and forty-nine activities have been itemised to assess the manager's power to act. This in no way considers everything the managers do or how they do it. And there are problems with this form of analysis.[46] The measure is an estimate of power and not an analysis that includes a mode of validation. I must take the manager's word for it to use scores at all.

In what sense can the activities be analysed to produce an estimate of power? Some activities may imply enormous power whilst others are relatively trivial matters. Theoretically each activity is a universal: that is every manager could have access to every activity. This access to a universal is the impetus of the manager's power. In everyday terms the amount of power he has is the size of his slice of cake.[47] Much depends on how the

data are treated and the approach does have the merit of being at least simple. Having the last word is being in the position to have your own way. This means that a veto, an approval, or an advocacy are treated as the same. The last word can be the word that immobilises action, promotes it or has it accepted. These three possibilities are considered to be those of power. Thus, if the manager says he always has the last word in a task, he is counted as having power over that task. Whilst if the manager says he infrequently to frequently has the last word he is counted as having influence. Power is hitting the arrow home whilst influence is deflecting its course.

Every activity (every score) is treated as relevant to estimates of a manager's power and influence. The scores are treated as having real properties; the score which says the manager has the last word on a task counts as five, whilst the score which says he has influence counts as the influence that he registers from two to four. The scores are totalled for each scale.

In the case of 'dealing with people' each subscale is estimated. These two sets of scores, for power and influence, are then correlated with the scores on the stress scales. Two further scores have been made to exhaust the possibility of these data and experiment with a line of reasoning. First, a 'powerlessness' score was made by counting up all the activities in which the manager 'never had the last word' or implied this by leaving the alternatives unmarked. Then two ratio scores were calculated. A ratio of power to influence was made by the fraction of the sum of all the fives over the sum of all the fours, threes and twos. Power is here made relative to influence. The concern is with

the texture of duty. Duty, that is, in terms of the emphasis on power in the context of influence. This crude mathematics is intended to approach the overall weighting of experience by decisive duties and attendant duties, by leadership and being on hand.

A further ratio of power and influence to powerlessness was calculated. Of all the fives, fours, threes and twos to all the ones and noughts. Power is more than relative to influence. Any involvement, no matter how slight, is relative to exclusion.

Table 3.29 gives the correlations between the many measures of duty and the stress scores that were above the value of 0.2. There is no discussion of why some of the measures of duty are not significantly related to those of stress.

A first glance at Table 3.29 detects that there are a number of negative correlations. Substantially, it seems, as power over some resources increases stress in some matters decreases.[48] Having more power over recruiting people, makes for less stress in impracticality from both the boss and the people worked with and makes for receiving less ambiguity from a boss and giving less ambiguity to others. Having more power over getting the people you want makes for less likelihood of practical stresses. Each correlation between power over a resource and a type of stress can be similarly explored and an acceptable explanation advanced. The more power over controlling people (by allocation) and ideas the less illegitimacy from others. These are, after all, the two major subjects of morals, the integrity of people and principles. Alternatively power/over dealing with capital and the environment correlated with a decrease in ambiguity from the boss. These may be the two areas of big activity and the communication on these

company relevant matters may be obscure by intention and by a reluctance to be deliberate in delicate affairs.

Holding more power makes the manager less liable for some sorts of trouble.[49] Power can get you out and keep you out of trouble. Trouble, that is, from the incessant demands from above and around. It seems the case that more power protects from increases in stress because increase in influence, even on the same resource, is generally correlated with increase in stress. Power gets you out of trouble and influence gets you into it.

Take the two power activity areas of recruiting people and dealing with ideas. In these matters having more power correlates with a decrease and having more influence correlates with an increase in the same sorts of stress; namely the bosses' ambiguity and illegitimacy from others. In fact, more influence is generally correlated with more stress. 'Having a say' does not help, it increases the chances of conflicts and ambiguities. It is having power that decreases stress.

The correlations with compatibility continue this emergent relationship. Having power over recruiting people increases the boss's compatibility. Whilst having influence or recruiting people decreases the same man's compatibility. If you have power you can be certain. If you have influence you can have doubts, squabbles and suppression of preference to avoid the surfacing of conflict in which you are bound to lose.

It is worth noting the subject, or objects, of compatibility. They are power over dealing with capital and influence upon dealing with the environment. These are the bigger, grander activities. They are power over the purse and influence upon the market place.

They are more entrepreneurial than managerial activities. And yet the more entrepreneurial the manager the greater his compatibility with all; with his boss and those around him. It may well be that more rank is more stress, that more duty is more worry, but some duty works in the reverse - here the bigger the manager is, the more like a real boss, the less he is at odds with those around him.

The correlations between the two ratios and categories of stress are more difficult to interpret. For one thing it is not exactly clear what the ratios mean and for another a ratio cannot be said to be the cause of an effect. It is interesting that they both correlate with multiple senders' impracticality and focal ambiguity. It may be that these are the most general stresses of work and have responded to the most general measure of rank as duty. Certainly the feeling that others have no idea of what you are doing but are full of how to do it is as pervasive as the profound sadness brought on by others steadfastly repeating that you are unclear or downright incomprehensible. After all, it is as much the responsibility of others to find out what you are doing before they direct your labours. It is as much their responsibility to use what they can understand and not to abuse that which they misunderstand. The ratios indicate that the more power in relation to influence and the more power and influence in relation to powerlessness the less the impracticality of others and their determination of yourself as ambiguous. Again, it seems that the more power the manager has the less stress he is liable for. And thatthis can be put another way - the less relatively powerlessness (either relative to influence or full powerlessness) of the manager the less

his stress. This rounds on the problem of power abruptly; influence is more akin to powerlessness than it is to power. It is power that makes a difference. Influence and powerlessness make headaches.

3.2 Rank as prestige

By now it may have been forgotten that rank was said to have two axes, those of power and prestige. Prestige gets less attention than power. It is a less complex commodity. It is also a softer, kindlier, aspect of the manager's rank.

There is prestige in being a manager. In popular thought a manager has got on and he has got on to a good thing. In sociological terms, a manager's prestige is the relative merit of his position.[50] It is the honour that his standing confers. The company awards pay and facilities to its manager and these constitute indicators of his worth. Obviously, calculations are made to assess the manager's dues. These calculations are based, however, on scales that are known to a small few. Scales that are customs rather than rules; for the settling of pay and perks is a mysterious business. No one knows how to equate rewards to performance. Measures of performance can easily trivialise into counting everything a manager does and jeopardise his obedience, the discharge of thankless tasks and special efforts, which are not readily amenable to comparison. In sum, there is no rational scale or series of related scales for a manager's rewards. Nevertheless, managers do have offices and salary. There are personal gains considerably larger than those received by the workforce that managers superintend.

Managers were not asked to estimate the prestige of their

jobs. Rather they were asked the material advantages of their jobs and observations were made of their surroundings. What do managers get, materially, for being managers?

(i) The manager's office

The manager's office is his home for the greater part of his wakeful life. This home incorporates some 'home from home' comforts. Hard furniture and soft furnishings combine to populate and clothe a room in which the manager may work. The room and its inanimate occupants may be inherited from a previous owner or equipped specifically for the present inhabitant. In either case, every stick of furniture and lick of paint is the result of the extensive negotiation the manager enters into to make his place comfortable. These negotiations entail at least outright demand, a degree of patronage and cornering scarce skills by informal access to those who control the labour.[51]

The offices I entered ranged from the palatial, carpeted, heavy curtained, conference room, with a butting open plan desk to Dickensian cubby holes in the factory with the desk slotting in sideways and a filing cabinet with its top decorated with teacups and memorandums. There were impressive mahogany partner desks and cramped tiny typing tables. Some offices showed all the signs of loving care, whilst others were only big enough if the manager went out. The union of hard bargaining and elegant opulence was a gaboon-faced chipboard; long, low suite with inlaid vinyl; plastic-coated legs and anodised aluminium knobs. The more gross variations in furnishings are used in scoring each article and can be found in Table 3.30.

It may be noticed that the facilities include the possibility of a second telephone. This is a direct private line that saves using the switchboard and thereby removes even slight control on its usage. The facilities also include access to or having a secretary. This facility is considered by some to be crucial. To have your own secretary is to have arrived. Certainly secretaries affected some facilities too much for them to scale. Where the secretary filled, at least partially, the roles of mother, wife, daughter and best friend, the manager's crockery, wardrobe and hat stand were also her domain. The number and welfare of plants in the manager's office seemed to suggest how well they got on together.[52] The scale is related to stress when more direct rewards have been discussed.

(ii) The manager's pay and perks

No account can be taken of the informal perquisites of the manager's jobs. There are, of course, managerial equivalents of things that have fallen off the back of a lorry. Materials and products can be had for little or nothing. Pots of paint can conveniently find their ways into the boot of the manager's car. Men can be got to work, too. Cars can be cleaned and serviced, and craftsmen can be given 'foreigners'. Nevertheless, prerequisites here are those more formally provided by the company.[53] (See Table 3.31)

Two formal benefits are missing from this scale, namely car parking and dining arrangements. Car parking varies by proximity of the plot and whether or not a place is specifically reserved by the manager's name and car number. Dining place is

equally as important; the high point being access to a secluded room with a select menu.[54]

Convenient car parking and contact with elites are, of course, of less importance than hard cash. The manager is in receipt of a salary and there is a duality in this form of esteem. For money has both a material and a symbolic significance. The manager's salary is both his actual purchasing power and a power symbol for him. In either case the question is what does the manager take home at the end of the day? This question is treated separately in correlations with stress categories.

(iii) Rank as prestige: the correlations of furnishings, perquisites and pay with stress

There was only one correlation between the three 'parts' of prestige and the eighteen categories of stress. The more the perquisites the greater the overload from others (0.243). It seems that the simple measures of rank prove less sensitive to the variations in stress. The measures of prestige were calculated on the basis of the company's provisions. It is possible that the company provided prestige somewhat erratically. But it is more likely that these are too static as measures to relate to role stress. For the more dynamic the measures of rank (the more they specify action and activities) the more productive they have been in relation to measures of stress.

3.3 Rank, power, prestige and stress

This long chapter has threaded its way through the structuring of the firm to the structuring of the position. Each

conceptual development has been made laborious by having many relevancies. Each term has been explicated and then detailed. The results have been used comparatively and causally. Two kinds of results have been used - the manager's own words and their scores on the many measures.

Throughout two kinds of reasoning have been interwoven. They are the stress inherent in the property and the stress caused by the property. Power is a problem and causes problems. Prestige may be a problem, though it was found to be largely unrelated to the measures of stress. The following chapter continues these lines of inquiry. Specifically the problems are the stresses of responsibility and the relationship of responsibility to stress. These lines are part parallel. For to say why there are problems in power is to begin to show how that power may produce conflict and ambiguities with others. The next chapter, then, is more concerned with what managers actually do and how the content of their work causes these same stresses from a different perspective.

Chapter Four

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A POSITION

> "A manager's job is a varied one. It is varied in different ways: in the place of work, in the contacts, in its activities and in its content."
>
> Stewart, 1967:95

Introduction

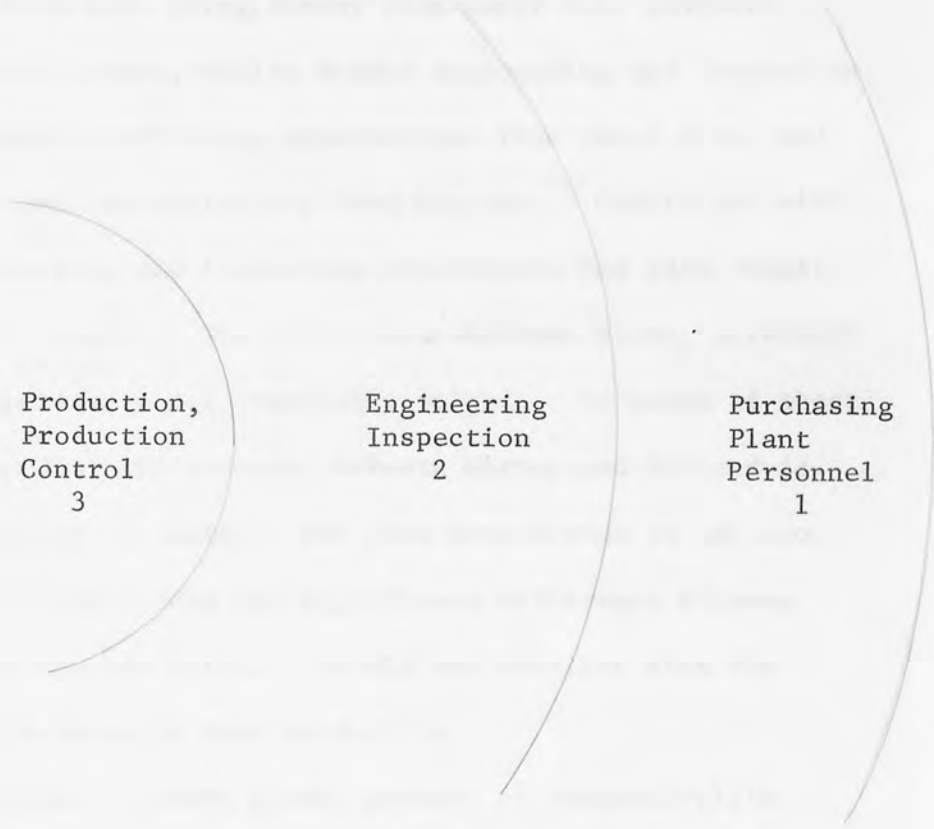
This chapter seeks to give some substance to the term 'responsibility'. The questions being 'What do managers do and how long do they do it for?' The concern is with the content of the manager's actions; with what is in the can he carries. The answers are pursued in a cold fashion,[1] and they are made to relate to stress.

Mersey and Midland both have seven manufacturing departments.[2] They are production, production control, engineering, inspection, purchasing, personnel and plant. Production make the products, the parts are made and assembled, the common complaints are that they cannot get the materials or that they 'can't get the bits'. Production control chases on behalf of production, hurrying up suppliers and output. Engineering evaluates the process and the product and slices off margins with changes in design, tools, machines and work study. Inspection assesses the reliability of the product by checking each stage in its career. Plant 'nurses' production by supplying power, renovating the site and despatching the goods. Personnel gets the manpower, keeps it and discharges it by advertising, interviewing applicants, training apprentices and staff, administrating welfare facilities and negotiating pay and conditions under the heading of industrial relations. Purchasing buys what they and the other six departments use.

In the simplest terms, departments form layers around production. Production is at the centre and other departments surround it and feed it. A representation of this speculation is given in Diagram 4.A

Diagram 4.A

DEPARTMENTS AS LAYERS AROUND PRODUCTION



Managers grade their departments by their proximity to production. Production, it is held, is the centre and cause of crisis. The idea of grading comes from the feeling that the closer to hell the hotter it is. This impression is the first idea of responsibility to be tested. Is there greater stress the nearer to production, regardless of level? Scoring the three groupings in Diagram 4.A with the values shown, however, did not produce a significant correlation on any stress score. Such a simple test

may have failed because of differences between Mersey and Midland. The three groupings are retained and a comparison between Mersey and Midland is made in Table 4.1.

As was found in matters of rank, Mersey tends to be more stressful. There are few significant differences despite the generality of tendency. Mersey production and production control departments have both more illegitimacy from their boss and more focal ambiguity with others, whilst Mersey engineering and inspection departments have more conflicting expectations from their boss, and more illegitimacy and impracticality from him too. Consistent with this, Mersey engineering and inspection departments had less compatibility with their bosses. The differences between plant, personnel and purchasing departments are remarkably slight. In terms of these groupings it seems that the contrast between Mersey and Midland is less noticeable at the extremes. Yet this proposition is far too strong. Table 4.2 shows only one significant difference between departments within the two firms. At Midland conflict with the boss increases with distance from production.

The simplest, or most gross, measure of responsibility, that of proximity to production, reveals differences between Mersey and Midland rather than differences between departments (so grouped and in relation to stress). More exact approaches to managers' responsibility will now be tried.

4.1 Responsibility as task: perspectives on the content of managerial work

A parallel question ran beside the lists of activities detailed in the previous chapter to determine how important the

task is in the manager's job. So it was asked:

> 'How important is the task in your job as a priority; to what extent does the task rate as one which would have to receive most of your attention if your job is to be done well?'[3]

This questioning identifies the number of responsibilities and their strength or importance.[4]

Before exploring the many possibilities of priority differences between managers, it is of some interest to consider what responsibilities managers have in common. That is, is there a practical reason for the general term manager? Are there core tasks that every manager does?

The idea of core tasks has obvious attractions. For if there are common tasks above and beyond the somewhat vague 'running a department' or 'dealing with people' management could be said to be a core general skill with appended peripheral specific skills. That is, cluster and constellations could be constructed of the chemistry of management.

Two techniques are used to launch this absorbing sub-science. First, are there modal tasks? Or, to put it another way, what tasks, if any, do all managers say they have? Secondly, the criterion is weakened a little by asking what tasks do two-thirds or more of the managers studied say they have? Strictly speaking, only the first question is of interest. The second question is something of a safety net. Rather like the monopoly rules, it is not a case of all having a task but most having it. Normality refers to the majority rather than everyone.

Taking the questions in turn, what tasks did every manager signify as part of his job? Table 4.3 lists the tasks by the frequency with which they were endorsed and notes the

frequency within each company.

No task was endorsed 100%. 90% endorsement and above are given to supervisory tasks: putting subordinates to work and keeping them at it. In fact, all but four of the tasks endorsed 66% and more are those dealing with people; initially with subordinates and latterly with employees (the grouping indicates that the managers did make the conceptual distinction between subordinates and employees). Were the question put differently, the managers may have said that they were in business to make money by dealing with people. As it is, three specifically financial tasks are endorsed, they deal with the internal arrangements of budgets and expenditure. The theme of work may be to make a profit, but this is a criterion of tasks rather than a task in itself. The end is fixed: it is a yardstick of action. The means vary by controlling labour, directing if efficiently and generally 'keeping tabs on it'. In brief, Table 4.3 upholds the manager's simple dictum that his job and problems are in dealing with people.

Mersey and Midland managers endorse tasks similarly though Midland managers, as a whole, seem to have slightly more responsibility. The differences are, however, slight and in some cases slightly reversed. The core of management is dealing with people (with the appropriate emphasis upon the tasks it describes) and little direct involvement in financial tasks. Finance is a reasoning applicable to the productive discharge of supervisory tasks. The periphery that encircles the core is the particular productive requirement of the manager's department. In general, he deals with people, as he says himself.

The stress of dealing with people is a theme in this thesis. There are the problems of exercising power, engineering agreement and checking subordinates' movements without making them immobile. The stresses relate not so much to the fact that they are people but to the acts in which they are compelled to engage. And some of the acts - called here the tasks of responsibility - walk closer to the edge, revealing potential conflicts and ambiguities more clearly.

The literature abounds with accounts of the big tasks of management; the breathtaking changes; the challenging initiatives and the lightening of fortune. The tasks endorsed can be used to consider some, though not all, of these widely held ideas. We begin with one of the most fashionable; is it harder for the manager largely at the frontier of change than it is for the manager who is holding the fort? That is, is there any relationship between the amount of 'change tasks' for which the manager is responsible and the stresses that he experiences? The 'real' scores have been totalled for every endorsement on tasks involving change in policy.[5] The more the manager is responsible for policy concerning people (Dimension 1) the less conflicts of overload he makes for others (0.246). And the more the manager is responsible for policy on things (Dimensions 2 to 6) the more conflict of overload he has from them (0.267) but also the more compatible with them (0.280). These correlations seem sensible; the more the manager is responsible for policy over others, the more he can avoid overloading them. And if the manager has more responsibility for policy on things there will be no end to his job, yet things are a basis for agreement and comraderies with others.

Being in the thick of it, being at the front line, having to stick your neck out, is being responsible for change in policy. It is arguably a rare experience for a manager to sit down and work out a new policy. Basically, change is made in an ad hoc fashion. Something doesn't work and a manager is detailed to worry it until it does. Usually, too, the atmosphere is not encouraging for sweeping changes to be made 'every five minutes'.

For even if there is a gaping inefficiency at least 'everyone knows where they stand'. 'Better the devil that you know .....' runs the adage and current devilment does guarantee each his job and his place in jobs being done. Policy changes can easily make all or part of a manager's current responsibilities irrelevant. Managers are made redundant by policy change: an impersonal, sweeping axe that slices through the structure with much greater destructive power than a host of vendettas. In part, a change in policy is too abstract for the matters in hand and in part its consequences could be to lift managers, including yourself, right out of their jobs.[6]

Managers, then, customarily engage in the continuation of procedures. The operating rules and raison d'etre are laid down and they fit them to the operational problems in hand. Most of the tasks specified were of this nature, their specification implied that there was a customary practice, or even manual diagram, telling them what to do. As with the measure of policy change, the ratings of importance were simply added up in two groups, of dealing with people and dealing with things and related to the stress scores. More procedural responsibility in dealing with things has the same

correlates as policy responsibility for things. The more the responsibility, the more the overload from others (0.277) and compatibility with them (0.280).

Further, managers engage in both change and continuity tasks. And it could be that it is the relative emphasis of change tasks that is stressful rather than a simple count of it; a manager may have few tasks overall, but a preponderance of change tasks. Conversely, a manager may have many tasks but few dealings with policy change. To consider the significance of responsibility for change relative to the responsibility for continuity, a 'ratio' has been constructed which, like previous ratios devised, divides the scores for policy change by the scores for procedure continuation for the two groups of tasks - namely People and Things. Both ratios have the same correlate, the conflict of overload with others. The greater the emphasis on policy the less the conflict of making overload for others, be it policy on people(-0.235) or things (-0.245).

Overall responsibility in tasks has produced similar relationships to those of power in activities. Though few correlations were significant, they were with the alter and ego of one score: overload. Having more responsibility increased overload from others but decreased overload made for them.

Being on the edge has other meanings than being in the van of change. One writer thinks that being on the edge means a primarily 'boundary role'.[7] He sees the firm as having an inside and a perimeter and holds that tasks which take the manager over this boundary are more prone to stress than internal administration. The device of considering the firm as a system enables some sort of test for this idea. For two and possibly three of the conceptual

divisions imply dealings across the firm's borders. They are the divisions of inputs, outputs and interrelationships with the wider environment. All but 'throughputs' then, have implications of boundary relationships. Inputs and outputs could be the first skin and interrelationships the second skin. The real scores are taken separately for these two groupings, that is, subscales 1 and 3 of each resource and scale 6 that deals explicitly with wider relationships for each resource.

Again, overload from others is the sole significant correlation. The more the responsibility for the 'second skin' for dealing beyond the firm the greater the overload from others (0.309). Responsibility has so far produced a limited result of considerable interest. Responsibilities as classifications of tasks, or the content of activities, relate to overload. The more responsibility under four alternative perspectives the more the overload from others and the less for them. Responsibilities stretch out a man's time.

Considering the content of managers' tasks by department, as a core, as responsibilities for change, continuity and boundary relationships in no sense exhausts either the available data or its imagined possibilities. Scores could be constructed to estimate the amount of technical control, the amount of 'office administration', or each source taken in turn. But though such calculations may be of interest, I have no grounds for pursuing them. It is possible, too, that much more precise interests in the content of managers' tasks would find the organisation and specification of tasks rather too crude for its purposes. We leave this perspective on responsibility as the content of tasks, for another. We now consider

responsibility as predictability.

4.2 Responsibility as predictability: routine in managerial work

For a manager to be responsible is for him to be predictable; he is expected to be so by other managers. He is not expected to be a robot but 'usually doing things in a certain way' is a direction to develop some robot-like qualities. The more formal his working relationships become, the more his actions are being predicted by being put in a predictable form. To put this another way, formal procedures are transmitted to the manager for his enactment and this transmission itself is often a formal procedure. This is interpreted by the manager as making him predictable and getting through to him in predictable ways. The product of formal expression to him and predictable action from him is that of routine.

The context of routine is the juxtaposition of the standardisation and formalisation of the manager's tasks. By standardisation is meant a fixed arrangement of tasks; a set pattern of problems. By formalisation is meant a fixed treatment of tasks; a set pattern of problem solution. The sorts of things dealt with and the ways of dealing with them, are more or less routine. The more typed the task the more stereotyped the job and the more confined the person within it. The stress of predictability is the fear of being completely swamped, of being fully turned into a machine, of having no glimmer of vitality left. And the closer the manager works to a machine the more he may be expected to model his performance on it.

None of the devised measures for predictability were adequate. Instead I rely on impressions from conversation. Certainly all managers moaned at the extent to which they were not able to boss and at the way in which they were surrounded with memoranda, forms, rules and set piece procedures. These high geared helpful devices were flatly considered hindrances. At Mersey, managers pointed to their desks with resignation whilst at Midland they were sometimes more shrill. A few managers were enamoured with the charts of flow and the weight of information at their command. But most resisted, by most means, all attempts to standardise and formalise their jobs any further.

There is a contradiction in this resistance to routine. Most managers were, at least part of the time, engaged in devising routines that made the work of other managers more visible, and thereby accessible, to themselves. In their own terms, they were sorting out the messes of others so they could get speedily and accurately to the problem. Put another way, they wanted information, regularly and fully so that they could act upon it immediately. Incoming insistence for revised or new information routines were stalled and dodged with considerable skill. Outgoing programmes tocollect information from others were doggedly pursued until the appropriate clerk was found, tamed, trained and made to believe that he had another boss.

4.3 Responsibility as role-scope: the contacts in managerial work

Role-scope is a further perspective on responsibility. It means the breadth and depth of contact in a position. It

entails detailing every 'contact' above, below and alongside each manager.[8]

Scope has long been argued a prime factor in stress. It is suggested that if you have one boss then you have a 'clear direct line of command': the necessity of an eyeball to eyeball confrontation on contentious issues and no respite if he happens to be a bad boss. If you have two or more bosses you have the possibility of conflicting expectations and disparities in priorities. You can also play both or all of them off and get them controlling each other rather than you.

There is also a fashion to have no more than six subordinates, all of whom report directly. It is argued that the fewer the subordinates the greater the likelihood of chance meetings and briefing and the less the necessity for holding regular meetings with itemised agenda. The fewer the subordinates the greater the possibility of being pals and the less likelihood of the development of rival factions and detested favourites.

At Mersey and Midland every manager had his line boss and his group and central boss. Nominally his line boss had more power and certainly in day to day matters he was the immediate reference. Group and central bosses said what new things they wanted doing. So the line boss controlled work and the 'outside' boss commanded new and extra work. As all managers were 'in the same boat' there is no possibility of comparison. Few had any great liking for,and most feared, the central staff. Your own boss is the man above and, as discussed in the context of domination, he was accorded first loyalty - obedience to the last.

At Mersey and Midland there were patterns in the number of subordinates for executives and managers. Production, Production Control, and Engineering managers had six subordinates, Inspection four, Plant,Purchasing, and Personnel having three subordinates. In addition to this patterning there are two factors of untold relevance: namely the physical distance between the superordinate and his subordinates on the one hand and between his subordinates on the other. On some occasions the executive was housed in the far corner of an office acre and each of his subordinates was spread throughout the factory sited close to the scene of their operational responsibilities. On the other occasions the executive and his managers clustered like a camping brood with thin partitioning between their offices. This latter group had distinctiveness and separateness. They had each other. The former variety did not live and work as a close-knit group. Their knitting was done on the telephone and at full-dress meetings.

Taking a simple count of the number of subordinates, therefore, is subject to the obvious criticism that it takes no account of their location.[9] It may be that 'the more we are together the merrier we shall be'. It may also be that 'what the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't grieve about' and 'absence makes the heart grow fonder - for at least three hours'. Sadly there are not enough managers to have more than a few of each type in terms of number of subordinates and distance from them and between them. So, the simplest measure will be used, that of the number of subordinates. The more subordinates the less the ambiguity from the manager to others (-0.246). The more

people the manager tells immediately the more he says. The more subordinates the less the conflict of illegitimacy with the boss (-0.260). Do subordinates protect their boss as much as he protects them? If there are fewer of you, is the boss more likely to be told what to do by his boss? Is this correlation evidence of there being strength in numbers?

4.4 Responsibility and time served: the problem of limits to managerial work

The broadest perspective taken here on a manager's responsibility is in answer to the question 'How far does he have to go?'. How much time, as distinct from effort, does the man spend being a manager? This is no easy problem for any salaried employee in a position of responsibility. Workers are paid for every moment they are occupied (or unoccupied) at the factory. Secretaries and clerks have fixed norms (though the former may anticipate 'working over' from time to time on a rush job that keeps the manager sweet). But the manager's hours and days are not so fixed. He can anticipate being at the factory at least as long as office workers and then anticipate some more. It may be a sign of a manager on the ball that he is in with the workers and last off the site. It may be a sign of a keen man that he 'pops in' during the weekend, and stays to sort out any trouble. It may be best for him to take work home and think about it when the children have gone to bed. It may be that the only day he can guarantee with his family is Sunday and the other six belong to the firm. It may be that he has yet to take his full holidays because there

is always something cropping up. And if all this is the case, what does it add up to? Does it mean that the manager is happily married to the firm, or does it signify a cheerful incompetence veneered with devotion to duty?

A series of questions were put in the first interview to establish how much 'working over' Mersey and Midland managers did and to note their comment on the work load. The problem is quite simple: a normal working week can be enormous and enormously tiring. What does the manager feel about it?

First then, how often does the manager work overtime? Table 4.4 gives the questions and elementary results to this question. The questions seek the periods of overtime in the contexts of time appropriate to them: days in an average week and weekends in an average month.[10] No attempt was made to ask how much you want to do, or under what compulsion must you do extra work though the comments given later do illuminate this concern.

The response ranges and means are of considerable importance. Though the responses ranged from minima to maxima, the averages are conspicuously high. Four out of five weekdays are worked over; at least one day in five work is taken home; at least one weekend in four is spent at the office with the same fraction applicable to working at home during weekends. Of course, not every manager does all this. Rather some do less and others considerably more. But such patterns as there are will emerge later. It is sufficient here to say that there is a norm of overtime at Mersey and Midland and though this norm may not be accepted by all, or be acceptable for long, it is worked by many.

Overnight business trips and days away from home have

been included because they constitute being on the job for an indefinable period in the former instance and probably taking all day and half the night in the latter. On days away from home the manager is working through the day until late afternoon and getting home during the evenings to avoid making an overnight stay. The averages indicate the national and international nature of Profit's operations. Very few managers remained continuously at the factory, the average is two weeks of overnight trips and three weeks of long days.

Long hours, days and weeks are stressful in themselves. A manager needs some respite from incoming demands and the need to outgoingly perform. Particularly so if 'there is no end to it'. Yet, on average, two days of the holidays are worked. Some work at least a week of their three weeks provision. How long are these norms that are often worked? Table 4.5 gives the questions and arithmetic answers.

On average, almost a sixth day is worked during the week and a seventh is worked over the weekend. Whilst the average hours indicated for the holidays total two and a half 'normal working days'.

These results question the notion of a normal working day. Though all responses range from '0', no manager worked a normal day, week or month. And the maximum scores for the hours worked are staggering: 28 hours overtime during the week means starting at 8.00 a.m. and finishing at 10.00 p.m. every day, 39 hours overtime during the weekends of a month is five 'full' days out of 8, and 120 hours during the holidays is virtually not having any.

The managers at Mersey and Midland work enormously and excessively long hours. The normal working experience is being at the factory and having work-related matters on their minds. Some managers, it is true, had light loads but usually the managers were working flat out.

In addition to there being little rest, there was little slack. There was little more time to be devoted to emergencies. The factories were working at emergency pitch through continuous crises; any additional crises could command few resources in terms of managerial attendance. The managers were already there and already engaged in a problem. Obviously the managers moderated the impact of continuous long overtime as best they could. Each devised his personal system of getting through an escalating work load. Departments worked it out with discrete, informal, rotas, and managers 'covering' for each other. The specifics of relating to the problems are dealt with when the scores of frequency and intensity[11] (the literally added up days, weekends and hours) have been related to the stress scores in Table 4.6.

The more overtime worked the more conflict of overload with the boss and others. The larger the overtime worked the more conflict of overload with the boss and others. The action is equalled by the reaction. In addition the length of overtime correlates with two other conflicts. First conflict made by the manager for his boss. Overtime could be the causus belli: of getting the boss to do things he doesn't want to do. Secondly the larger the overtime the more conflict over impracticality with others. With a tired body and mind the ill-fitting and inappropriate expectations of others could be manifestly irritating.

4.5 Responsibility and overtime: comments on the duration of managerial work

The comments made as we went through the questions show how the managers and executives relate to their troublesome responsbility: to have a responsibility that requires exercise nearly all the time. Some thrived and others wilted. Some dodged and others protested. Comments on each section, weekdays, weekends, holidays and trips are given[12] and followed by an appreciation.

(i) Working late

'I'd sooner work late than take work home.'

'We must put in 60 to 70 hours a week but we are home at weekends.'

'We work all hours but we are not effective for half of them.'

'I'd rather spend the hours here. When I leave the place I like to think I forget it.'

'I stay back in order to avoid the traffic congestion.'

'They don't tie me down, I do it myself. I work here on routine paper work, lists and exercises till its done.'

'Personally I'm committed against overtime but I have to do it anyway.'

'I do less now. I used to put in 15 hours overtime and 10 hours at home.'

'The job requires being on hand in the evenings and a preparedness to attend functions.'

'I get my rational thought once the factory has gone home.'

'I try to keep evenings free.'

'I start at 8 because the earliest starters do. My lateness depends on the importance of the job running. I can call in any combination of myself and up to three levels below to ensure that there is no hold up.'

'I leave overtime to thinking and writing up a report.'

'I start at 7.45 a.m.'

'After hours I have bits and bobs to knock off, otherwise I'd be sitting in a traffic jam.'

'My golden rule is that unless there is a special project I don't do overtime.'

'Working late is not overtime but rather taking the advantage to see for myself.'

'I make a point of going between 5.30 and 5.45.'

'I don't really consider the hours I work - I have a job to do. Recently I had three jobs and I kept them all ticking over.'

'I could be back at 11 tonight for something.'

'I come in at night once a month to see the night shift and reassure them that they are not a forgotten race.'

'Part of the job is attending evening meetings.'

'I'm usually in time for tea, between 5 and 6 is a good quiet time to get a few jobs done.'

'My superior extends my days.'

'I tend to detail and I can't get it done during the day. It could be personal inefficiency or pressure. I prefer to stay later. But it's not my intention to do this for the rest of my life.'

'I come in early.'

'I make an 8 a.m. start.'

'I arrive 8.05 - 8.10 a.m. It avoids the traffic and is of considerable use.'

'There are periods of intensive overtime with special projects.'

'If I have a job I stop and get on with it.'

There is considerable pride in the early start. Older managers, especially, have got into a firm routine of arriving leisurely; smartly turned out after a good breakfast. They have mastered the routine of work with a personal routine of

'retiring at a reasonable time'.

There is also a practicality in this routine: arrival and departure can be more leisurely if the manager staggers his time away from the rush-hours. Then there are quiet periods at both ends of the day and an unhurried, smooth travel. No doubt the manager finds these less uninterrupted times of great value; he can dispatch many little tasks with alacrity and also unwind before going home. The 'get it all done and go' line of thinking applies more to non-production managers. For them a clear desk is possible and important. For production managers overtime usually means a more intensive concern with results; of getting the figures for every job and visiting the troublesome jobs to see if they can be edged through the door with a little more effort.

Special projects (the seeds of the future's more complex processes of surveillance and accountability) are by definition special. There is no room for them in the existing timetable and the managers usually take them home.

> 'I take things home in my mind and in the unguarded moment a solution or facet will emerge, especially if it's prior to a meeting or a distant commitment.'
>
> 'I take reports home but no practice.'
>
> 'I always take confidential work home.'
>
> 'I take work home in my mind.'
>
> 'At home I get a bit of peace and quiet.'
>
> 'I try to leave the place behind though I can't mentally. The compass needle always swings back to work.'
>
> 'I take peripheral reading and the budget generally.'
>
> 'I take no routine but I have to take special exercises.'

'I do mental work in the solitude of television and two screaming kids.'

The working day is long: elongated into the evening by extra efforts to clear work or to complete special tasks. The working day is spread into the night in the manager's mind; to switch off may be his ambition but thoughts intrude and on other occasions home is his last and best chance to organise particular thoughts.

Many managers spoke of exhaustion, fatigue and listlessness. In the following subsection on holidays these feelings are made clear. In this subsection the argument is that the day is exhausting. Exhaustion is staved by spreading the day out. The day is expanded by a contraction in the amount of work done during this long time.

The natural day is a cycle of long length with pockets of high and low activity. This day is not 'natural' to any manager. It is a modification of factory culture. It approximates to the peaks and troughs of pace worked by machine operatives.

The natural day begins with an early start. All managers have arrived before the first secretary opens her office door at 8.30 a.m. It is a sign that work has begun, it is progress and in earnest. The work is at a fast pace until around 10.30 a.m. Telephones ring, typewriters rattle, small deputations assemble in the outer office and enter for brief but keen discussions. No coffee break is taken, coffee, and perhaps biscuits, are served by the secretary to the manager at his desk. After, even while, drinking coffee the pace slackens. Visits are less frequent. The secretary is busy organising things until after lunch.

The manager has lunch with his colleagues; hard chat in the restaurant and soft gossip over sandwiches in another's office. The early afternoon is less active than the early morning. Meetings begin at 2.00 p.m. and appointments start at 2.15 p.m. The meetings are digging - in sessions and there is some blur from the digestion of dinner. Tea is again served at the desk but the manager can get up and walk round with it. He can demand it if thirsty, 'parched', of 'dying for one'. He can go to look for it if it's 'late'. After tea work picks up, the typewriter splutters again. The post mounts up very rapidly. Clerks and workers finish by the clock, and secretaries clear their trays of all but the longest jobs.

When the 'rabble' have left, the manager relaxes for half an hour to an hour. He calls other managers by telephone for extended conversations on whole ranges of subjects. The manager may also call into the offices of managers with whom he is friendly and whose offices are close to his own. Then a substantial amount of written work is done (more than during the rest of the day). The manager makes notes on what he is to report. The manager 'drifts away' between 6 and 7 p.m. That is not to say that his step is not firm but that his presence melts away from his surroundings.[13] For a while he may still be there.

(ii) Working weekends

Some of the comments in the previous subsection concern working weekends. Specifically they imply 'working over' during the week keeps the weekends clear. Other resolutions and tones are discernible in the following comments made with reference to

the questions on how many weekends in an average month were worked, where, and for how long.

'My broad philosophy is that five days a week my life belongs to Profit. On weekends my time is my own. Mind you, my job is not in the line of fire from production crunches.'

'Coming in is showing the managerial flag.'

'You can saturate yourself with desk and paperwork. I keep Saturday free. I tend not to come in deliberately.'

'On Saturdays and Sundays I bring staff in so I feel morally obliged to be there to help with queries.'

'Recently it's been rather abnormal. I'm in three Saturdays and one Sunday a month.'

'Weekends are times I should devote to my family to do my job more efficiently.'

'I come in but I'm never in the office. I make a conscious effort to see the men.'

'One cannot work seven days a week, so it's not often that I do both Saturday and Sunday.'

'I use weekends for seeing people - I don't work to plans or systems.'

'I come in at budget time but I'd sooner come back and do it in the evening.'

'We are under considerable pressure and we need the weekend to recover. We ought to be able to do our work in normal hours and leave overtime for crises. As I get older I put greater and greater emphasis on free time.'

'I've got no regular pattern but it's usually Saturday morning or Sunday.'

'I come in to do special exercises.'

'I avoid it like the plague.'

'The crisis has now passed, but I took work home three hours a day every week and came in every weekend. There was no way round it.'

'Very occasionally we get a quiet period, say once every two months.'

'The place is working most weekends, so I must.'

'I come into work on Saturday morning to get away and leave the weekend clear.'

A few managers put their feet down. Some grumbled and most spent some of their weekends at work. Theoretically the only limit on the amount of work is the number of hours in a day. For some managers this means there is but a difference in degree between the week and the weekend. The factory is quieter and a little more of the work load can be unloaded. Significantly some managers use the period for 'seeing for themselves'. Their weekend experience is akin to a prowl. They are looking carefully at work in hand and occasionally come across other prowlers. They can stop for a good chat or avoid each other's shadow.

Full weekend working has yet to be achieved but the indications from Mersey and Midland production are that it is likely 'the demand for the product' continues. And production sets the tone for other departments, drawing them into its cycles. These cycles are false. The pressure inexorably intensifies towards the end of the month to meet the production targets. During the last week there is a flat out effort to 'get it out'.[14]

At the other end, as it were, the plant department executives and managers are affected by the continuous demands of the plant's machinery. There is a need to nurse the boilers as if they were hospital casualties or children that would go berserk without attention. A plant manager can be working any time and called to work any time. He needs to accept the timeless nature of his tasks by living near enough to pop in and out without a major effort.

Production is becoming a weekend inclusive job and plant is a perpetual job. Other departments are drawn into the production pattern, particularly to boost the readings on its false production cycles. Some managers obviously resent and resist any further intrusion into their free time.[15] Others see it as both necessary and desirable. These two sentiments are in evidence in the comments on working holidays.

(iii) Working holidays

'I have to keep peace with the wife, but a good session away stops the tension building.'

'It's my own fault on holidays. I like to save a few days for the freedom to take a day off, but every year I've a couple left and when the next year comes they're gone.'

'You really have a sore point here. Last year I didn't have any.'

'You ought to talk to my wife about it.'

'I don't wait for holidays. I spent the whole year on my material well being. I like the job, it's not a bore or a chore. It's rather exciting.'

'I'm determined to have it this year. You've got to book it.'

'You have to relax and refresh. Holidays are a sore point here. For years I haven't taken them. Last year was the first time. The problem should ease as we get it sorted out. You always seemed to get hammered. The fall guy. People above and below take their full holidays.'

'I intend to this year. I get the annual works fortnight but the tail-end charlies slip through my fingers.'

'I'm going to make sure I take my full holidays for the first time this year.'

'I'm encouraged to, I encourage others to take their full holidays.'

'I always take my holidays.'

'With holidays I set out to take the lot. I insist on a fortnight with the family and take the rest in dribs and drabs.'

'I just take the days. I don't watch them or tick them off.'

'I do take them <u>now</u>.'

'Most years I take them. I'm fitter if I do have a rest.'

'I fit a holiday in to suit the occasion at work.'

'By the end of the year I usually find I have one or two days left and time has run out. The holidays are curtailed not because of lack of desire but lack of opportunity. Most senior staff have four weeks and like to take it. So I find it difficult to allocate my own holidays and theirs. I'm stuck for a time.'

'It's booked this year, I'll take it come what may.'

'I work a couple of days each year. I shan't be losing any this year.'

Some managers were adamant: they were going to take their holidays. Holidays were generally an issue of passionate concern. A few were already set into a pattern of full holidays. Many had a 'piggy bank policy'. They kept a week 'up their sleeve' and a few days were left unspent. These managers were saddened by their own lack of forethought. Nevertheless, they adhered to the annual nature of provision. There was no suggestion that the 'lost days' could be carried forward.

The managers held that holidays revived jaded spirits. And some managers were determined to be revived. Booking the holiday shifted the responsibility; as if the manager were compelled to keep an appointment. He had paid for it and so he would have to have it. Further, the booking was made long before more immediate demands could encourage him to repeatedly defer his holidays until the summer had gone. From the tone it is clear that those who were booking were doing so because less fixed plans had fallen through in

previous years. More clearly these managers had little respite the year before. A defiance had entered their voices and in part this could be a reaction to the frustration of the increasing work during weeks and weekends. Having clear holidays could be something of a last resort.

(iv) Working trips

Fewer comments were made on day and overnight trips. For these are obviously in the line of business.

'I checked last month, I'd done 4,000 miles by car.'

'Rather than making trips I learn to conserve energy by using the phone and writing.'

'Just recently it's been quiet. Sometimes I'm never at the office.'

'If I'm away I work as many hours as there are. When you break the routine you really break it.'

'I'm fortunate because we are half way between Mersey and Head Office and sometimes I can get meetings here.'

Day trips are usually meetings; two managers had succeeded in reducing their frequency by being host or using communications media. Day trips may constitute a break but they are also made up of considerable travelling, a day's talking and a day 'lost' on pressing matters. Trips are important and unimportant. Rarely can the appointment be cancelled and yet it may produce little more than an impression and a renewed contact.

Overnight trips are much more than outings. They are the problem of a working holiday. The thrill has its chills. The manager is let out and let loose. He is courted and entertained. He travels, talks, sees and listens. He works, as one manager commented, all the time. There is nothing else he can do. Meanwhile he is flying, living it up and visiting exotic places. It

is not easy to work in such an atmosphere. To some extent he is suspect to his colleagues. He is having a good time, living on expenses and seeing the sights. When he returns he wants to rest and this doubles the suspicion that he's been enjoying himself whilst others have been working.[16]

(v) Patterns of overtime

It is relevant that managers describe their excessive work load as overtime. They are comparing their positions with that of the workforce. Their problem is that there is no norm of time. Rather the opposite, there is a norm of overtime. If they accept a norm that overtime is normal, the problem becomes: if abnormal is normal, what is insane? More simply, if working from 8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. is normal, how is it possible to resist working on until 8.00 or 9.00 p.m.? There is a problem, too, for those who wish to work a 40 hour week as a 50 hour week appears to be generally accepted. The comparison with the workforce is made more so by a pointed comparison with the directorate. For, on hours worked, and holidays taken, above and below are better off. Managers' days are very long and some, and possibly all, of their holidays can be lost.

Executives and managers have the responsibility to overwork in an atmosphere of continuous noise and pressure. They respond by accepting this responsibility and softening it by work and sharing and spreading the day out. Having spread the day out it is most difficult to contract it to one of less time but greater efficiency.

As an aside, some said that the ideas of private study

(of reading technical matter) and reflection (of five minutes thought before an important action) were right out. For even though they had spread out their day, the same standards of efficiency were held to apply, they felt guilty when caught doing a bit of reading or thinking.

Three patterns of overtime were generally discernible. First those who worked in service departments began before 8.15 and would leave on or before 6.00 p.m., taking a little or no work home and coming in on exceptional Saturdays. Secondly, there were those in service and production departments who would arrive before 8.30 a.m. and work on until everything was finished and for whom part of Saturday or part of Sunday was usual. . Thirdly, there were those who came in no later than 8.30 a.m. and worked until after 7.00 p.m. and were geared to production through a full Saturday or Sunday if need be. The three patterns might be called overtime, high-time, and full-time. Each pattern had its critics and a few enthusiasts. Home life and health matters more to the middle aged.

Executives and managers shouldered different weights of responsibility and did not feel the same about the time they worked. Executives knew they were to work long and hard whether or not they were willing. Managers felt the strain of a work-laden life and they could remember times when it had not been so relentlessly hard.

4.6 Responsibility and stress: the struggles with workload and content

The categories of responsibility have been drawn out

the content of managerial work. Stock has been taken of how much they have to do. As they say, they are 'all over the shop'. The consequence of these various breadths in their work appears to be a conflict of overload with others.

Types of responsibility, role-scope and workload have all correlated with overload. They have all correlated with overload. They have also drawn in other conflicts that increase and decrease with this predominant note. And though these findings may be obvious, the sheer amount of responsibility as overtime is spectacular.

Overtime is a norm for Mersey and Midland managers. It has a binding power from its blending of three principles. First, overtime is a necessity. It comes from the need to make work more by 'minding' machines and operators who work longer and staggered hours. Secondly, overtime is an expediency. The manager needs to get his own work done by devoting himself to its complicated opportunities. Thirdly, overtime is a solidarity, keeping the flag flying, as one said, a camaraderie of proving worth by long sustained effort. In the face of these principles few managers can fly. The norm of overtime is likely to be altered only by increasing the acceptable amounts in a day, week and year.

The struggle with overtime is not that of overload but of sensibility. The problem is to prevent exhaustion from collapsing into defeat and degeneration. The struggle to keep going, of course, is in direct opposition to the struggle to stop.[17]

But the manager may not have it in his mind to stop. And so we continue to a glimpse of the manager's mind.

Chapter Five

THE POSITIONS OF IDENTITY

> "Who am I? If this once I were to rely on a proverb, then perhaps everything would amount to knowing whom I 'haunt'. I must admit that this last word is misleading, tending to establish between certain beings and myself relations that are stranger, more inescapable, more disturbing than I intended. Such a word means much more than it says, makes me, still alive, play a ghostly part, evidently referring to what I must have ceased to be in order to be who I am."
>
> Andre Breton, 1928

5.1 An introduction to the complexities of identity and position

The elucidation of rank and responsibility depended upon a certain reasoning. From the development of these concepts it would seem that the job is a tight fit upon the man or that each manager has a tight grasp upon what his job involves. This is true and untrue. It is true that the man and the job interpenetrate to a point of potential identicality. It is untrue that this is because the man has a grip upon his job.

The man thinks about his job and himself within it. The man's mind is at work; his thinking is fed, his thoughts bend to the problems of his job. As he thinks of his job it is as if his mind has turned backwards to return to a modest name. As he gives life to a job so it gives some light to him. A job is something to think about - it occupies minds as well as bodies - a job is something to think about most of the time. These thoughts are not haphazard. They return to themes.

There are passages from one thought to another as if by deduction, inference or change of context. There is more than a man and his job. For in between them there are his ideas of himself at work, his ideals about his work, ideas of his life's work. These ideas about being something, the ways of relating to the rank and responsibility of a position, constitute an identity.[1]

The man's job has an image. The man has ideas. The job depends upon the man to enact it. The man depends upon the job for his rights and obligations in action. The job and man unite partially. The mutual dependence is one-sided for the job is dead and the man lives. The man is the maker of the job whilst the job makes him. The partial unity of man and job is made by the man's identity. For in his identity he holds two sets of ideas in one breath; he links what his job is about with what he is about in his job.

The man's identity is his own: it is his own handiwork. He has forged it from the available materials because of the material problems that he faces. Yet the identity is that of many who also work against, or with, the same problems; who are also provided with the same raw materials. The job is a headache; the identity an addictive cure. With an identity a man can relate to his job. With an identity a man has to have a job with which to relate. The man finds the job gripping and takes a grip on himself.

The idea of identity is an obvious way of understanding the argument that man is made by his environment. A man is taught to believe, and teaches himself what to believe. Both the context and the content of the positions he holds teach him what would be advantageous to believe. For a man is put into

a position to learn how to be in a position by how to be in that position. Its context is its rank, its power and prestige in relation to others. He is to learn the necessity of structure from the knowledge of the ordering of levels. Its content is its responsibility, its tasks in relation to others. He is to learn the necessity of skill from the knowledge of the logic of production.

There is enough breadth and subtlety for each to make his own. Around him are many themes and many variations within and combinations between them. It takes an individual to make his individuality but he is doing it by working and reworking socially centred, recognised and encouraged ideas. An identity is individual to the degree of representing a battle position. It is an identifyer developed by a man aware of the cost and benefits of its expression. Costs and benefits are incurred within as well as without. An identity helps a man control his position and control himself whilst in position.

What is in identity that makes it so significant? A simple answer could be that a man has means and ends neatly sewn together. He asserts what he believes in and what he likes doing. In more abstract terms his ends also act as a conscience; he sanctions himself; he speaks with himself on the value and validity of what he is doing. He uses his words. Some words and phrases have particular importance to him. He uses them as judgements of what is going on around him; what he is doing and what is going on within him. Meanwhile his means are his preferred activities, his near rituals and his disposition to his own rituals. In sum, his means are his skills and his ends are his values, they signify

why he does what he does and how he does what he wants to do.

An identity is developed with reference to a position. For all that a man is free to develop his identity, he is restricted by the tenure of a position to make his tenancy appropriate to that position. To put it another way, an identity is not a man's view of himself, it is his attitudinal equation of himself in his situation. An identity is a peculiarly social personality. It is a guided[3] development of values, skills and dispositions.

It is clear that identity is not 'cold'. An identity has all the warm blood of passion, pride, potency and capability. It does, after all, concern what the man finds in his position and what he has come to look for in that position. Thus an identity indicates that which the man warms towards. His identity is, in part, his 'soft spot'.[4] It is where others can touch him by learning his words, the style of action he likes and to say boldly what they know he stands for. An identity can be immitated quite adequately; others can practice the deception of hypocrisy[5] whilst the man feels himself mirrored, no longer alone, but with a 'soul mate'. And if his identity indicates that which holds his attention it also implies that which will not interest him, his 'blind spot'. His strength charts his weakness and one of these weaknesses is the potential for conflict with others holding different identities in their different positions. So identity is a clue to antagonisms over and above the resentments and resistances of rank and responsibility. From the principles of identity everyone could be feuding with everyone else. Identity is primarily the man's means of making his position honourable and sensible. Its secondary property of marking him out from

others holds the possibility of marking out the battle lines with them. There may be both direct and indirect emnity between identity holders. After all, an identity is more than held with care. It is held with passionate concern.

But perhaps too much has been written in these abstract terms. For identities can be represented as real properties. Three sorts of white-collar identities have been structured to see how Profit's managers come to terms with their positions and how these terms affect the stresses of their positions. All were current in the literature but here they are given equivalent treatment. The first of these identities is that of professionalism.

5.2 Professionalism: an identity above and beyond the organisation

Mention of professionalism with managers draws one of two portraits. Generally the picture is that of a slick executive; good looking in a boyish way, sporting in a generous way, who knows his business and drives it as fast and as thoroughly as he handles his new car. Occasionally there is a smaller image; of a mad scientist, a boffin, tinkering with his test tubes, working all hours, muttering in his laboratory; dreaming to himself and being angry only when disturbed. Both images cause some embarrassment.[6] The executive image is that of a professional manager, good at his job and likely to go far. The scientist image is that of a back-room genious from whom the future may flow. Of course, neither images are professionalism. They carry, very slightly, a few resonances of identity. From the 'executive image' comes the note of skill; of competence with difficult things. From the

'scientist image' comes the note of involvement in the job and an autonomy to the job. These notes are drawn from more complex tones and can be seen at work from the background to professionalism as an identity.

> The doctor gets you when you are born,
> The preacher when you marry,
> The lawyer has you once or twice,
> When through life you tarry.
> Professional men they have no cares,
> Whatever happens they get theirs.
>
> Ogden Nash

The true professionals are middle-class monopolists.[7] Doctors and priests prescribe for the weakened man, whilst lawyers attack and defend his alleged moments of weakness. Professionals are independent - with a closed shop that stretches from the recruitment and training to their employment and careers. They centre upon a client. They are hired to do their stuff and completely take over. The client is passive, transported by an expert entrepreneur and an entrepreneurial expert. This image is the sociologist's stereotype.

The images blend. Professionalism[8] is about competence, intellect and independence. Professionalism is an identity whereby competence, intellect and independence can be defined in many ways. Professionalism here is made to mean an identity given to, and developed by, at least some managers. The discussion of the questions also involves accounting for the structuring of items in this way. Table 5.1 itemises the goals of the identity of professionalism.[9]

Professionalism allies the good of society with what is good for the society of professionals. That is, professionalism is a particular pursuit that pursues a general good. The ends

of professionalism are both personal service[10] and social progress; and both the advancement of knowledge and the advancement of a specific body of knowledge.

Personal service is to be of use, to have an open skills freely available to those in need. This personal service is enabling gradual change, lives altered and enobled, a bit here and a bit there, in such a way as progress is realistically and really achieved. Professionalism accepts that all is not right and works on the evils.[11] Professionalism is an intensely personal awareness in a nebulous togetherness. Professionalism advances faith in what it being progressed as well as progress. The identity is loyal to a pocket of knowledge, culture, community and society.[12]

Professionalism is customarily rooted in its vocational training. A man has learned, and been taught, these values before becoming a manager. They are values from the mouths of committed teachers. They are idealism with a thread of realism. For, as well as social progress, there is the progress of specialism. A specialism, or discipline, is a vested interest.[13] It demands survival and an inkling of success; honours for its senior p ractitioners; the ear of those with political power; growth in the number of qualified and employed practitioners; and investment in its problems as funding for its researches. Professionalism begins with the golden edge of social progress, and ends at the iron feet of personal advancement. The importance of this spread is that in professionalism such values are seen as necessary and necessarily complementary. Obviously professionalism has collegiate implications; of being co-workers with the authority of proficiency in skill rather than the attitude of a position. Professionalism is potentially anti-authoritarian.[14]

Professionalism is in the service of the client - the sponsor of its industry. Professionalism is analytical exploitation. It is the manipulation of the objects to examine the feasibility of practical exploitation. In this sense, professionalism is always concerned with making a new advance or verifying an old one.

So far the identity of professionalism has been concerned with values or ends. The identity of professionalism has been concerned with values or ends. The identity is also composed of means or skills. Of course, there are many other ways in which the identity can be organised. The intention of this design is to be as direct as possible and to reduce repetition to a minimum. Table 5.2 gives the six statements that refer to the skills.

There is something elevating in professionalism's skill. This is the enthusiasm of a boy scout pioneering through a forest. It lies in the hunger and capacity for novelty, challenge and the sheer pleasure of working something out.[15] For professionalism's concern is with a current mystery that can be resolved as a puzzle with resolute skill. 'Knowledge for knowledge's sake' runs the adage. The pursuit of knowledge produces breakthroughs. Such achievements are the substance of professional works, Articles confer prestige. For to write an article means that a man is surfacing, screwing his courage to the sticking point, measuring his claims with due modesty and 'making a contribution to the literature'.

In all this, in values and skills, professionalism is somewhat other-worldly from the company's point of view. Professionalism values and practices enlightenment. Seemingly

the enlightenment of everyone or anyone.[16] Apparently the identity of professionalism is centrally concerned with the enlightenment of the professional. The following identity, that of managerialism has neither explicitly social nor personal values or skills.

5.3 Managerialism: an identity upon and around the organisation

It might be thought strange to structure an identity of managerialism.[17] For obviously this could simply be what a manager is exhorted to be. However, there is abundant literature that seeks to give form and purpose to this identity. Managers are encouraged to be both people and profit minded, tough and tender, literate, numerate, sociable and technically expert. The basis of all this instruction is to be company-minded, for the manager to identify with the company, for its welfare to be his own concern. He is encouraged to think and act as if the company were his. Company-mindedness is to limit the manager's interests to those of the company and 'thrust' outwards in its interests. The morality of managerialism is to value the company as the centre of the universe and to see that universe outlined by the company's horizons. Table 5.3 gives the values of managerialism.

Four subcategories of the values of managerialism have been made. They mesh as one 'for the good of the company'. The company is to grow; be profitable; independent and successful in whatever competition it enters. Growth, independence and competitiveness are values that sweep the company's field of operation. Without growth that the company could stagnate and reverseits

fortunes to that of failure. Competition sustains growth, holding customers and markets to prevent recession. Independence is a value of loyalty.

Managerialism means accepting the values of any company and, in the process, promoting the value of the company in which the man is employed. Clearly, it is the directorate's explicit value to be a large independent company (even though they may weaken the company to sell to a high bidder). But whilst the directorate may value independence for as long as the company is a profitable investment, managerialism values the company in its own right - no matter how large, anonymous and monopolistic.

Profitability, of course, is what it is all about. And the broad value of profitability includes a little internal ruthlessness. The alienation of unprofitable product lines is simply the pruning and burning of dead branches. The hard, impersonal, skills of managerialism contrast immediately with the general, vague skills of professionalism.

Seven such 'hard-nosed' criteria of managerialism's skills are itemised in Table 5.4.

The criteria are threefold: the immediate cash outlay or its equivalent, the immediacy of returns, and risk. Whilst the values of managerialism are to test every proposal as if it were to hurt the company. The criteria demand precise specifications, exact costing and 'no messing' estimates of what is at stake.

The skills and values of managerialism are to be sought not in any prior training but in the rank of the manager. Managerialism involves both visibility and accountability. Visibility is

being high enough to see how the company is doing in its market. Accountability is being accountable in 'hard cash' for what goes on and being in a position to render others accountable in the same terms.

The final identity is that of bureaucratism and is also concerned with the good of the company.

5.4 Bureaucratism: an identity within the organisation

Bureaucratism, too, has its stereotypes.[18] Bureaucracy is a technical term for administrative control and a term of abuse for such control. Bureaucracy has come to be synonymous with paperwork. It means filling in forms, filing them, and making up forms to keep track of forms. It is a way of tying things up.

Ransome K. Fern is advising Noel Constant on the importance of creating Magnum Opus, Incorporated, rather than continuing to speculate from his hotel room:

> '..... But just imagine how hard you would be to watch if you had a whole office building jammed to the rafters with industrial bureaucrats - men who lose things and use the wrong forms and create new forms and demand everything in quintuplicate, and who understand, perhaps, a third of what is said to them; who habitually give misleading answers in order to gain time in which to think, who make decisions only when forced to, and who then cover their tracks; who make perfectly honest mistakes in addition and subtraction, who call meetings whenever they feel lonely, who write memos whenever they feel unloved; men who never throw anything away unless they think it could get them fired. A single industrial bureaucrat, if he is sufficiently vital and nervous, should be able to create a ton of meaningless paper a year for the Bureau of Internal Revenue to examine.'[19]

Bureaucrat is a term of abuse. A bureaucrat is a legalised cretin; a bumbling clerk whose mind stretches no further than his scratching pen. He is rheumatoid arthritis: a bloody clot in the system. It is reckoned by many that all the

frustrations could be traced to their bureaucrats nauseating glee for trivia. Writing of Roman times, Gore Vidal (1962) puts their mannerisms thus:

> 'Our eyes were dazzled by glittering armour and elaborate cloaks, by the din of a thousand clerks and notaries who scurried about the courtyard, demanding their baggage, quarrelling with one another, insisting on various prerogatives. These noisy clerks with their inky fingers and proud intelligent faces were the actual government of Rome, and they knew it.'

And, of course, the bureaucrat is always right. He is an expert in his systems. It may be irritating to be reminded of the appropriate procedures and it may be irritating to be reprimanded for short-circuiting them, but it is really irritating to confront the pride in punctilliousness which these exchanges carry.

The stereotype is clear enough. Bureaucracy is a necessary evil, the bureaucrat is doing his job - albeit in a pedantic fashion. For administration, impersonal forms of control, pieces of paper are part of the fabric of the firm. Here bureaucratism is taken neutrally. It has to do with matters of administration. Table 5.5 itemises the values of the identity.

Bureaucratism is concerned with systems of administration, with legal codes of the firm; with rules that have a quasi-legal status for those to whom they apply. The general concern being with what is 'good' for the administration. Administration has been sub-categorised into two complementary axes, work is formalised and standardised.[20]

Formalisation is writing everything down, this is the process that turns every event into a recorded history, and a

process that turns every deed into a script. Past, present, and future are neatly parcelled in documentation and this facilitates standardisation.

Standardisation is making a method for everything. It is the devising of a fairness and a regularity that makes for predictability and the straightforward identification of responsibility.

Items in formalisation and standardisation make use of technical terms: job descriptions, organisational charts, these are pieces of paper which give form and standard.

Communication channels and decision-making procedures are both the product and the prayer of standardisation. They are terms that express the hope that communication be channelled and that decisions are made in an orderly fashion.

Bureaucratism values 'rational' management. It is an internal affair related not to training or rank but responsibility. Bureaucratism is a definite approach, not to making fundamental changes or big profits, but to the mundane task of keeping things going. It is a value concerned with the survival of the organisation from within; holding all together come what may.[21] As a value upon internal matters and a value upon defeating germs of disorder it has a defensive tone detectable in the esteemed skills. (See Table 5.6)

All items carry a hint of resistance. All, that is, except item 3. The two technical terms of rule and administration tropism will be explained.

A tropism is a move towards something. Plants trope towards light, water the earth's centre and towards each other.

Moving towards bureaucratic elements in the company has two distinct but interrelated tones in the literature. Partly by virtue of abuse and disbelief in any intrinsic interest in bureaucratic matters, there are suggestions that bureaucratism is a function of the man's personality. That is, the man is rigid, authoritarian, inflexible and probably incompetent. Consequently rule tropism was devised to consider a rigidity towards rules. Secondly, bureaucratism has been held to be a function of the nature of responsibility, a general form of 'accountant's disease', and made largely by the predominant experience of routine.[22] It has been held earlier that the juxtaposition of formalisation and standardisation produces routine. It is held here that the job's responsibilities may be such as to demand routines and demand largely routines from others. Consequently the items refer to administration by name and to its two products - manuals and paperwork.

Bureaucratism and the other two identities will now be analysed in a number of ways. The analysis begins by attempting direct relationships with role stress.

5.5 Relationships between the three identities and stress

In this chapter's introduction, notes were made on the reciprocity between the man and his job. For a man to take a job is for a job to make a man. Somehow, then, an identity approximates to a role as the man and job proximate to each other. As such, the identity shields the man. It is a protective layer of a 'competence in attributes' around

the demand for 'competences in activities'. To sketch another metaphor: an identity is the flux which cleans the welding of man and job.

The identity, however, is also distinctive. It sticks out. It makes the man in the job a 'stickler' for how things are to be done. He has his dispositions. He wants something doing first and done particularly well. As well as shielding a man, an identity sets him up. Theoretically, the stronger the identity the more he has taken his job upon himself and the more he is prone to criticism for the strength of his preferences.

Each of the three identities, the refined stereotypes of professionalism, managerialism and bureaucratism, have a particular relationship with role stress. For each have their values as to what is legitimate and practical and each have the ears attuned to what might be ambiguous. Practically the identities increase or decrease the probability of role stress. Professionalism is oriented out beyond the job. The values and skills reach out to worlds beyond the firm. Stress could increase with their profession.

Managerialism, however, seems theoretically most appropriate to the job. It relates to the rank of the job and relates the manager to a level of entrepreneurial interest in the firm. Managerialism is taking the company to heart. Stress could decrease with its tenure. Bureaucratism seems to be related to the responsibilities of the job. But it is related to some, rather than all, of these responsibilities and related to these in a peculiar way. It is intrinsically a narrower, narrowing identity in comparison with those of professionalism and managerialism.

On balance, stress could decrease with its adherence. Table 5.7 gives the few significant correlations between conceptual parts of these identitites and categories of role stress.

All three identities have some significant correlation with overload from the boss and from others. The stronger each identity is held the more critical the manager is of escalating demands. Each identity has its pride in the planning and execution of work; each identity's pride is buffetted by the demand 'give it me now'.

Professionalism was described as 'other-worldly' and the greater the importance of community good the greater the illegitimacy of the boss, the less compatibility with him. Business values are more than different from social values, they are in opposition to them. The parochial aspect of professionalism, advancing the specialism, correlates with underload from others. This was a rare conflict; that of being left alone and near abandoned. A manager involved with this external vested interest could be abandoned by managers with more immediate interests on their mind.

Managerialism has two 'individual' correlates in addition to those with overload. The more the values are held the less the ambiguity given to others. It is as though the more distinctively the company's interests can be expressed, the more the manager's words can be understood. If he values the company, he exercises the company's language and 'makes himself understood'.

The more the importance of managerial skills, however, the more the conflict with the boss. Of course, exercising

managerial skills could well be telling the boss a thing or two. To exercise managerial skills is to undermine intermanagerial domination. Managerialism draws the subordinate alongside his boss and if his boss resists the same managerialism encourages pursuing him to open conflict.

Bureaucratism has no separate correlates. Only one part of bureaucratism emerged with significant correlation and this was formalisation. Getting the procedure right and the protocol exact is an unhurried determined process. The more procedure is bypassed or compressed the less is done and known about it. Formalisation opposes load and pressure. Apart from this the identity may well be ambivalent to conflicts and ambiguities. There is in bureaucratism a strong note of subservience, of system worship and'an 'umble man'.

But the ideas in this interpretation are poor. There is no necessarily simple or unidirectional relationship between the content and strength of an identity and the sort and strength of role stress. Integrative and disintegrative functions of identity may cancel each other out. Yet again, such speculations treat the identities as frozen realities. This is not the case. I make no claims to having identified professionals, managerialists and bureaucrats. A manager's identity is a complex blend of available identities. The three identities have been expressed in similar terms to enable a consideration of the blends possible: the blends found in Mersey and Midland managers.

5.6 The concept of organisational identity[23]

Professionalism, managerialism and bureaucratism have

been similarly defined. All are identities about means and ends in and of work. They are the three prevailing vocations in white collar jobs. Each identity carries a caricature: or a stereotype of its perfect professor. It is possible that these stereotypes have so loaded the identities that they are seldom considered worthy of serious study and systematic interrelationship. As I wish to discuss their overall relevance and possible variety, my first task is to clear away some implicit elements that hold the identities firmly apart.

First there is an obvious evaluation in the stereotypes. Put simply, the bureaucrat is a trivial fool; the professional is eccentric but good, and the manager is a solid chap. They are three points on a continuum from bad through neutral to good. Secondly, there are differences in the complexity attributed to the identities. The bureaucrat is a simple identity made by myopic interests; the professional is more complex with a sweep of interests. The manager is most complex with a complicated set of interests derived from the fabric of the firm. These systematic differences in worthiness and complexity have been overridden. The evaluative aspect has been ignored and the complexity aspect has been made common to all three.

In what ways, then, are the three identities related and what is the relevance of their relationships? Bureaucratism is compounded of goals and skills internal to the organisation. Managerialism is composed of goals and skills that are inter-organisational in their concern with survival and success, in the market. Professionalism is a concern beyond the firm, extra organisational in means and ends. The identities are mutually exclusive ideal types linked by common formal characteristics.

And, taking the location of the organisation as the common formal characteristic, the identities are exhaustive. Diagram 5.A conveys this impression.[24]

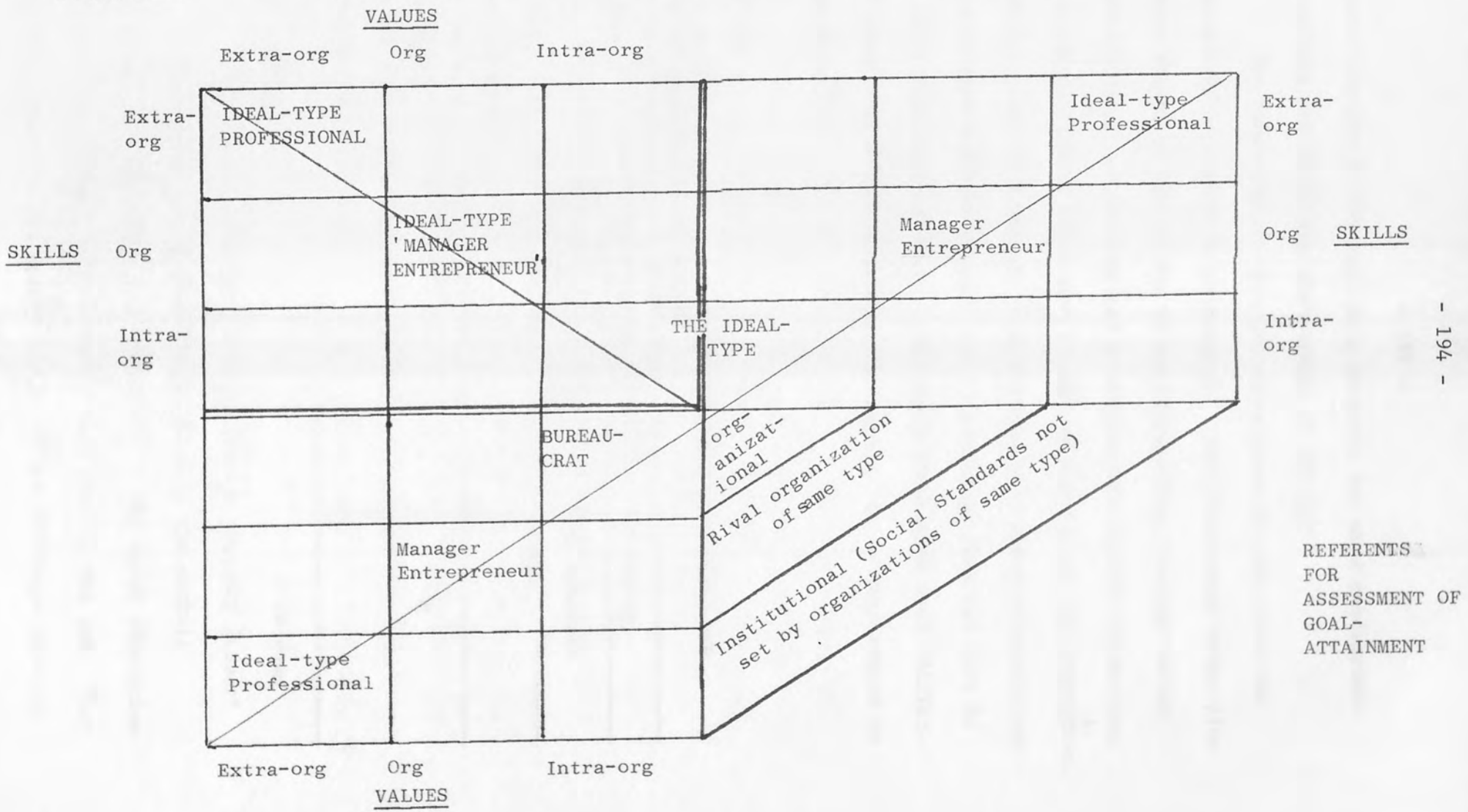
There are three 'pure types' and many blends or mixes. And there need be no problem of overlap or consistency.[25] The composite identity is the manager's chameleon coat: substantially he suits his surroundings.

From the measurements made, the actual types of identity at Mersey and Midland can be assessed. An overall score was constructed from the responses to statements which were consistent within the three identities (this calculation is discussed in detail in Chapter 6). Each score was trichotomised according to the empirical distribution of scores.[26] Each manager's score was then retitled as high, medium or low on the three identities. This exercise produces 27 types. Table 5.8 gives the list of types and the frequency with which they were found.

There was no pure 'bureaucrat' or 'manager', and only one 'professional'. The spread of blends at Mersey was almost uniform. The spread at Midland looks a little more patterned. The types with five or more adherents are composed largely of identities at 'medium strength', managerial-bureaucrats, managerial-professionals and allround, mediums: professional-managerial-bureaucrats.[27] There were drop-outs and maximisers; eleven managers were predominantly low and three were high on all three identities.

The spread is an important corrective to any impression that Mersey and Midland managers have any predominant, or pure, identity. The identity blends are the context for understanding

Diagram 5A A SCHEME FOR CLASSIFICATION OF CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS



that each identity is not held as a property but as a predisposition enabling and disabling the manager in his job.

The disabling in identity mixes comes in part from the ambivalence of incompatible principles. The first-order principles that were stated as the values of professionalism; managerialism and bureaucratism can overlap and interpenetrate without generating major contradictions. The second order principles of the identities do, however, contain opposing predispositions. For predispositions are not so much how the manager would like things done but what he feels about what is happening. The three identities feel 'differently' about technological goals, for example, as is represented in Diagram 5.B.[28]

Diagram 5B

THE CONTRASTING EVALUATIONS OF THREE TECHNOLOGICAL GOALS AND TENDENCIES IN CURRENT PRODUCTION

Identity	Tendencies in Production Technology		
	To produce quantity	To produce quality	To innovate
Professionalism	-	+	+
Managerialism	+	-	+
Bureaucratism	+	+	-

+ = to welcome - = to shun

What then can be said of organisation identity proper?

Throughout the discussion on identity the overall relevance of the phenomenon has been clear. The three identities signify something bigger than a man getting used to his job. They are specifications of the actual nature of the exchanges between

the man and his work: as he thinks of them, as he sums his own abstractions. None of the three identities are critical of the work a manager has to do. On the contrary, they each express an enthusiasm for a part of the manager's rank or responsibility. In general terms the identities considered integrate the man and his job of manager. Theoretically, managerialism and bureaucratism bind the man to management. Professionalism carries somewhat pristine virtues and may well appear a social conscience in contrast to business ethics. But professionalism no longer makes a virtue of independence; employment is accepted. Employment may well be accepted initially to pursue the profession, but then the employment is pursued to perpetuate the professiona as well as the profession. Thus, though theoretically there is opposition between professionalism and managerialism, this conflict does not ensue because professionalism is stated in sufficiently abstract terms to include managerialism and bureaucratism. And even if professionalism does not rush to embrace the more earthly values, it does not exclude them as alternative, concrete definitions of its own.

The broadest possible use, then, of the three identities is to relate them all to the problem of integration with the organisation. That is currently the identification is not with a quality product, the three sons of the founder, or the gentlemanly managing director. The integration is with a name, a company symbol with the organisation no matter how it is represented. The integration is that of an organisation internalised and identified. Organisational identity = professionalism plus managerialism plus bureaucratism.

Organisational identity maximises the insulation of beliefs and attitudes conducive to managerial work. An organisational identity secures the man in the job and the job in the firm. Further an organisational identity means an interest in the community, profitability and control procedures. Finally, an organisational identity is an attachment to managerial work and the welfare of management. It is not an identity rooted in a particular job. Which means that the manager has fixed loyalties and an open preparedness to put these loyalties to work in almost any managerial job. Organisational identity fits the man more or less into management.

But, of course, organisational identity does not 'cause a drop' in role stress. It intervenes. It mollifies an existing condition in such a way that though there is the same 'risk' of stress there is not the same experience of it. Identity is not a cause but a catalyst, or a fitter of experience. And these propositions stretch this account into its theory. The next chapter is concerned with the relationship between rank, responsibility and identity.

SETTLING THE SCORE

Chapter six makes a theory, tests it according to scientific standards and wonders why it didn't work.

Chapter Six

MANAGERS' STRESS AT WORK

> 'The purpose of empirical inquiry is to settle disagreements and doubts about facts, and thus to make arguments more fruitful by basing all sides more substantively. Facts discipline reason; but reason is the advance guard in any field of learning.'
>
> Mills, 1959: 205

Introduction

The account of my research has been descriptive and argumentative. My observations on life at Mersey and Midland have been bent to describe the stress inherent in managerial work. The argument being that this work is inherently stressful; that the job of manager entails a confrontation between man and job which neither can win nor lose.

There has been a tension in the account. The stress measured is that of role stress: of conflict and ambiguity both made by and sent to those with whom the manager works. Yet the discussion of stresses inherent in domination, for example, went further. They entered a cavern of private, inarticulate despair. Whilst, then, using stress under licence of the codes of research I have also taken the liberty to illuminate the broader and deeper problems managers have with managing. That is, I have often borrowed the full force of the term stress's everyday meaning and only later admitted that all I am qualified to discuss is role stress.[1]

Not every confrontation has been depicted. A full list could doubtless be made of every facet of managerial work and then each facet shown to be a mechanism that gives the man purpose and punishment; that leaves him to resolve a contradiction of pleasure and pain. But to make such a list would be pendantry and a badly torn web can still catch a fly for its spider.

Nor has the relationship between facets of work and stress been explicitly stated. An argumentative description is not an explanation. Instead plausible reasons have followed significant correlations. Their plausibility has rested upon how a type or category of stress might spring from a particular situation. In a nutshell stress has been objectified. The categories have been made as concrete 'types' and their very concreteness has made post-factum explanations possible. Overload has figured so large as to become real: as if there really were balances that could be tipped, bent and broken with successive weights. The objectification of stress into stresses has served me well but it hinders any attempt at a theory of stress - my attempt to explain the absurd.[2] I turn now to a theory; a theory of the confrontations within management; a theory of conflicts between managers.

The working class are alienated according to Marx (1844). But when I studied supervisors I found them generally less confident, more miserable[3] than the workers they supervised. My reasoning was that of a layman: workers leave the job behind, they go home hating it and forget it by doing something else. Managers take their jobs home with them, they cannot afford to

forget what they do not really like. Managerial power is visibility.[4] Managers can see many things above,which they are powerless to affect and see things going on below which reflect this corruption. Managers, I reasoned, are 'nearly men'. They are to control without having it and close to needing an imagination without realising it. Managers, I thought, have as many, if not more, grounds than workers for being alienated: for workers have some slight bases of co-operation between them and see a little of the products of their labour. But the manager is 'still at school', there is still the competition for the middle ground: not to come top but to avoid being bottom. And management is an art more than a skill. The manager is acquiring a most intricate art: most of which he knows has little to do with capability. I put the art of management as if teaching it to you.

The art of putting on a hard shell; of not caring too much if things at work go wrong. The art of knowing people and a little of why they do what they do. The know-ledge that one's actions have consequences and that one answers for some of them. The knack of squaring one's shoulders just before a big event and just afterwards. Defending solitude and yet seldom resisting a demand. Grinning and bearing it when the going gets rough. And it gets rough. The roughness of others; their tempers, intolerances and language (an habitual problem) but holding back when you feel things rising inside. Dressing smartly and eating well. Keeping the hair neat. Keeping the body in good condition and not worrying too much about old age. A certain timelessness has developed[5] and

one is living invariably in the present with a hazy history and a blazing future. The successful manager is the man who has mastered the art of management. And yet he may be known by some other managers as 'the man with the mouth'. One must be able to take a certain amount of dislike or emnity; it is a form of attention; one of the marks of success.

The art is one of compromise and opportunism.[6] The manager is to be an edge, edging his way through to what he has to do. It is not that this practice is unpleasant. For though it has its unsavoury moments it is more that the activities are usually nerve racking.

The cynical[7] understanding of the art of management synthesises the conflicts within the men and between the managers. The nominalist mode of this enquiry separates the two conflicts as if there were two parts to the man. My theoretical concern is now with the subjects, or sources of stress; the question being <u>with whom is the stress</u>, with men in what positions relative to the manager?

The aim of this research was an empirical enquiry into the causes and conditions of a particular sort, or definition, of stress. A theory was constructed to direct this enquiry. And it is to the skeleton and substantiation of this theory that this chapter is addressed.

6.1 <u>A theory towards role stress: occupational crises as a particularity in the theory of organisational crises</u>.

The theory of organisational crises is simple. It holds that organisations are crisis-ridden institutions and that the major

experience to be found in organisations is that of perpetual crisis. Those who work in organisations may express this idea in terms of 'staggering from crisis to crisis'. Those who study organisations are impressed with the ways in which crises are perpetuated. The theory of organisational crises, therefore, relates the layman's experience to the scholar's concern with detecting the rationality of the apparently irrational. How is it that organisations are causing the crises to which they are prone? The answer to this question needs two parts: parts which are opposing perspectives that explode on combination. The first part makes the organisation's form so important that those in it appear barely relevant. The second part reverses the emphases and looks at the situation of the employee.

All organisations have a structure and a culture. To be more precise an organisation has many structures and cultures. But for the purposes of appreciating how organisational life is possible a structure is that which administrates work and a culture is that which teaches workers about work.

A structure is formed by the interplay of stratification and differentiation. Stratification is the differential distribution of power. Differentiation is the differential distribution of tasks. Stratification and differentiation oppose each other. They are opposing organising principles. Stratification is of levels, rank and form, seeking permission, getting approval and stifling opposition to a command. The chain of command is strictly vertical. Stratification is the imperative, unbending nature of power and prestige. Stratification is behind all

domination and its becoming discipline. Stratification is thus its own first principle and last resort.

Differentiation is of tasks, responsibilities and skills. The marking out of a job makes a job for somebody to make a job of it. Differentiation is working well within this space, with tools to hand and helpers not far away. And so it is necessary involvement with the work in hand, patiently picking each loop in the knot getting down close to the work and momentarily shutting the world out. Differentiation is thus a compartment in the reality of work, the necessity of labour and their coupling with ingenuity and creativity: imagination at work.

The principles oppose each other directly. Stratification makes a chain of dependence and differentiation advances claims for independences. Stratification means that permission must be sought. Differentiation means that competence is the best judge of intended actions. To use the terms in which domination was discussed, stratification is a force for superordination and subordination whilst differentiation is a force for autonomy. Jobs are the cells of action formed by the organisational forces of stratification and differentiation: they are the planets that reveal both sun and orbits.

Organisations tend to make more and more rules on possession of power and make jobs and tasks more specialised. The tendency of organisations is to escalate the opposition of stratification and differentiation; the conflicts between ranks and responsibilities.

A culture is formed by the interplay of the society and the organisation. It is a collection of attitudes towards making

what is made (as necessary and desirable) in the way in which it is made (as natural and intelligent). The culture of the organisation approximates where possible to the societal culture, upholding its virtues and condemning its wickednesses: promoting the virtuousness of the organisation. The culture binds the organisation to the society at the same time as modifying societal culture with its own culture. The culture is developed by those who have an interest in employees thinking the same, not controversial, things. It is taught from one level to another to socialize those at such levels to acknowledge the rightness of their levelling. The culture of an organisation is an ideology.

The internal contradictions of the organisation culture underpin and blur the contradictions within the organisational structure. The more obvious contradictions within the culture[8] are those of co-operation and competition; innovation and conformity, human values and economic values. Co-operation is an ideal expression of differentiation: all doing different parts working together to make the same thing. Competition is an ideal expression of stratification struggling to express the level so clearly that the struggler leaves the level for the next. Likewise, innovation and human values are the loci of differentiation and conformity and economic values the loci of stratification. In sum, whilst differentiation bears upon the content of work stratification shapes its form. The organisation's culture, or ideology, supports both forces and makes the contradictions of the structure more pervasive and more amenable to ambivalence

So by crises I do not mean difficulties in getting

materials or making a substantial profit. By crises I mean flash points, tensions produced and sustained by tensions within and between the organisational structure and culture. And these crises are obviously handled with considerable care. Crises are encircled by mechanisms for their handling for crises are easier to approach within structure and culture than are the contradictions in structure and culture themselves.[9]

The theory has been examined at the level of a job. This means that I have moved from the macrocosm of the organisation to the microcosm of some men's work and adapted the meanings of structure and culture accordingly. I assume that there are two levels of analysis: the organisation and the work of the organisation's employee and that each employee works for the organisation and so houses a fraction of each part of its patterning.[10]

There are qualitative changes in this shift of level: the organisation is scaled down to what happens in a man's job. The term stratification (the differential distribution of power and prestige) is expressed as the rank of the man's position. The idea of differentiation (the differential distribution of tasks) becomes the job's responsibilities. The change is from a concern with how differently power and tasks are distributed to a concern with the comparative value of possessing different amounts of powers and tasks.[11] The man has so many things to do and so many ways to do them. To be sure he has more than some and less than others. Of course, the extent of these differences is relevant. But the assumption here is that each manager does have 'a slice of the action' that he is made to

manage and enabled to manage. Each manager gets so much of what is going. Stratification, differentiation and identification have been put in white collar terms. The crises managers experience from the contradictions within and between these forces have been limited to that of role stress.

The theory of organisational crises has thus been refined to a theory of occupational crisis for a particular occupational group. And the theory holds that there are predominant influences between the four features.[12] These features when operationalised are referred to as variables and when expressed as possibilities produce hypotheses.[13] Diagram 6.A shows the structure of the hypotheses and then lists them.

The theory is a role theory. It treats the job as if it had a life of its own. As such it commits an existential error by making concrete that which is in the minds of men. But at the time I knew no other way of studying the complexities of man and work save by simplifying them into convenient categories. These categories have the merit of being extensive and detailed and the first stage in testing the theory is to see whether or not these big groupings are consistent. The question, then, before that of relationship is cohesion. Do the variables hang together in themselves or have so many bits been loosely organised?

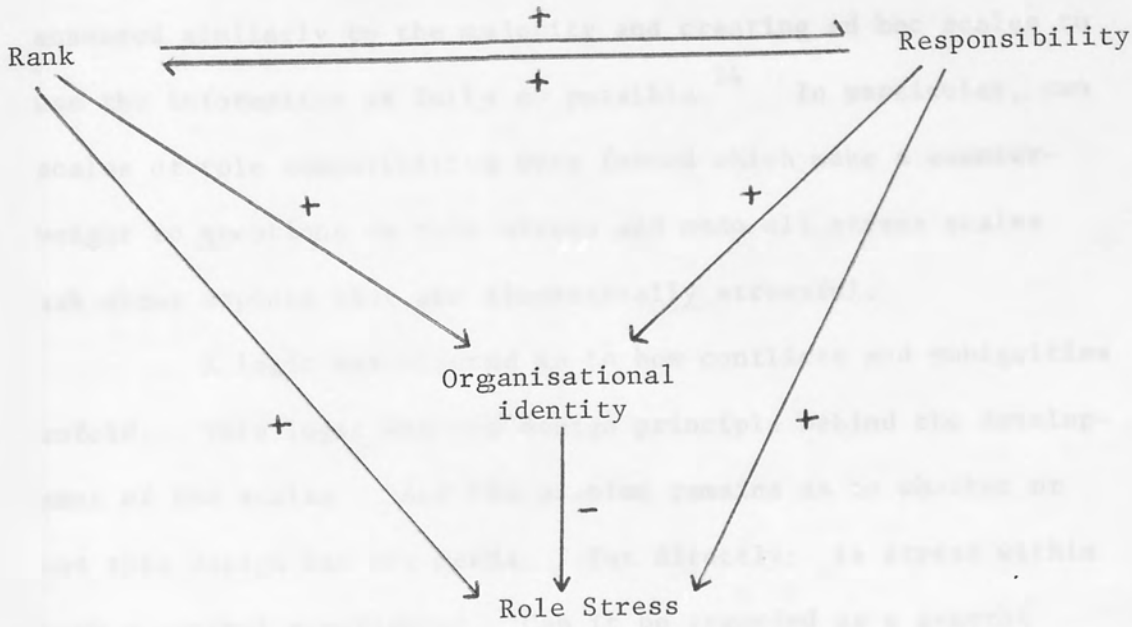
6.2 The general variables: the internal consistency of stress, rank, responsibility and organisational identity

(i) Intra-role stress

The original 14 scales of conflict and ambiguity to

Diagram 6A

THE THEORY OF OCCUPATIONAL CRISES AS PRODUCING ROLE STRESS



The hypotheses:

1. The more rank the more responsibility.
2. The more rank the more role stress.
3. The more responsibility the more role stress.
4. The more rank the more organisational identity.
5. The more responsibility the more organisational identity.
6. The more organisational identity the less role stress.

and from the immediate boss and the people with whom the managers worked produced 18 modified scales. The modifications involved dropping the answers to some questions because they were not answered similarly to the majority and creating ad hoc scales to use the information as fully as possible.[14] In particular, two scales of role compatibility were formed which make a counter-weight to questions on role stress and mean all stress scales ask about aspects that are theoretically stressful.

A logic was offered as to how conflicts and ambiguities unfold. This logic was the design principle behind the development of the scales. And the problem remains as to whether or not this design has any merit. Put directly: is stress within work a general experience? Can it be regarded as a general variable?[15]

Diagram 6.B arranges the variable according to the subject of stress, to who is giving or getting conflict and ambiguity. The theory of role stress, when causally expressed, emphasises that occupational crises emerge as manager against manager.

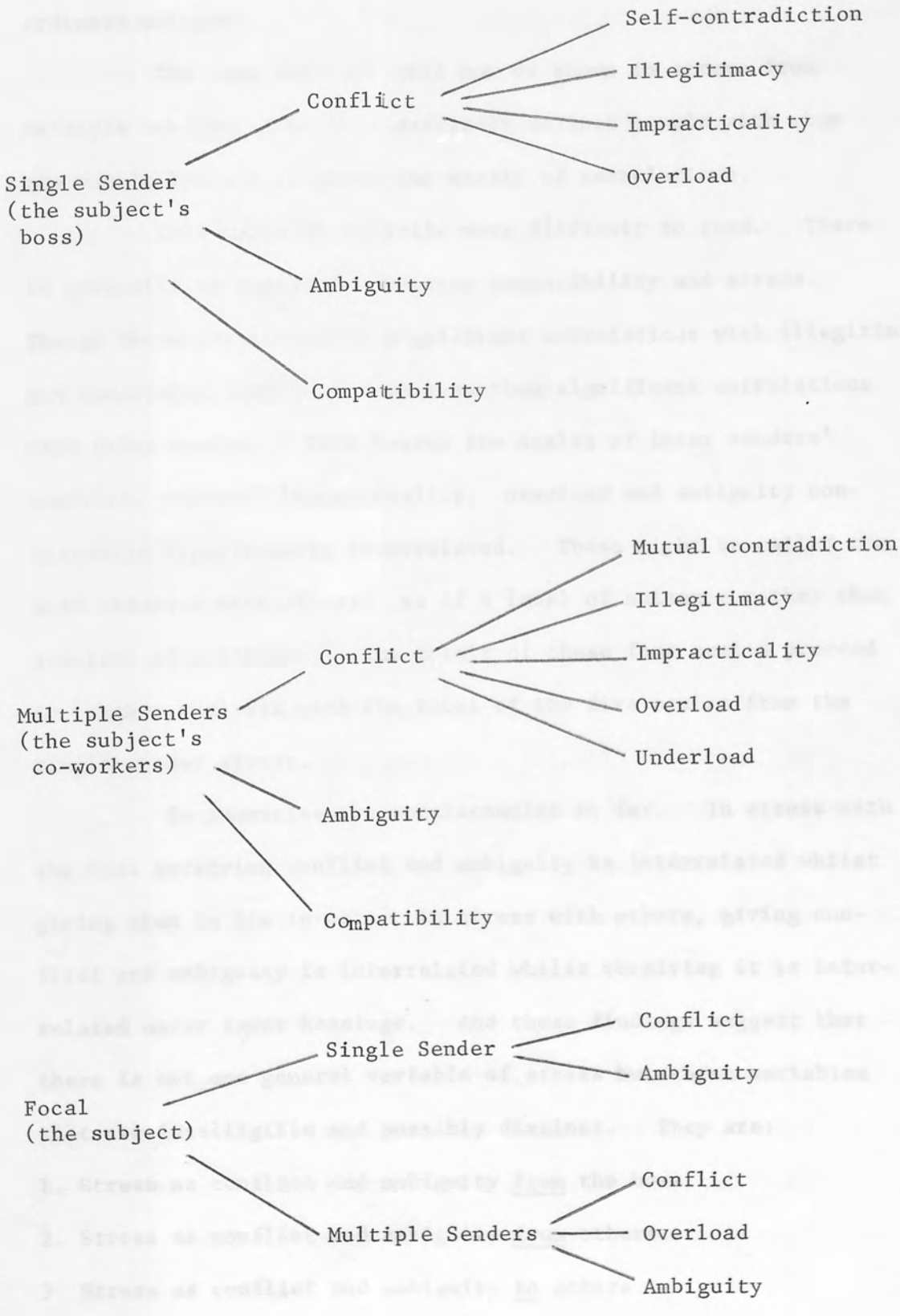
I consider stress to and from a single sender first. Table 6.1 gives the matrix of correlations between the scales.

Sender compatibility is consistently, and generally significantly, in opposition to sender stress. There may be ambivalence towards the boss. There may be good and bad times with him but if the manager has scored his boss 'high' on stress he has scored him low on compatibility. Not surprisingly, then, stress and compatibility are negatively correlated.

And single sender stress does seem to be all of one

Diagram 6B

THE STRUCTURE OF ROLE STRESS FROM THE SUBJECTS, OR SOURCES, OF CONFLICTS AND AMBIGUITIES



piece. High illegitimacy is correlated significantly with high impracticality and so on.[16] What is produced by this analysis, therefore, is a general measure of stress from the boss that encompasses the conflicts and ambiguities he makes for his subordinate manager.

The same interest will now be shown in stress from multiple senders; the less precisely defined 'people with whom you work', Table 6.2, gives the matrix of correlations.

This table is a little more difficult to read. There is generally an opposition between compatibility and stress. Though there are generally significant correlations with illegitimacy and underload, they have some less than significant correlations with other scales. This leaves the scales of inter senders' conflict, senders' impracticality; overload and ambiguity consistently significantly interrelated. These might be called the soft stresses with others: as if a level of nuisance rather than a matter of collision. The totals of these four scales proceed to further analysis with the total of the five scales from the single sender stress.

To summarise the consistencies so far. In stress with the boss receiving conflict and ambiguity is interrelated whilst giving them to him is not. In stress with others, giving conflict and ambiguity is interrelated whilst receiving it is interrelated under fewer headings. And these findings suggest that there is not one general variable of stress but three variables that are intelligible and possibly distinct. They are:

1. Stress as conflict and ambiguity <u>from</u> the boss.
2. Stress as conflict and ambiguity <u>from</u> others.
3. Stress as conflict and ambiguity <u>to</u> others.

Table 6.3 gives the matrix of correlations between conflicts and ambiguities to others to test the idea of this third variable.

The manager's ambiguity to his boss is not significantly correlated with the other categories of stress. But this matrix does encourage the making of a variable of stress to others as conflict for the boss is significantly correlated with conflicts and ambiguity for the people with whom he works.

Meanwhile, the two compatibility scales were correlated at 0.634. So stress is not a general variable in the strict sense.[17] The conceptulaising of the variable did, however, produce four more compact variables that are consistent within and coherent from without. They are empirically interrelated and intelligible. They are:

1. Stress from the boss.
2. Stress from others.
3. Stress made for others.
4. Compatibility with the boss and others

(ii) The rank of the position

The job is given to the man, the man takes it and makes what he can of the position. The rank of the position is literally its standing in the hierarchy. The standing is theoretically produced by the interplay of power and prestige.[18] And these two aspects are amenable to measurement even if this measuring is somewhat drawn out. In fact, their measuring is so extensive that so far it may have been unclear as to whether one thing was approached by many paths or whether each path led to a different destination.

The range of measures were both 'hard' and 'soft' - by

which I mean that apparently objective and subjective measures were made. There are what might be identified as the signifiers of the power and the prestige of the manager's position and what the manager said in terms of power and prestige.

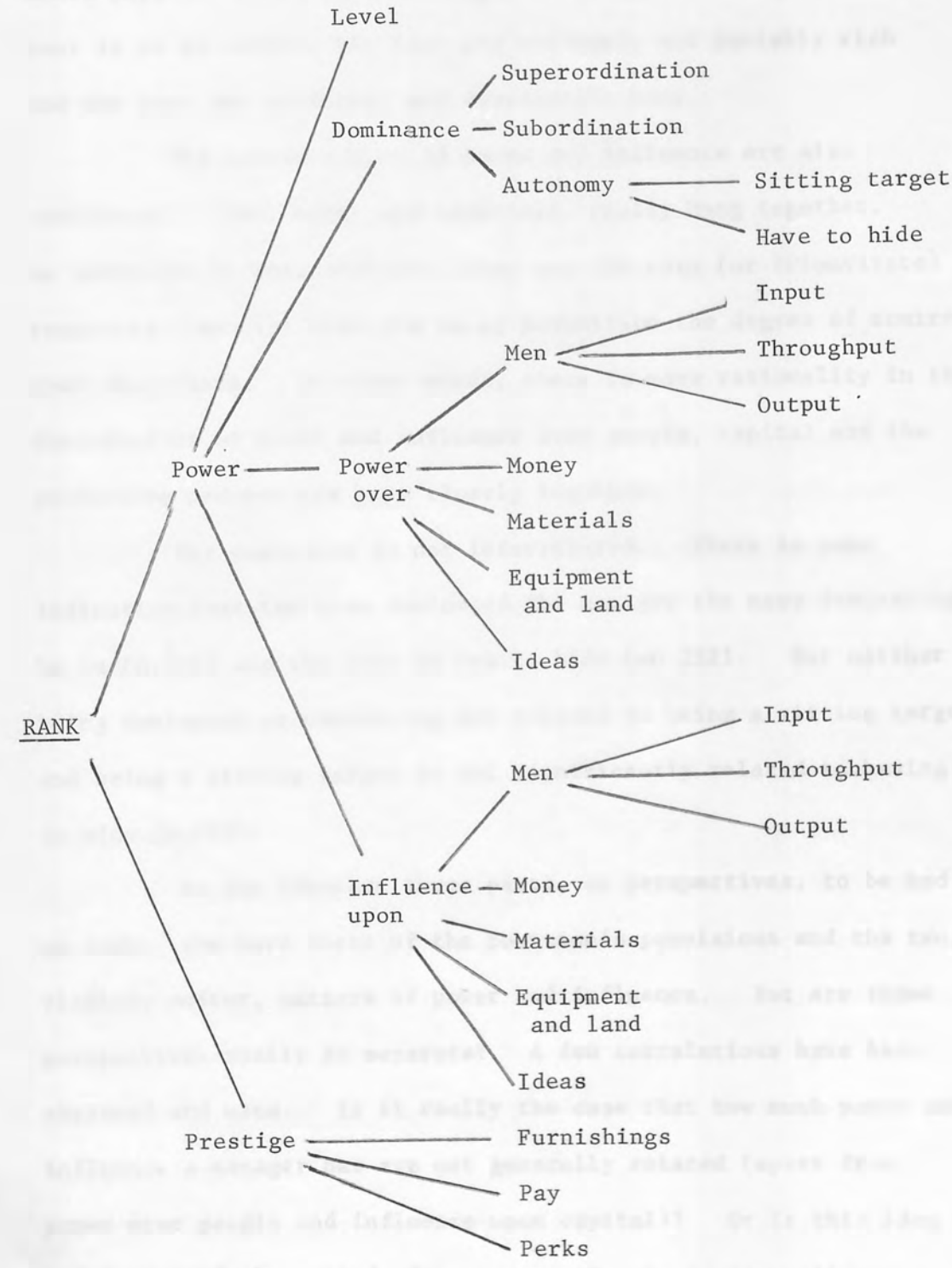
The analysis for consistency, the search for a general variable that might fairly be called rank, takes the same form as the analysis of stress. The matrix of intercorrelations is examined for a pattern to give the highest or longest single or multiple measures of rank. Diagram 6.C gives the scales whose intercorrelation has yet to be established.

Power had more detailed attention than did prestige. Most of this detail was provided by an extensive analysis of specified tasks and a simple classification of the forced responses chosen. In the text dominance was elaborated beyond the meanings of its measures. Whilst prestige was observed and recorded, no attempt was made at the feelings that might be involved. Thus, though these measures of rank are numerous, they are neither exhaustive nor intended to convey any such impression. Any general variable made of them is general only in the sense that it is conceptually and empirically distinct. And for this the correlation matrix of the measures is consulted. Table 6.4 takes some reading but there are some things that can be read out of it.

First, Table 6.4 contains many insignificant correlations. In fact, most of the recorded correlations are irrelevant. Those that are significant form two interesting groups. There are three sets of intercorrelations within conceptual groupings and there is the correlation across conceptual groupings that makes for guided speculation.[19]

Diagram 6C

THE STRUCTURE OF RANK: THE CATEGORIES AND MEASURES USED TO ESTABLISH THE POWER AND PRESTIGE OF POSITIONS



All the hard, and relatively simple, data on power and prestige are significantly intercorrelated. The level, furnishing, pay and perks of the position are tied together. As one increases they all increase. A low level is meagre furnishings, small pay, and but a few advantages on the side. Within management it is as beyond, the rich are uniformly and lavishly rich and the poor are uniformly and desperately poor.

The pseudo-scales of power and influence are also consistent. Men, money and materials, really hang together. As indicated by this analysis, they are the core (or triumvirate) resources: control over one is by definition the degree of control over the others. In other words, there is more rationality in the distribution of power and influence over people, capital and the productive process are kept closely together.

But dominance is not interrelated. There is some indication that the more dominated the manager the more dominating he is (0.246) and the less he has to hide (-0.232). But neither being dominated or dominating are related to being a sitting target and being a sitting target is not significantly related to having to hide (0.199).

So far thereare three parts, or perspectives, to be had on rank; the hard facts of the position's provisions and the two, slightly softer, matters of power and influence. But are these perspectives really so separate? A few correlations have been observed and used. Is it really the case that how much power and influence a manager has are not generally related (apart from power over people and influence upon capital)? Or is this idea a function of the method of measurement? Or is it really more

important to consider who is in the job rather than what the job is?

To begin to answer these questions is easier than arriving at a resolute answer. One asks the questions how are power and influence generally related and are they related to the facts of the position? Table 6.5 gives the matrix of correlations from which some light may be drawn.

This matrix makes interesting reading. Power and influence are not significantly related. Powerlessness significantly decreases with increasing power and even more significantly with increasing influence. The 'ratios' correlations indicate that the fraction of power over influence is related to increase in power and decrease of influence and again the numerator is dominant in the fraction of power and influence over powerlessness. Meanwhile the ratios are not significantly related nor are any of the totals or ratios related to the hard data on rank.

To summarise the analysis of rank it can be said that rank, like stress, remains in its constituent parts and that these parts are:

1. Rank as attributes of the position in terms of the level, pay and perks of the job, and furnishing of the job holder's room.
2. Rank as power in terms of the number 'last words' on managerial tasks.
3. Rank as influence in terms of the number of 'says' had on managerial tasks.
4. Rank as powerlessness in terms of the number of managerial tasks over which the manager has neither power nor influence.

These four distinct measures proceed to the mathematical skeleton of the theory that follows accounts of the consistency within the general variables of responsibility and identity.

(iii) The responsibility of the position

The measures of responsibility were more simple than those of rank. Two measures involve direct observation of the position's setting they calculate how close the manager is to production (1) and how many subordinates he has (3). The content of work was approached through three perspectives: change, continuity and boundary tasks. A fraction was calculated between responsibilities for changes in policy over responsibility for continuing procedure. The broadest definition of responsibility was taken to mean the amount of time at work and on work related matters. It is clear that responsibility as a general variable is of a different order again from that of stress and rank and this matter concerns us later. Diagram 6.D gives responsibility's structure.

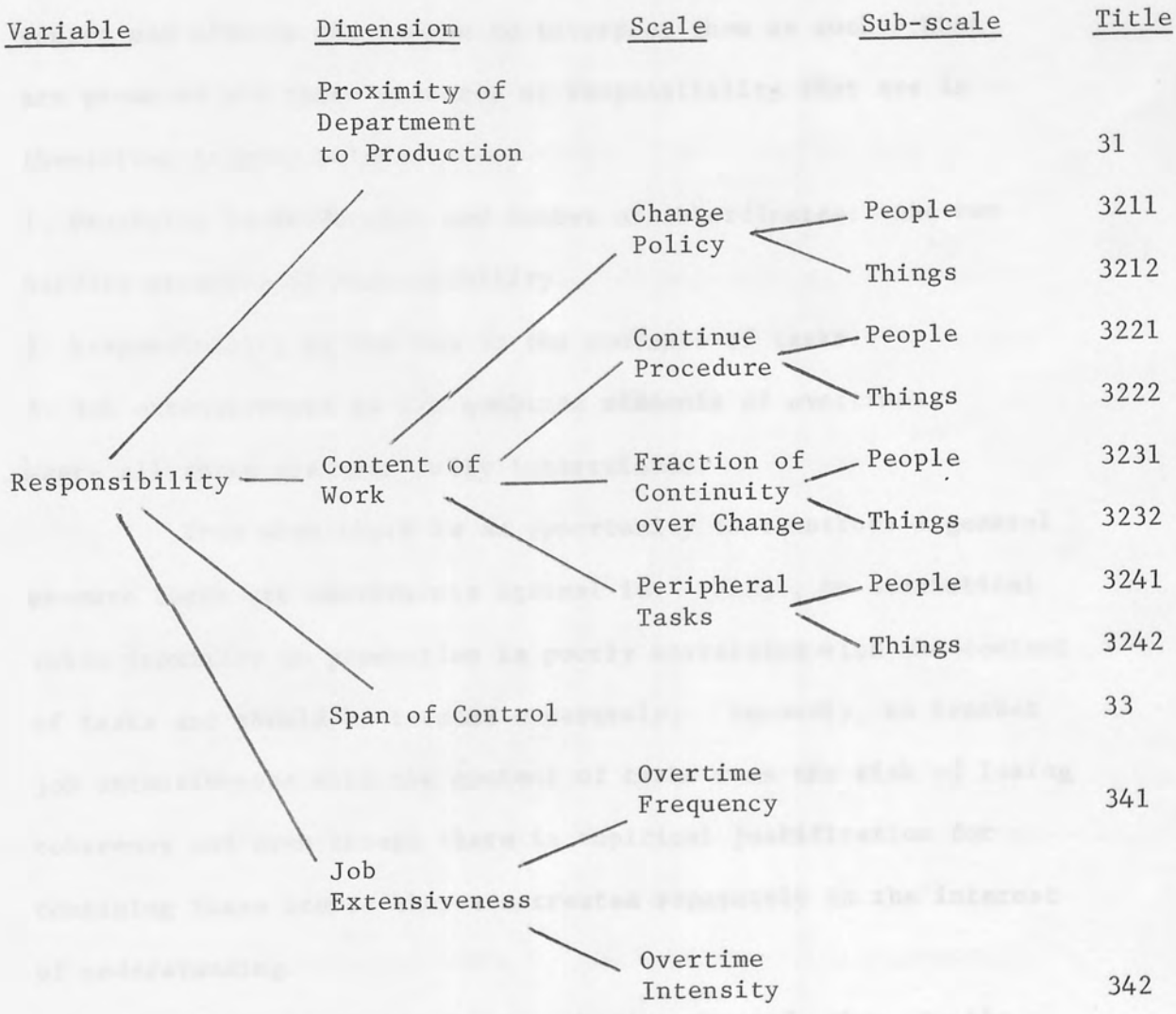
Table 6.6 gives the matrix of correlations between these measures.

With the exception of the two fractions, the correlations are generally high and significant. In particular:

1. The closer to production the greater the responsibility for changing policies involving people (0.358) and peripheral tasks involving things (0.303) and the more subordinates(0.527).
2. Omitting the ratio, the six sets of responsibilities are inter-related; having more responsibility is having more responsibility for change, continuity and peripheral tasks involving people and things.

Diagram 6D

THE STRUCTURE OF RESPONSIBILITY: THE CATEGORIES AND MEASURES USED TO ESTABLISH THE WORK LOAD OF POSITIONS



3. Having more responsibility in tasks is having more overtime.
4. Overtime frequently increases with the number of subordinates (0.290) and proximity to production (0.283).

But it is difficult to assert such relationships as causes and effects and unwise to interpret them as such. What are produced are three measures of responsibility that are in themselves largely related.

1. Proximity to production and number of subordinates: the two hardest measures of responsibility.
2. Responsibility as the sum of the contents of tasks.
3. Job extensiveness as two combined elements of overtime.

Where all three are near fully interrelated.

Thus when there is an opportunity to construct a general measure there are constraints against it. First, by statistical rules proximity to production is poorly correlated with the content of tasks and should be treated separately. Secondly, to bracket job extensiveness with the content of tasks runs the risk of losing coherency and even though there is empirical justification for combining these scores they are treated separately in the interest of understanding.

Three measures of responsibility proceed, then, to the statistical examination of the theory's utility.

(iv) Organisational identity

Theoretically organisational identity intervenes between what work causes, and its effects of stress. It is a general variable by design; a design that involves a clear break with any common-sense logic on the subject. As a variable it is general because it tries to exhaust three main foci of occupational

culture. To be a manager is also to equate oneself with professionalism; managerialism and bureaucratism. These three occupational cultures might be called ideologies upon a white-collar position. They fit the believer to work: set him to work as if under his own control. For their meaning is to make a grand vocation out of a specific job. The ideologies lock the man into his managerial place. He locks himself in. Organisational identity is the formula for a man to make his formula of rank and responsibilities and ameliorate his experience of their effects. His identity uses these cultures. He adopts some values. In other words, he adopts some things and avoids others, he amalgamates the institutions notions of sacred and profane with his own. The formula for organisational identity is an attempt to maximise the integrative value of the identities available.

Thus the testing for a general variable is testing a concept. The questions are, first: are the three identities internally consistent and then are the aspects of the three identities related? Table 6.7 gives the correlation matrix.

In interpreting Table 6.7 each of the three identities is taken in turn, beginning with professionalism.

Professionalism, as devised, is not a unitary entity. The importance of community good is correlated with that of knowledge generally expressed (0.440), but not with the more particular importances of the good of the specialism and practicing the skills. A further relationship occurs between the good of knowledge and exercising professional skills (0.312). The stronger and more 'external' two correlates will be taken and

used. Professionalism will be taken to mean a concern with the community and knowledge at large which is more related to a vocational 'view of life' than the view from a named profession.

This usage is in clear opposition to the meanings of managerialism and professionalism. Meanwhile, the greater the interest in the good of the specialism the greater the importance of managerial skills (0.308). Also the greater the importance of professional skills the greater the importance of managerial values (0.297). Further, and more incredibly, the greater the importance of the good of the specialism, the greater that of formalisation (0.446) and that of administrative tropism (0.278). So professionalism as designed does have some parts positively related to those of managerialism and bureaucratism. The good of the specialism seems to be a truly parochial interest and related to the good of managerial and bureaucratic practices. It is a part of taking an interest in <u>everything</u> one should.

Managerialism is both internally consistent (0.586) and generally positively related to bureaucratism. The particular exception being with rule tropism (-0.051 and 0.248). The good of the company is also being a good manager and being interested in the managerially advantageous aspects of bureaucratism, but not in 'rules for the sake of rules'.

Bureaucratism is also internally consistent with the exception of rule tropism. Formalisation, standardisation and administration are consistent goods.

Professionalism is not related consistently positively or negatively with either managerialism or bureaucratism. So the three identities will be treated separately. The measures that go forward from organisational identities are:

1. Professionalism: the good of the community.

2. Managerialism: the good of the company.

3. Bureaucratism: the good of the company's administration.

6.3 A note on the making of the general variables

Each of the four variables has now been analysed for consistency. The analysis has not proved that stress, rank, responsibility, and identity are unitary entities. Rather, each has been compressed into a number of manageable and meaningful subcategories that will shortly be used to examine the theory of occupational crises.

But even though the general variables are similar in size, style, and concern with detail, there are different modelling processes evident in their making. I mean that each general variable was thought out differently, the difference lies in the vision of the subject matter.

Stress unfolded stage by stage through a conceptualised logic of action in an organisation. A story was told which made the drama of managerial action eventful, systematic and decisive. Action was stripped away from all that is needed to act. Stress was made to read like something worth explaining, though stress is not felt over the same thing. It was written to suggest that it might be the same feeling. And it could be treated as a general variable if the concern were with the general feeling rather than detecting through possible sources of the feeling (see Table 6.8).

Rank is also a disciplined variable, a tight variable that enters the hierarchy approaching by two main co-ordinates as if plotting a fixed point from small distances in distinct

directions. Rank is a direct approach to form: the form that provokes direct confrontations between people as contradictions of its positions. Rank, however, could not be treated as a general variable, its conceptualised parts remain distinct and separate (see Table 6.9).

Responsibility is an extensive variable, a variable also modelled by co-ordinates but developed through overlapping spheres. It enters the breadth of the position by way of its manifold content. If rank is a place in a structure, responsibility is a pattern of pathways within that same structure. Responsibility is a weaving approach to what is done and what goes on, the babble that produces confusions between people as they are drawn out and then put against each other. Responsibility could be treated as a general variable (see Table 6.10).

Organisational identity was modelled by making three identities related to the same features. All concepts were borrowed. It was the particular identities inidentity that were borrowed and put in the same framework. There was no structural logic to this framework. It was the researcher's understanding of the 'culture-space' of a manager's circumstance. As such there was the possibility of making a general variable that held manifest conflict and stretched as far as imagination might be allowed to go. But professionalism tended, though not significantly, to increase with managerialism and is unrelated to bureaucratism positively or negatively (see Table 6.11). Managerialism and bureaucratism, however, are as one. Thus though the general variables are general in their attempted reference to structure, culture and experience, they have not

been fashioned by any identical principles of generality. Further, the general variables have not produced unitary variables by virtue of internal consistency and where this was possible it was rejected in the interest of coherency.

6.4 Testing the theory of occupational crises

The measures are now manageable even though the details to which they refer may be nearly lost by you. All this compression was made necessary by the chosen means of testing the theory. This means is that of dependence analysis.[20] 'The dependence coefficients, when corrected by the appropriate variances, are really a measure of the direct influence of one variable or another in a causal scheme.' (Boudon 1965: 370).

Dependence analysis asks that measures be distinct: 'When the implicit factors are uncorrelated, the dependence coefficients are always identifiable' (Boudon 1965: 369).

So we examine the correlation matrix between the measures into which the general variables decomposed (see Table 6.12). This table is, of course, of interest in itself. Items could be gently whittled away, picking a correlation here and fudging a reason there. Take overtime load, for instance, it significantly correlates with stress from the boss (0.272), managerialism (0.451), and bureaucratism (0.243) as well as with its own variables' other two measures and the objective indicators of the position's rank (0.355). And it is this last observation that causes us to stop short. Accordingly rank and responsibility measures are not independent. In fact, these two variables seem to interpenetrate through many of their measures. So it looks as though the arranged marriage cannot be consummated.

At this point I took the troublesome data to a statistician.[21] He found a path to salvage my plans and save my face. But this plan led away from the carefully constructed measures into the valley of safety of principal components analysis.

Such an analysis involves a computer picking what is common out from data and 'making measures up' from its findings. The principle is to pick up as much as is common as possible[22] and to separate out such components as clearly as possible. Rank and responsibility were ripe for this analysis. The calculation makes the components independent and therefore eligible for dependence analysis.

The structure of the two components of rank and responsibility can be appreciated by an examination of Diagram 6.E.

Diagram 6.E

THE EMPHASES WITHIN THE FIRST TWO PRINCPAL COMPONENTS OF RANK AND RESPONSIBILITY

	Component 1	Component 2
Possessions	+	+
Power	+	-
Influence	+	-
Powerlessness	-	+
Proximity	+	+
Responsibilities	+	0
Load	+	+
Proportion of Variance	46.65%	20.62%

Diagram 6.E indicates that though the two components relate similarly to responsibility, they differ in that Component 1

refers positively to power and influence whilst Component 2 refers positively to powerlessness. For simplicity's sake, these components shall be called the power and powerlessness of positions, even though they include many other features and largely include them in a similar way.

Turning again to Table 6.12, it is clear that the measures of stress for which explanation is sought have very few significant correlations with measures said to be their causes. This fact occasions a second volte-face. To salvage a little and give whatever strength possible to the dependent variable, a further principal components analysis was made, this time on the stress measures themselves. There is one component which loads 0.5, 0.5, and 0.4 on stresses from the boss, from others and to others, and -0.5 on compatibility with others.[23]

Finally, a principal components analysis was made upon organisational identity. First a component was taken from professionalism and managerialism which had a loading of 0.7 on each.[24] Then a principal components analysis was made on managerialism and bureaucratism. The potential components were separated this way because of their meaning and the correlations between them as measures.

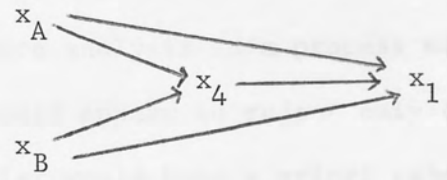
The theory is now in a position to be tested. Diagram 6.F shows two models made to do the work.[25]

These results declare the theory to be inadequate or useless. Nothing explains increases and decreases in stress. Instead the correlations confound the one difference established to enable dependence analysis. Power and powerlessness both correlate with nearly the same significance and in the same

Diagram 6.F

TWO MODELS TO TEST THE THEORY: NOW OF THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS OF THE GENERAL VARIABLES

Model I.



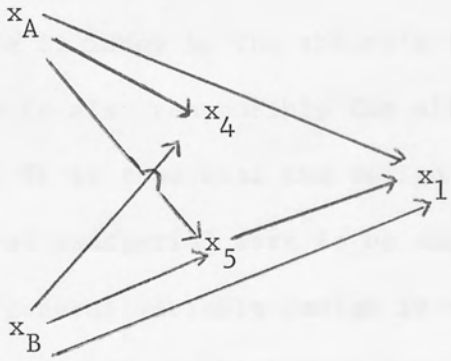
x_A = Power

x_B = Powerlessness

x_4 = Professionalism/ Managerialism

x_1 = Role Stress

Model II.



x_5 = Managerialism/ Bureaucratism

The dependence coefficients for the two models compare.[26]

	II	I
a_{4A}	344	344
a_{4B}	301	301
a_{5A}	143	NA
a_{5B}	086	NA
a_{1A}	007	0079
a_{1B}	071	0718
a_{14}	-050	-0492
a_{15}	-010	NA

direction with professionalism-managerialism. And their weak correlations with managerialism-bureaucratism is near identical too. Nothing is explained.[27]

And to open a critical discussion of this nothingness, we might reiterate words of Gordon Hilton:

'Causal inference analysis is a process with seductive accuracy. Basically it would appear to reject only those networks that the prudent scientist would have a priori rejected anyway. The technique appears unable to discriminate between several intuitively plausible theoretical frameworks and this is much to do with the present inadequacies of social science data.' (1971:20)

6.5 An evaluation of the study

There is irony in the theory's failure under test conditions. For the theory is also responsible for all that is good and bad in this report. It is true that the design of the general variables enabled a lot of managerial work to be examined. And it is also true that the general variable design is now as suspect as the ideas of cause and effect which they were made to serve.[28]

The sociological function performed by the theory was that of social diagnosis.[29] It brought as much as possible into one picture and had each feature painted in similar colours. In the foreground there was the figure of stress: the conflicts and ambiguities inherent in the mechanical nature of managerial work.

The word 'stress' crops up in much writing about living conditions in the west. Because of its practical associations, the meaning seems obvious: some potentially destructive force is acting on the fabric of human existence.[30]

But is stress appropriate for the form of social diagnosis used? Can a 'destructive force' be contained as a general variable and then be made dependent upon apparently 'constructive' forces?

This is not to say that stress is not worth explaining but rather that it could be part of the explanation itself. In sum, the theory could be changed in the light of the empirical data. To explain stress could be to finish a theory in the middle. As a diagnosis, the explanation should be of the nature of individual and collective action, in how, through stress, 'almost 75% of these men may be characterised as consumer oriented while normatively tied to work as the acceptable source of income',[31] or how cliques and cabals combine, co-operate and collapse.

Alternatively, the few significant correlations found could be used to make a smaller and more circumspect theory. The finding that the greater the power the less the stress was in the reverse direction to the theory's prediction. Whilst the parallel finding that the greater the influence and powerlessness the greater the stress suggests stress comes when matters are within reach but beyond grasp. An interesting counter theme could be threaded from the finding that the greater the responsibilities for both people and things the more overload the manager gets from others even though he gives less overload to them. And, finally, the stronger the identity - be it professionalism, managerialism or bureaucratism - the more overload from the boss and others. Again the theory was reversed, identity did not ameliorate stress, it amplified it. A compatible theory would be forced to suggest that the less you are the less you feel.

Such a little theory would be bound to accept that stress is not caused by structure in the way in which the theory of occupational crises depicts. Such a theory would also have to fully separate form and content, separate the contradictions between man and job from the contradictions between man and man. And in so doing the stretch and subtlety of contradiction would drop out of the picture.[32]

The criticism of the theory goes much further than the fact of not fitting the data. In addition to the mechanistic causality, and the unmentioned mechanisms of such causation, there is also the fact of telescoping history to the gestures of tendencies - ignoring both cultural history and the possibility of qualitative, or degenerative, change. As a detail of this criticism the theory did not anticipate differences between Mersey and Midland and there was difference in both how I was accommodated and the clarity of past and present managerial life. At Mersey I was, naturally, a nonentity and at Midland, equally as naturally, I was a celebrity. Mersey was like a town with only the super-powers momentarily visible. At Midland the curious could usually see what was happening.

Differences between the two sites have been observed in all chapters. Not only could things be seen at Midland it had more marks of old independence, of capitalist management. There remained a gentlemanly manner of relationships between squire and smallholder. More pomp; more pride; more ceremony - Midland had a tradition. And in keeping with this tradition even at the time of study, Midland managers had a bit more power and influence than Mersey managers; more distance and deference in the lattice

of domination; less illegitimacy and overload from the boss.

The theory of occupational crises had not adequately transformed the theory of organisational crises. In bungling the dialectics of, and between, structure and culture, the historical relevancies in the development of their contradictions disappeared. There were greater differences between Mersey and Midland than I had anticipated and the difference was almost that of two kinds. The difference became that of two kinds under Profit's pressure to have the two sites think alike. If Midland were holding out, Mersey had gone under. But gone under what? All that had happened was that Mersey was corporationism at work. And thus makes the theory of organizational crises inadequate. For corporationism massifies; moves continuously without plan or manifesting purpose; changing in such a way that the owner-manager hierarchy and personnel are always obscure and less important than the rumour of the next change.

Organisation theory is too systematic to equate with the mammoth impenetrable pattern of a monopoly that spreads across spectrums of products. It is this weakness that makes the obvious relationships of structure and culture elusive.[33]

Nevertheless, corporationism is, in part, compatible with organisation theory in its systematisation of work. Considerable consistency was found within the general variables even though their interrelationships were not proved. The consistencies found, particularly within stress and identity, are at least indicative of general tendencies, or forces, in the standardisation of managerial thought and reactions to managerial situations. And it is these consistencies that raise problems. How are managers similar?

Or, to question the perspective: is the nominalist mode of this research appropriate to the study of managers <u>because</u> the tendency of corporationism is through conformity to uniformity?

Throughout this research, therefore, corporationism itself has been the subject of study. I was able to gain access to subject managers because the directorate had an interest in their managers being questioned by an outsider. I was able to speak with nearly all the managers because they had no real right to refuse. And I was able to query each general variable until substance was found because the managers themselves spoke so readily of their situations. What good descriptive material I have has come from particularly isolated managers 'spilling the beans'. In some cases I just caught the manager in time - within weeks or months he was moved to another site, demoted or dismissed. These men revealed the contradictions of management by trying to organise all they knew and then still finding no way out. From unravelling the motives of the directorate to superintending the next stage in the false, but normal, production cycle, each was working with partial knowledge and the fear of discovering what it all meant.

In this peculiar sense, the study has been worth while. It did come close to managers' problems as managers experience them. For though I lacked the courage to let managers determine my enquiry, asking of stress did enable them to correct and inform me. Despite the theory's failure there is stress in management and I hope it has been adequately illustrated.[34]

But the stress I sought was both conflict at work and with work itself. I address my concluding remarks to this

phenomenon.

To be a manager is to be party to a terrifying absurdity. That which is absurd is the drive to keep going with no idea of where you are going; to control in order to be in control for the people who control you; to be active all hours and yet unproductive. That which is terrifying is the impossibility of protest against the absurd. To expose the ritual would be to invite more explicit forms of control. There is coercion behind a manager's compliance. He is an employee. His situation is as fragile as that of any employee. He can be directed to fire others and he can be dismissed just as easily.

In concealing absurdity the manager actually compromises his own reasoning. And I want to say it actually changes his mind. His mind narrows, becomes more scrambled, less retentive and yet more acquisitive. In all, absurdity benights by impenetrability and belittles by the acceptance of things as they are in case they get worse.

The prospects of realism are, therefore, daunting. For were the absurdity revealed, something would have to be done. Managers could seek the reorganisation of work in partnership with workers as a commonwealth. This is the situation into which some managers were placed at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders Unlimited. Managers could refuse to manage unless there were common ownership. Managers could leave managing altogether to pursue their hobbies productively.

But such demands and changes do not come by realism. Rather they come from creating constructive alternatives to corporationism. And, meanwhile, corporationism is changing management.

The base stress, I believe, is the dawning realisation of the end of management. Managers are employees and employees with no definite skills. They are what might be called a technical proletariat. Corporationism is, in all things, mechanisation. The mechanisation of work and 'information technology' and the proliferation of computer control have gradually made supervisors (once called foremen) to be 'glorified clerks' to their workers. In the generation since the end of the second world war we have seen not just the end of the foreman but his replacement by a tier of managers. Now the executives hold the power the foreman held not so long ago.

The middle is vulnerable because its positions are based on the machines it has installed. More mechanisation just pushes the managers closer to the work force in the nature of the work they do.

Management is thus being removed from the middle and being made a local elite executive and their servile teams of experts to price and programme the next mechanisation. In both these forms there is no place for managers as they are today. Nor is there any reason for them to transfer their knowledge to the elite or project teams. And it is at this point that managers detect the end of management as they know it. The old are not training the young and the young are almost encouraged to disregard the 'experienced manager's' existence.

It is the realisation of being 'phased out' that makes for panic and despair. This realisation also makes managers wonder if the pinpricks that I identified as stress are worth suffering. And it is this realisation that produces the question

'why bother?'. The reason why absurdity is not contradicted by realism and realism does not provoke the search for alternatives is that the managers know they are liable for so much stress and that they are technically redundant. In a way, they resent the swindle of this redundancy. And in the same breath many would welcome being 'let off the hook'.

Managers are men and many have had very nearly enough.

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