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Morale and the Postwar Politics of Consensus

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Abstract The aftermath of the Second World War saw massive efforts to promote morale management across British industry. While these new discourses and industrial practices have often been explained in terms of the development of expert knowledge, this article places them at the center of the politics of social reconstruction. While the proper management of morale was linked to greater productivity, this article argues that it was often their assumed benefits regarding social cohesion and harmony that mattered most. It shows the ways in which government officials, management experts, and social scientists mobilized the perceived links that the war had forged among morale, collective sacrifice, and democratic citizenship and thus turned the workplace into a privileged site for the manufacture of consensus.

"No one who looks at the war story of Great Britain since 1940," the management theorist E. F. L. Brech wrote in 1945, "can fail to see how the human element has been thrown into relief."[1] To many of his readers, Brech's exhilaration was reminiscent of the previous total war and its unfulfilled promises of a new age of "humanism in industry," in the words of David Lloyd George.[2] But the sentiments to which Brech gave expression referred to something that was altogether different and novel. As Brech observed, those who previously had been interested in questions of industrial management for the most part conceived of the "lessons of the last war" in terms of the physiological aspects of labor (hours of work, ventilation, and the like) and at times their (individual) "psychological significance."[3] The current war, however, suggested that these factors were of less significance to the outcome of collective effort than the state of collective morale. "Throughout the war," he told his readers in what seemed like a well-rehearsed truism, "morale has been the foundation of resistance and successful attack, whether in military affairs or in the activities of civilians at work and home."[4]

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[1] E. F. L. Brech, "The Management Lessons of the War—Industrial Relationship," *British Management Review* 5, no. 3 (1945): 26.

[2] Lloyd George is quoted in E. Dorothea Proud, *Welfare Work: Employers' Experiments for Improving Working Conditions in Factories* (London, 1916).

[3] Brech, "Management Lessons," 30.

[4] Ibid., 26.

Brech's article in the *British Management Review* can be taken as a starting point for the "golden decade" of human relations management in Britain.[5] Those years saw an immense effort to promote and disseminate research into human relations forms of management by myriad public and private organizations, all actively supported by the postwar social-democratic state. The following article sets out to explain this discursive "explosion," seeking to explore the efforts undertaken by state-related bodies to orchestrate and promote human relations managerial practices and approaches, and to understand the vitality of such approaches during those years. The article argues that these trajectories should be explained by, and shed light on, the broader story of postwar social reconstruction.

Readers of this journal will recall the intense debate on the nature, and very existence, of political consensus in the aftermath of the Second World War. Sparked by Paul Addison's seminal *The Road to 1945* (1975) and emerging in full force during the 1990s (a period marked by Thatchers brutal and successful offensive against the British welfare state), the consensus thesis served as an important organizing principle for historiographical debate.[6] It suggested that during the Second World War and the period of reconstruction, British politics was marked by an agreement upon several principles of government: namely, a mixed economic policy along the lines suggested by John Maynard Keynes and the elimination of want through pragmatic welfare measures along the lines suggested by William Beveridge. According to this account, the postwar consensus was strong enough to sustain attacks from both the Right and the Left until its collapse, ushered in by the ascendancy of Margaret Thatcher. The consensus thesis has since been attacked by scholars who have suggested that there was no broad agreement on either of those policies, that conservatives never really agreed to such policies, or that the left wing of the Labour Party was promoting an agenda much closer to socialism than centrists like Beveridge would allow.[7] There has been, in short, no agreement as to the nature of postwar political consensus or whether such consensus existed at all.

My aim here is not to revisit the debate but rather to use the concept of consensus in a different manner. Broadly understood, the notion of consensus reflected a particular type of political aspiration that animated new institutional practices. Consensus was a fantasy, national unity a myth, and the elimination of class conflict a façade, but the existence of belief in such things demands that historians ask questions about the discourses and practices that helped forge such myths or were generated in order continuously to sustain them. These were political artifacts, central to the project of

[5] On Brech's article as "influential," see Nick Tiratsoo and Jim Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency and State Intervention: Labour, 1939–1951* (London and New York, 1993), 56.

[6] Paul Addison, *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War* (London, 1975).

[7] See, for instance, Ben Pimlott, "The Myth of Consensus," in *The Making of Britain: Echoes of Greatness*, ed. Lesley M. Smith (London, 1988); Dennis Kavanagh and Peter Morris, "Consensus Politics from Attlee to Thatcher," in *Making Contemporary Britain*, ed. Anthony Seldon (Oxford, 1989); Stephen Brooke, "Revisionists and Fundamentalists: The Labour Party and Economic Policy during the Second World War," *Historical Journal* 32, no. 1 (March 1989); Harriet Jones, "The Post-War Consensus: Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis?" in *The Contemporary History Handbook*, ed. Brian Brivati, Julia Buxton, and Anthony Seldon (Manchester, 1996); Harriet Jones and Michael Kandiah, eds., "The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945–1964," in *Contemporary History in Context* (London, 1996).

social reconstruction.[8] In order to understand them, we need not think of consensus merely in terms of the familiar sources of political debate—party policy, pamphlets, and so on.[9] These tell only part of the story. They neglect the emergence of new, always contested, forms of expertise in manufacturing and governing consensus.[10] Consensus is here examined in terms of the efforts to produce and manage it. The contestations over these activities of government are best understood as the politics of consensus.[11]

The management of morale was at the center of these efforts, and in the aftermath of the war, the focus was on the industrial sphere. The more interventionist state that emerged worked to place an important value on the promotion of new forms of industrial management. While these circumstances tell us why industrial management came to be seen as an important political question, they explain neither the shape that these efforts took nor the justifications that often underscored them. Thinking about these questions in terms of "advancement" of the science of management (for better or worse, depending on one's taste and inclination) would merely leave us reiterating contemporary, internalist accounts. However, even management experts never lost sight of the simple fact that managerial solutions have to do with much more than technical questions of shop floor organization. Solutions to managerial questions could be many, but in postwar Britain, these were sought in the promotion and management of morale. Those who worked on such questions drew on the new significance of morale, now central to thinking about collective enterprise in a mass-democratic civil society. They did so because to them the proper management of morale appeared as a better way to get the job done, as well as an important technology for manufacturing affect, responsibility, and a sense of collectivity, all deemed necessary for successful social reconstruction.[12] Linking the legacy of the war to the building of the New Jerusalem, individual effort to collective enterprise, and productivity on the shop floor to the travails of democratic citizenship, morale was now at the heart of the new technopolitics of consensus.

SOME GROUND CLEARING

Those who promoted human relations management were the first to situate their work within a historical trajectory. One exemplary text here was the trilogy *The Making of Scientific Management*, written by two of the most prominent

[8] Important attempts to understand the history of the war and immediate postwar period along such lines include Becky Conekin, Frank Mort, and Chris Waters, eds., *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1945–1964* (London and New York, 1999); Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain, 1939–1945* (Oxford, 2003).

[9] A similar point is made in Helen Jones, *British Civilians in the Front Lone: Air Raids, Productivity, and Wartime Culture* (Manchester, 2006), 11.

[10] For theoretical considerations, see Nikolas S. Rose and Peter Miller, "Political Power Beyond the State: Problematics of Government," *British Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 2 (June 1992).

[11] On consensus and propaganda in the postwar years, see William Crofts, *Coercion or Persuasion? Propaganda in Britain after 1945* (London and New York, 1989). Croft emphasizes the centrality of industrial mobilization to these efforts.

[12] Moreover, in the new technocratic idiom that crystalized in postwar Britain, it now seemed possible that such concerns could be addressed in a scientific manner. This ethos is analyzed in Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain Since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford, 2010).

figures in the British managerial profession, Edward Brech and Lyndall Urwick, and published in 1949. It was arguably the first serious piece of historical research on the topic, but more important, it was a contribution to the politics of the new management profession, to which the authors had sought to provide an ethos and an identity (they were not alone in this endeavor). In this work, the authors situated human relations as the end point of a progressive history of the "humanization" of industrial practice, a story characterized by increasing attentiveness to the "human factor." Choosing the "human factor" as an organizing principle enabled Urwick and Brech to incorporate into their history more disputable chapters such as Taylorite scientific management. Human relations management, then, was explained in terms of the vision of the authors for a professional ethos and was presented as its finest example.[13]

Other contemporary management theorists offered interpretations that were much less celebratory. The most important of these was John Child, both a theorist and a historian of management thought. Writing in 1969, Child offered a critical account that was diametrically opposed to the former. It viewed human relations forms of management as developed versions of earlier programs to secure the domination of workers, albeit under a more human guise, and to bypass the essential questions regarding the nature of modern capitalist societies.[14] Child, then, turned the previous thesis of humanization on its head. Yet, in a similar fashion to the whiggism explored above, Child explained the story of management in the new profession's own terms.

More recently, scholars have examined human relations management, and management thought more generally, within broader historical trajectories. Jim Tomlinson and Nick Tiratsoo, for instance, have situated human relations management within the history of political contestations over state intervention in economic life and in the question of industrial productivity. Here the writers emphasized the centrality of labor politics to the readiness of the state to secure efforts to promote industrial productivity (as opposed to the Tory commitment to *laissez-faire*), efforts of which human relations management now seemed an essential part.[15] In relation to this interpretation, in his work on Anglo-American collaborative efforts to secure industrial productivity, Tiratsoo has viewed the promotion of human relations management in Britain in terms of the Americanization of managerial approaches and the "limits to Americanization" set by the reluctance of British managers to adopt such measures.[16]

"Human relations" was an amorphous term to begin with. Child has written of the "Human Relations School," but such a designation suggests the existence of a managerial program more coherent than it actually was. It has been mostly associated

[13] L. Urwick and E. F. L. Brech, *The Making of Scientific Management*, 3 vols. (London, 1949).

[14] John Child, *British Management Thought: A Critical Analysis* (London, 1969).

[15] Nick Tiratsoo and Jim Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency and State Intervention: Labour, 1939–1951* (London and New York, 1993).

[16] Nick Tiratsoo, "Limits of Americanisation: The United States Production Gospel in Britain," in *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1945–1964*, ed. Becky Conekin, Frank Mort, and Chris Waters (London and New York, 1999). The view that human relations management was largely an American import is shared by Michael Rose, *Industrial Behavior: Theoretical Development Since Taylor* (London, 1975), 103–79.

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with the work of Elton Mayo, an Australian psychologist who had moved to the United States after the First World War. His writings on a series of experiments conducted in the Hawthorne Works near Chicago during the interwar years resulted in a common identification of Mayoism with human relations management. However, as the sociologist Michael Rose has persuasively demonstrated, this view merely reflects the efficient public relations efforts by Mayo and those in his circle. Even within the American context alone, human relations management referred to a much broader and more diverse group of approaches.[17] Similarly in the British context, human relations meant more than Mayoism or other American approaches. Some Britons were familiar with Mayo's work already before the war, but according to all accounts, those were relatively few in number until the publication of Urwick and Brech's *Making of Scientific Management*, the third volume of which was entirely devoted to the Hawthorne experiments.[18] More important, however, the real question to be answered is why Britons turned to Mayo or other writers when they did.[19] British writers on management were familiar with the American literature, but in order to understand the British fascination with human relations, and what it actually meant to those who promoted it, one has to look to local British cultural and political trajectories. These suggest that, as proponents of human relations themselves often argued, more than merely the destination of the long march of expert knowledge, human relations management was a new political endeavor.

MORALE AS A NEW PROBLEM

Postwar calls for the professionalization of management echoed three decades of similar calls for transformation of both managers and management, presented as the substitution of politically neutral expert knowledge for amateurism and partisanship.[20] As Oliver Sheldon, who directed Rowntree's works in York, wrote, management "is no longer the 'middle man' between Capital and Labour. . . . It stands rather in co-ordinating position between the two, owing allegiance to neither, but acknowledging as master the public will of the community alone."[21] Early British management thought was characterized by its distinct emphasis on practices of industrial welfare. Interest in such practices had emerged in earlier years and received a major boost during the First World War.[22] This particular outlook of early British writers on management meant that at the level of self-

[17] Rose, *Industrial Behavior*, 103–07.

[18] Early publications on the subject in British professional journals include Elton Mayo, "Supervision and Morale," *Journal of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology* 5, no. 5 (1931); T. North Whitehead, "Social Relationship in the Factory: A Study of an Industrial Group," *Human Factor* 9, no. 2 (February 1935); T. North Whitehead, *The Industrial Worker: A Statistical Study of Human Relations in a Group of Manual Workers*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1938); Urwick and Brech, *The Making of Scientific Management*, vol. 3.

[19] My approach here is similar to the one promoted by Matthew Thomson, who emphasizes local trajectories in the generation of expert knowledge and related discourses. See his *Psychological Subjects: Identity, Culture, and Health in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford and New York, 2006).

[20] Urwick and Brech, *The Making of Scientific Management*.

[21] Oliver Sheldon, *The Philosophy of Management* (London, 1924), 44.

[22] A key text here was Proud, *Welfare Work*. On welfare and the Great War, see Angela Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend: Munitions Workers in the Great War* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), 68–75.

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presentation they rejected wholesale F. W. Taylor's rhetoric and techniques, which they regarded as impractical, un-British, and ethically unsound.[23] They did accept his call for a "mental revolution" in the approach to management, which they too sought to reform.[24]

The crystallization of such voices during the interwar years was linked to larger debates regarding economic planning.[25] The extent of the actual impact of such calls on management practices has been a matter of some debate.[26] Two things, however, clearly marked this period. First, professionalization, in the sociological sense (understood largely in terms of identity, ethos, claim for monopoly on expertise, and institutions), was slow to come. The principal associations that were established to promote the professionalization of management, such as the Institute of Industrial Administration or the Institute of Personnel Management, failed to draw more than several hundred subscribers each.[27] Second, the state was not involved in such matters. In the aftermath of the war and the election of a Labour government things changed dramatically, and the government now actively sought to promote professional management through new institutions such as the Personnel Management Advisory Board or the British Institute of Management.[28] Furthermore, the government actively sought to promote and disseminate applied research on managerial questions through existing scientific departments. To sum up, by the period under examination, the management of the shop floor had become amenable to scientific observation and management in ways that had been unthinkable only a few decades beforehand. A complex institutional apparatus, oriented toward dissemination and application of new forms of expert management, and supported by the state, had been set in place; and owing to the distinct welfarist inflection of interwar British management thought, the links between shop floor practices and social organization had been forged and secured.[29]

[23] A classic articulation of this position is J. A. Hobson, "Scientific Management," *Sociological Review* 6, no. 3 (July 1913).

[24] Assessing the extent to which elements of scientific management were adopted in Britain has been a difficult exercise, mostly because scientific management was not a coherent set of ideas or practices, nor were managerial practices ever exclusively part of one system of management. A classic account is Judith A. Merkle, *Management and Ideology: The Legacy of the International Scientific Management Movement* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1980). As Michael Roper reminds us, postwar assessment of Taylorism was not free of new disciplinary concerns within management studies. Michael Roper, "Killing Off the Father: Social Science and the Memory of Frederick Taylor in Management Studies, 1950–1975," *Contemporary British History* 13, no. 3 (June 1999).

[25] On planning, see Daniel Ritschel, *The Politics of Planning: The Debate on Economic Planning in Britain in the 1930s* (Oxford, 1997); Richard Toye, *The Labour Party and the Planned Economy, 1931–1951* (London, 2003).

[26] This question was inevitably linked to the question of rationalization of business practices; Leslie Hannah, "Managerial Innovation and the Rise of the Large Scale Company in Interwar Britain," *Economic History Review* 27, no. 2 (May 1974).

[27] T. Rose, *A History of the Institute of Industrial Administration* (London, 1954), 166.

[28] The creation of the British Institute of Management is described in Tiratsoo and Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency*, 111–30.

[29] I explore these transformations in interwar management theories and early reactions to welfarist management in Daniel Ussishkin, "The Will to Work: Industrial Management and the Question of Conduct in Interwar Britain," in *Brave New World: Imperial and Democratic Nation-Building in Britain between the Wars*, ed. Laura Beers and Geraint Thomas (London, 2012), 63–80.

Postwar human relations management has often been understood as a version of interwar industrial welfarism.[30] There were, however, important differences. Welfare, and increasingly in its technocratic form that it had acquired during the 1920s, related to all those physical aspects of work (such as hours of work, wash basins, chairs, and ventilation) or the improvement of the *individual* worker (by the creation of saving banks, recreation facilities, opportunities for education, and industrial canteens).[31] Industrial welfare was a characteristically late Victorian and Edwardian liberal solution to both productivity (factory discipline) and social organization (government). At its core, it was premised on the "idea of character," which, as Stefan Collini has shown, linked will to duty and was central to the political idiom of the long nineteenth century.[32] "Character," Edward Cadbury explained, "is an economic asset," thus pithily summing up the entire philosophy of interwar British managerial thought.[33] Character linked productivity to individual ethical conduct; for those who thought about morale, however, it was *collective* attitude that mattered most.

There was more to it than mere semantics. A close reading of this type of expert literature suggests that welfarism and human relations management should not be collapsed into each other as one "social" approach to management.[34] Brech, as we saw, thought the lessons of the Second World War were altogether on a different plane than earlier physiological or psychological studies. Those early promoters of morale management insisted that although all these aspects of work that were central to the welfarist agenda (hours of work, illumination, rest pauses, nutrition, or recreation) necessarily had a bearing on productivity, in the final analysis it was morale that mattered most. A survey conducted by the National Institute of Industrial Psychology (NIIP) among 105 of its subscribed employers in 1954 may serve as an example: asked to point to unresolved problems in British industry and to rank them according to what they deemed most urgent, most employers pointed to issues of morale, attitudes, and communications. Welfare, which had been the burning issue during the 1920s and the 1930s, now averaged at the bottom of the list.[35] The management theorist W. H. Scott articulated a similar sentiment when he suggested that industrial management had been previously interested in welfare and the individual's satisfaction with his job, concerns that he established as differing from human relations and morale.[36] To be sure, morale and welfare were seen as

[30] See, for instance, Child, *British Management Thought*, chaps. 4–5.

[31] Proud, *Welfare Work*. Seebohm Rowntree explained that welfare was directed at "the payment of due consideration to workers as *individuals*." "A Record of the History of the Welfare Department," n.d., The National Archives (TNA), MUN 9/30. Industrial canteens were situated at the crossroads of both aspects of industrial welfare. See Vernon, *Hunger*, 161–80.

[32] Stephan Collini, "The Idea of Character in Victorian Political Thought," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 35 (1985): 29–50. For a good discussion of character and liberal forms of government, see also Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800–1910* (Chicago and London, 2008), 10–11.

[33] Edward Cadbury, *Experiments in Industrial Organization* (London, 1912), xvii.

[34] As, for instance, is done in Charles S. Maier, "Society as Factory," in *In Search of Stability: Explorations in Historical Political Economy* (New Rochelle, NY, 1987).

[35] Forty percent responded in full, and an additional 10 percent in partial form. "Inquiry into the Relative Importance and Urgency of Investigation of Different Human Problems in Industry," June 30, 1954, NIIP 10/15, British Library of Political and Economic Sciences.

[36] W. H. Scott, "The Scientific Study of Human Relations in Industry, Part II," *Journal of the Institute of Personnel Management* 34, no. 321 (September 1954): 143–44.

connected and never entirely mutually exclusive, but as Mayo had put it, morale was not determined by those factors that were generally associated with welfare.[37] The psychologist W. B. D. Brown explained that earlier studies of industrial psychologists were misleading because it had escaped their minds that "the morale of the worker . . . has no *direct* relationship whatsoever to the material conditions of the job."[38] Understood as the care of the physical and moral well-being of individuals, welfare targeted individuals *qua* individuals; morale was understood in terms of collective attitudes and intragroup relations, targeting individuals as *members* of a collective.[39] Work was now regarded as a social activity, and emphasis was laid on informal affective structures.[40] In the final analysis, if welfare was understood as the care of the "Human Machine," body and mind, the management of morale, with its wartime connotations, was understood as an exercise in collective mobilization.

This was a monumental theoretical shift, for it entailed a reconsideration of some fundamental approaches to the problem of work. Take the problem of incentives: during the previous decades, psychologists and managerial theorists had been promoting theories of incentives using two conflicting models with which they sought to understand and manage the worker. The first model, an economic one, assumed that workers would work better for more remuneration, an assumption that generated schemes of economic incentives to work, namely, payment by piece rate and profit sharing. The second, a psychological one, which had been developed during the interwar years largely as a reaction to the first, suggested that the worker was looking for satisfaction, and it was premised on the view that the job should be made more interesting and less monotonous.[41] But there were problems with both models. Economic incentives never completely disappeared from professional discourse, but they had by and large fallen out of favor. Piece rates and profit sharing never seemed to work: some argued that they were simply too complex, and hence too removed, to serve as an incentive to work; others suggested that when they did work, it was only for a short time, because the worker very quickly came to regard them as part of the basic payment. Most of all, it was argued that economic incentives would not work because they rested on an exaggerated view of the place of economic motives in determining human conduct.[42] As to questions of job satisfaction and monotony, it was difficult to establish objective criteria for a question that was as inherently subjective as that of what made one job more interesting than another. Leslie Wilkins, from the Central Office of Information, suggested to the readers of *Occupational Psychology* that an "interesting job" should not be considered in itself as an incentive because it was hard to know what the term meant: "A laundry

[37] Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York, 1960).

[38] "Investigations on temperature, lighting, time and motion study, noise, and humidity have not the slightest bearing on morale, although they may have a bearing on the physical health and comfort." J. A. C. Brown, *The Social Psychology of Industry: Human Relations in a Factory* (Harmondsworth, 1954), 191.

[39] The historicity of the concept is important. I am interested in how contemporaries thought about the term rather than in our own understanding of it.

[40] Brown, *Social Psychology of Industry*, 130.

[41] A good representative of this literature is George H. Miles, *The Problem of Incentives in Industry* (London, 1932).

[42] Brown, *Social Psychology of Industry*, 82–84; C. A. Mace, "Advances in the Theory and Practice of Incentives," *Occupational Psychology* 24, no. 4 (October 1950).

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sorter described her job as 'very interesting' because every garment was different," he told his readers in astonishment.[43] Incentives increasingly seemed to represent a question wrongly posed.[44]

Management experts and psychologists now shifted their gaze to the dynamics of the small group.[45] As the prominent psychologist C. A. Mace explained to the readers of *Occupational Psychology*: "We have to look *not so much for a force within the individual* but for a force that resides within the group, and usually in a very local group." His view that the conduct of the worker was shaped by the expectations of the worker's mates no less than by those of managers or union officials led him to emphasize the importance of informal social structures. There was a limit, he thought, to what could be achieved by formal committees.[46] G. R. Taylor, in his elegantly titled book *Are Workers Humans?*, reminded his readers of the value of small teams in the military and suggested that in factories things were not different: "Public men frequently make appeals for team-spirit in British industry. They do not seem to realise that you cannot have team spirits unless you have teams."[47] The underlying assumption was that workers whose morale was properly managed would not only do the job but also do more, and better.

It would be wrong, however, to view morale merely in technical terms fit for management specialists. Morale was now a ubiquitous concept that for many Britons came to define the experience of the Second World War, and those who spread the new gospel of morale in the context of industrial life drew on these common narratives of collective mobilization and sacrifice. The relation between civilian morale and victory had been prefigured in interwar military and strategic debates regarding the nature of a future conflict, but these discussions were largely understood in terms of the prevention of panic and collapse. The experience of the Second World War meant that morale came to be understood in "positive" terms of mobilization to action, and for the first time, the British state orchestrated a massive effort to observe, manage, and maintain morale on both civilian and military fronts.[48] The task for peacetime was indeed understood in precisely those terms: there was no question of panic in the management of industrial life but merely of mobilizing the citizen-worker and sustaining a high degree of active commitment to the job.[49] In war and peace,

[43] Leslie Wilkins, "Incentives and the Young Worker," *Occupational Psychology* 23, no. 4 (October 1949): 236.

[44] R. P. Lynton, *Incentives and Management in British Industry* (London, 1949), 3; C. H. Northcott, *Personnel Management: Its Scope and Practice*, 2nd ed. (London, 1950), 170–91; R. Marriott, "Socio-Psychological Factors in Productivity," *Occupational Psychology* 25(1951): 16.

[45] Brech, "Management Lessons," 57; H. Campbell, "Group Incentive Payment Schemes: The Effects of Lack of Understanding and of Group Size," *Occupational Psychology* 26, no. 1 (January 1952): 15–21.

[46] Emphasis added; C. A. Mace, "Satisfaction in Work," *Occupational Psychology* 22, no. 1 (January 1948): 13–15.

[47] "The soldier feels himself a member of his section, his platoon, his company, his battalion, his division and even the army as a whole. In fact, he goes further and feels himself a member of the nation in whose army he fights." Gordon Rattray Taylor, *Are Workers Human?* (London, 1950), 85–87.

[48] On the efforts to secure morale on the home front, see Ian McLaine, *Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II* (London, 1979). For the military, see Jeremy A. Crang, *The British Army and the People's War* (Manchester, 2000); S. Paul Mackenzie, *Politics and Military Morale: Current-Affairs and Citizenship Education in the British Army, 1914–1950* (Oxford, 1992).

[49] Of particular importance here is the work of Helen Jones on production, mobilization, and war. Jones, *Civilians in the Front Line*.

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morale was understood to be not merely a question of mood or contentment but was mostly understood in terms of modifying conduct.[50]

There was another side to the question of morale, one that rendered it a politically potent concept. British wartime morale, and the new practices that were generated in its name, were linked to radical transformations (whether real or illusionary) in the nature of British society, in the relations among citizens, and between citizens and the state. The new Britain that had emerged from a war that involved total mobilization was supposed to be more democratic, if the term is understood as a social and cultural, rather than merely constitutional, referent.[51] Democracy now seemed to have informed a desire to find, or invent, new forms of exercising power, in ways that addressed the new links that, as contemporaries were convinced, had been established between morale and successful collective effort. These imageries of war were pivotal in forging the links between democratic forms of exercising power, new styles of leadership, and the problem of collective capacity in postwar managerial literature.[52] Urwick, for instance, who had been an army officer before launching his career in industrial management, often referred to the links between leadership in the military and in the factory.[53] Management theorists repeatedly referred to the images of the popular heroes of the war, Generals Montgomery and Slim, who, as Gary Sheffield has noted, epitomized the personal leadership style appropriate for a democratic age, which was built on the promotion of a collective sense of purpose and on persuasion rather than (merely) on coercion.[54] Slim was later invited to deliver the seventh Elbourne Memorial Lecture at the British Institute of Management, where he suggested that "'man management' is a horrible term and I'm ashamed that the army introduced it. Men like to be led—not managed."[55] Mobilization for work, too, was to assume a democratic form in ways that were modeled on the experience of war, beautifully captured in the title of *The Battle for Output* (1947), distributed by the government nationwide.[56]

Best known of these efforts were the Joint-Production Committees, established by the thousands during the war and now remembered as the principal institutional manifestation of this spirit. Similarly, the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, which was later viewed (most improbably) as determining the "soldier's vote" and hence the outcome of the 1945 elections, was seen as a model for promoting democratic mobilization at the workplace by discussion and participation.[57] As George Isaacs, the minister of Labour and National Service, explained to the audience at the Industrial Welfare Society conference on works magazines, "[B]efore the war works magazines were *useful*. . . . After the war they will be *valuable*, because there has grown up a

[50] On the necessary relation between morale and action, see J. T. MacCurdy, *The Structure of Morale* (Cambridge and New York, 1943), 141.

[51] Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918–1951* (Oxford, 1998).

[52] Child, *British Management Thought*, 123–24.

[53] Lyndall F. Urwick, *Leadership in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1957), chap. 1.

[54] Garry D. Sheffield, "The Shadow of the Somme: The Influence of the First World War on British Soldiers' Perceptions and Behavior in the Second World War," in *Time to Kill: The Soldier's Experience of War in the West, 1939–1945*, ed. Paul Addison and Angus Calder (London, 1997), 34.

[55] Viscount Slim, "Leadership," *Manager* 30, no. 1 (January 1962): 41.

[56] This is discussed in Croft, *Coercion or Persuasion*, 42.

[57] Allan Jarvis, "An Experiment with Factory Discussion Groups," *Personnel Management* 25, no. 270 (1943).

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spirit among the employers to tell more." The production of such newspapers demanded careful attention to detail. At the same conference, Lionel Birch, who had been the editor in chief at the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, explained the connection between factual bulletins and morale, and emphasized the need to organize such bulletins in a logical way: it produced a sense of familiarity, and the soldiers "came to feel that this was *their* paper."[58] This interest in translating the lessons of war to the realities of peace led to the creation of dozens of new works magazines.[59] In the same manner, W. E. Williams, who had chaired the Army Bureau of Current Affairs during the war, now established a new civilian Bureau of Current Affairs, independent of government and funded by the Carnegie Trust.[60]

The notion of morale stood for a legacy of collective affective ties that were both produced by the war and were necessary to win it. Richard Titmuss, who notoriously linked what he saw as the sound wartime morale of the British to the creation of the welfare state, placed morale at the heart of the project of social reconstruction. "The civilian war of 1939–1945," he wrote, "with its many opportunities for service in civil defense and other schemes, also helped to satisfy an often inarticulate need; the need to be a wanted member of society. . . . New aims for which to live, work that satisfied a larger number of needs, a more cohesive society, fewer lonely people; all these elements helped to offset the circumstances which often led to neurotic illness."[61] Titmuss was important here not only because he set the tone for historiographic debate for several decades but also because although his work was conceived as a work of history, it is best understood as sustained political argument about the relations among morale, mobilization, and social policy (the title of the final chapter was "Unfinished Business"). Titmuss saw the war as an opportunity for social reconstruction, and his work of history was an attempt to prevent such an opportunity from slipping away.[62]

Since Titmuss, there have been endless debates regarding the "real" experience of morale during the war.[63] For our purposes here, such questions as whether Britons were right to argue that morale was high, or that the experience of war had indeed produced this type of imagined collectivity, are less important than the very attempt to mobilize the myth of the war toward a particular version of social reconstruction. It was this attempt that drove the myriad efforts to reform British managerial practices. Here, then, was the root of the centrality of morale to the new politics of consensus: on the one hand, it linked a technology of maximizing collective

[58] Industrial Welfare Society, *Conference on Works Magazines* (London, 1946), 4, 13–15; emphasis in original.

[59] A survey undertaken by the Industrial Welfare Society in 1955 showed that of the fifty-seven magazines whose editors responded to the survey, fifteen magazines had been established before the war, two during the war, and the overwhelming majority, thirty-seven, in its aftermath. Industrial Welfare Society Survey N. 32, Employee Magazines (1955), 7, MSS 303.IS/1, Modern Records Center (MRC).

[60] W. E. Williams, "Civilian 'ABCA,'" *Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management* 28, no. 304 (1946); "Bureau of Current Affairs," *Nature*, 6 April 1946.

[61] Richard Morris Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London, 1950), 346–47. On contemporary discourses of national unity and social cohesion, see Morgan, *People's Peace*, 3–28; Lawrence Black et al., *Consensus or Coercion? The State, the People, and Social Cohesion in Post-War Britain* (Cheltenham, 2001).

[62] Titmuss was a central figure, but of course not the only one, in this endeavor.

[63] A good summary of this debate, by a recent contributor to it, is found in Robert Mackay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester, 2002), 1–9.

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capacity to the politics of social cohesion; on the other hand, it linked a myth about Britain's recent past to a fantasy about her future.[64]

THE STATE AND HUMAN RELATIONS RESEARCH

Following the experience of war and the election of a Labour government, the British state now pursued the promotion and management of industrial morale in new ways.[65] These efforts stemmed from the new significance and prevalence of morale and Labour's readiness for government intervention in economic life. Ideas regarding economic planning were central to the question of industrial management. Approaches to the meaning of planning varied, and contestations over them never settled, but the question of human relations in industry was to assume an important place in Labour's approach to this issue. On the one hand, improvements in human relations would mark the new type of society that was to be forged. On the other hand, the very success of this enterprise depended on the cooperation and active participation of the citizenry. The exemplary figure here was Stafford Cripps. The years during which he had served as the wartime minister for Aircraft Production saw the maturation of his ideas regarding the meaning of "democratic planning."[66] Consultation and consent were at the core of his approach to the planned economy. As Richard Toye nicely puts it, during those years Cripps was "in the process of becoming a consensus politician."[67] The issue at stake was greater than industrial productivity or economic policy alone; it was the moral foundation of society seeking its sense of purpose.[68]

A first attempt in these directions was made in 1947, when Cripps created the Panel on Human Factors Affecting Productivity, later known as the Human Factor Panel, under the auspices of the Committee on Industrial Productivity.[69] The panel was chaired by George Schuster, a capable administrator and a former Liberal MP who had aided Cripps at the Ministry of Aircraft Production during the war and continued to assist him after the appointment of Cripps to the Board of Trade in 1945.[70] Like Cripps, Schuster approached the task of social reconstruction with a deep commitment to religiosity. Significantly, he thought welfare should prioritize moral, rather than material, aspects of life, and he had criticized Beveridge for doing otherwise.[71]

[64] The literature on the cultural and political legacy of the war is vast. One example is Malcolm Smith, *Britain and 1940: History, Myth, and Popular Memory* (London and New York, 2000).

[65] For Labour's commitment to human relations as a central feature of policy (rather than merely lip service), see Jim Tomlinson, *Democratic Socialism and Economic Policy: The Attlee Years, 1945–1951* (Cambridge, 1997), especially chaps. 4–5.

[66] On democratic planning and tripartitism, as was manifested by the creation of the Development Councils, see Tomlinson, *Democratic Socialism*, 85–90.

[67] Toye, *The Labour Party*, 123.

[68] "The morale of our industry is not what it has been in some great moments of our past history. We still talk and think of the Dunkirk Spirit. Our people lack neither the courage nor the capacity, but we do seem at the moment to lack a purpose." Stafford Cripps, *God in Our Work: Religious Addresses* (London, 1949), 11.

[69] *First Report of the Committee on Industrial Productivity* (London, 1949).

[70] On Schuster's "moderating effect" in relation to a different occasion, see Tiratsoo and Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency*, 69.

[71] Schuster, *Private Work*, 136; See also his *Christianity and Human Relations* (London, 1951). On the important place of religious discourse during this period, see Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800–2000*, 2nd ed. (London and New York, 2009), 170–75.

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In addition to chairing the panel, Schuster received an appointment at the Medical Research Council (MRC), first as a council member and a year later as the treasurer, because the MRC was to channel the funds allocated for scientific research. Of these days, Schuster later wrote that he found himself "an unwelcome 'cuckoo in the nest'" by the "orthodox members of the council."[72]

Schuster's difficulties at the MRC serve to remind us that far from a coherent set of scientific methods or assumptions, promoted by the progressively minded and the scientifically inclined, and resisted by everybody else, "human relations" was a political construction with which scientific, managerial, and other arguments could be promoted or confronted. Under Schuster's guidance, the panel was involved in several studies on the human problems of industry, largely executed by other research organizations. These fell under one of five areas: industrial health, fitting the job to the man ("human engineering"), fitting the man to the job (selection), work measurement, and human relations.[73] There was hardly any dispute regarding the nature of the work that came under the first four headings (these fields had been established during the previous decades), although what questions or methodologies should come under human relations remained unclear. Further difficulties arose when, toward the end of the decade, the Committee on Industrial Productivity, which had appointed the panel, recommended its own dissolution.[74] The scattered nature of human relations research, the lack of clarity as to what it meant, and the impending dissolution of the panel required, according to the proponents of human relations, a new set of inquiries as to the nature of, and the means to promote, research in this field.

Schuster's chief opponent at the MRC was Frederic Charles Bartlett, perhaps the single most important psychologist working in Britain during the half century that followed the First World War.[75] Bartlett was a proponent of a psychology that he regarded as "scientific" (i.e., empirical) and individual (he strongly opposed the group psychology as it emerged during the early part of the century).[76] Bartlett therefore regarded positively the work undertaken on other aspects of the "human factor," but he thought that "problems of human behavior and human relations—heading 5—were not yet capable of solution by scientific research." Schuster, by contrast, believed in the power of an appropriate institutional arrangement to promote promising and applicable research, and, indeed, to create fields of investigations where there were none. He therefore suggested the creation of a new Working Party in the hope of advancing the cause of human relations in industry.[77]

[72] George Schuster, *Private Work and Public Causes: A Personal Record, 1881–1978* (Cownbridge, 1979), 144.

[73] Memorandum on the meeting between representatives of the DSIR and the MRC, May 23, 1950, TNA, DSIR 17/423. The gendered language of managerial literature ("man-management" is the best example here) should be contrasted with the realities of a mixed workforce.

[74] The dissolution of the Tizard Committee is explored in Tiratsoo and Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency*, 93.

[75] By 1960 half of the academic psychologists working in Britain were students of Bartlett. L. S. Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology, 1840–1940* (New York, 1964), 219.

[76] Compare, for instance, Bartlett's criticism of Maurice Halbwach's work on collective memory in Frederic Charles Bartlett, *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology* (Cambridge, 1932), 294–300.

[77] Memorandum of the meeting between representatives of the DSIR and the MRC, May 23, 1950, TNA DSIR 17/423.

Representatives of the MRC and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) now conducted a series of surveys in an attempt to map out the current terrain of human relation research.[78] These revealed a seemingly wide gap between the evident excitement about human relations research and the realities on the ground. First, it was conceded that what constituted the field still remained unclear: attitude surveys, studies of social organization, practices of joint consultation, machineries for joint negotiation, effects of different systems of payment, conceptions of what constituted a fair day's work, and regional differences in working habits were all related to human relations. Second, at least at first appearance, it seemed that existing research work in the field of human relations was surprisingly sparse, amounting to only six projects undertaken in the United Kingdom.[79] Finally, the evidence collected suggested to the critical observers at the MRC that human relations research was characterized by a lack of an apparently "scientific" method: the "considerable interest displayed mostly confuses empirical practice with research," and private industrial enterprises had manifested "a widespread failure to appreciate what constitutes scientific research."[80] To be sure, there was no lack of interest among employers, as every survey had revealed: General Electric, for instance, "held exhibitions for the benefit of their employees and their families" and "opened the works on Saturdays to enable employees to show their wives and children where they work and what they make"; ICI (metal division) sponsored research on labor turnover, absenteeism, recruitment, travel, and housing, and further coordinated with the MRC and the Faculty of Commerce and Social Sciences at the University of Birmingham; Kodak experimented with placing the responsibility for personnel-related decisions within the hands of the line supervisors; May and Baker worked together with the trade unions and shop stewards on new mechanisms for joint consultation or new incentive schemes, to name a select few.[81] Enthusiasm, it was concluded, was hardly a problem.

By the end of the year, proponents of human relations research were able to point to a much broader collective effort on behalf of private industries, universities, and research associations to investigate problems of human relations. Whether this was merely a natural outcome of a year of research or the product of an attempt to cast a wider net is likely to remain unknown (one suspects it was a little bit of both). Either way, by the end of the year, the reports portrayed a field of research marked by abundance rather than scarcity: relevant research, they suggested, had been undertaken by Birkbeck College, London (on incentives and morale in the building industry); the Group for Research in Industrial Psychology at the Universities of London and Manchester (satisfaction and discontent in the nonferrous metal industries, promotion and joint consultations, comparative studies of wage systems, and the size of the working group); the British Institute of Management (on industrial peace); the

[78] Their surveys related to research on the "human factor" as a whole, but it is only human relations that concerns us here.

[79] TNA, DSIR 17/423.

[80] "Survey of Research and Its Applications on the Human Factor in Industry," DSIR section, January 1950, TNA, FD 1/306.

[81] Survey of Research and Its Application on the Human Factor in Industry: Supplementary survey of research being carried out by certain research stations and research associations, 6 November 1950, TNA, FD 1/303.

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NIIP (on joint consultation and the size of the working group); the Society of Friends (management and human relations), the Tavistock Institute, and other bodies in Glasgow, Birmingham, Liverpool, London, and Manchester.[82]

Schuster was most enthusiastic about such endeavors, and he was now convinced that a new institutional apparatus was needed. At a conference on human relations organized by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, Schuster cautioned his audience against the ("American") desire to reach scientific exactitudes in the field of human relations and that he saw the greatest obstacle in the application and dissemination of current research.[83] Still, opposition on scientific grounds was rampant: "I shall be inclined," Bartlett wrote to Harold Himsworth, the secretary of the MRC, "to put even more emphatically than you do the case against having a special body of any kind to organize and direct work on human relations. . . . I could not agree more strongly than I do about what you say earlier concerning the artificiality of defining spheres of operation or research in terms of subject content."[84] Himsworth, for his part, thought the problem was that because there was "such a keen realization of its importance . . . research workers are being pressed to do more than they know how to do."[85] A compromise of sorts was agreed upon in October 1951 when it was agreed to create two joint committees that were eventually set up as the Joint Committee on Individual Efficiency and the Joint Committee on Human Relations in Industry.[86] The two committees were eventually formed in 1953, mostly with the aim of dispensing Conditional Aid funds. [87] Due to his problematic relations within the MRC and the removal of his supporters from office with the end of the Labour government in 1951, Schuster was not invited to participate in these endeavors, and Bertram Waring, then the managing director of Joseph Lucas Industries, was appointed as chair of the Joint Committee on Human Relations in Industry (the second committee was chaired by Bartlett). The committees were disbanded in 1957 (a year later than initially planned) and replaced with a single Committee on the Human Sciences in Industry.

THE NATURE OF HUMAN RELATIONS RESEARCH

The preliminary surveys that were conducted in 1950 singled out the following as the three most important studies: research on joint consultation in British industry, undertaken by the NIIP; the Glacier project, undertaken by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations; and T. T. Patterson's study of a coal-mining community. Here I will examine two of those in greater detail, with a focus on the formation of a research agenda around the problem of collective morale.

[82] Final report by the MRC, 23 November 1950, TNA, DSIR 17/427.

[83] Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Report of the Human Relations in Industry Conference, Held at the Institution for Civil Engineers, March 18–20, 1952* (London, 1952), 17.

[84] Bartlett to Himsworth, 10 April 1951, TNA, FD 1/304.

[85] Himsworth to Ben Lockspeiser, 16 April 1951, TNA, FD 1/304.

[86] Memorandum on the meeting between the secretaries of the DSIR and the MRC, 31 October 1951, TNA, DSIR 17/427.

[87] For this reason, "practical" research projects received priority. Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and Medical Research Council, *Final Report of the Joint Committee on Human Relations in Industry, 1954–1957*, and *Report of the Joint Committee on Individual Efficiency in Industry, 1953–1957* (London, 1958), 3–6.

The most well known of the three projects, and the one that left a lasting legacy in the British social sciences, was Elliott Jaques's work at the Glacier Metal Factory. It was one of the "founding projects" of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations.[88] Jaques's work is particularly interesting here because existing accounts of his work, for the most part based on his published work, have not taken stock of the centrality of the problem of morale to the crystallization of Jaques's research agenda and methods.[89] A clearer understanding of the original intentions of Jaques and of his associates can be gained by examining the archival records. As they explained in a letter to the Occupational Psychological Committee of the MRC, Tavistock investigators sought to discover the "sources of low morale in industry . . . which are not accessible to study by other means."[90] Methodologically, the researchers were inspired by new group methods developed by John Rickman and Wilfred Bion, who had placed morale at the core of the therapeutic process (a fact glossed over by scholars who emphasize the psychoanalytic dimensions and legacy of his work).[91] Tavistock researchers rejected the notion that low morale could be ascribed to one or two underlying causes, or the idea that it could be prevented by the mere introduction of incentives or schemes of joint consultation. They proposed adopting a dynamic approach that dealt with "a multiplicity of inter-acting and inter-depended factors." The implications of this approach were immense: "[I]n this light, the task of industry becomes that of creating optimal conditions for the development of working morale. This task being in recognizing the manner in which all new methods and administrative decisions influence, and often adversely disturb, human relationships, and conversely, in recognizing the extent to which the existing morale situation determines the success or failure of decisions and methods."[92]

An opportunity to test such theories and to interrogate the bearings of group-related therapeutics and morale made itself apparent when in 1949 the Service Department recommended a reform in payment schemes. What began as a discussion of the suggested policy turned into a guided collective attempt to maintain morale by removing the workers' suspicion of management's intentions, what Rose has pithily summarized as a "psychoanalysis of the organization."[93] On the workers' side, what emerged in the process was an exercise in democratic citizenship:

[88] Sidney Gray, from the institute, recalled that during the institutes initial years, the staff undertook more than seventy research projects but that more than half their time was devoted to two projects alone (Jaques's work at the Glacier Metal Factory and A. T. M. Wilson's work on communication). Sidney Gray, "The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations," in *Fifty Years of the Tavistock Clinic*, ed. H. V. Dicks (London, 1970), 210.

[89] See, for instance, Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, "The Tavistock Programme: The Government of Subjectivity and Social Life," *Sociology* 22, no. 2 (May 1988).

[90] Medical Research Council, Occupational Psychology Committee, Note from the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, October 1948, TNA, FD 1/308.

[91] As Bion had put it in his discussion of the leaderless group test, "The establishment of morale is of course hardly a pre-requisite of treatment; it is treatment, or part of it." W. R. Bion, "The Leaderless Group Project," *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 10 (May 1946): 79. For further relevant discussions of Bion, see Robert. H. Ahrenfeldt, *Psychiatry in the British Army in the Second World War* (London, 1958); Nikolas S. Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (London and New York), 47–50.

[92] Extracts from a statement prepared at the request of the Working Party on Research and Productivity of the Scientific Advisory Council: possible contributions of applied social science to increased industrial productivity, TNA, FD 1/308.

[93] Rose, *Governing the Soul*, 89.

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the Shop Committee discussed matters freely, "more as representatives and less as individuals."[94] Good morale was secured, and "it was this morale which made it possible for the members to tackle problems in a comprehensive manner, as well as in greater depth."[95] It was not so much the content (what was discussed) as the form (the discussion itself) that mattered: an "opportunity for collaboration between groups in the solution of a concrete problem," an opportunity to exercise, or train oneself, in the travails of democratic citizenship.[96]

The second important study to receive funds through the Human Factors Panel was Paterson's study of a coal-mining community. A senior lecturer in industrial relations at Glasgow University, Paterson developed his interest in morale and work during his wartime service at the Royal Air Force, on which he later reported in his *Morale at War and Work*, published in 1955.[97] His wartime experience had played a central role in the development of his social-psychological and anthropological research on industrial life. In 1941 Paterson had been stationed at Bogfield Royal Air Force station and was soon asked by the station commander to look into the prevalence of accidents. Because there was no correlation between accidents and flying experience, Paterson concluded that the problem was deviant behavior rather than lack of skill. Accidents, then, were perceived in terms of individual and collective conduct, and he linked problems with both to the lack of group feeling (and not to individual psychology or pathology): the station, he thought, was seen as "a geographical entity, not a *social* [one]."[98] The solution was found in the management of morale, which was to produce the "*intensification of normative behavior*."[99] Paterson now sought to unite the station against a common enemy. Because Germans were far away, Paterson suggested flights in bad weather (which the station *as a whole* would work to "defeat"). The experiment, Paterson reported, was a successful one: the station was now united (against the bad weather), morale was high, and accidents were rare. The social implications of these experiments for the period of social reconstruction were immense: "We search for belongingness," he wrote, "in the masses of crowds in cinemas and sports stadia. . . . We join clubs, union, and societies. We read 'escapist' literature, escaping from the loneliness of our society. It is a fragmented society. . . . Bogfield in 1941 was a microcosmic picture of our society today."[100]

Drawing on his wartime experience at Bogfield, Paterson now embarked on an ambitious anthropological study of life in a coal-mining community. Once more, Paterson sought to promote normative conduct through the proper management of morale: it would have significant implications, he thought, for the prevention of accidents, the management of productivity, and even the prevention of disease (such as miners dermatitis). Minute details mattered. In one case, for instance,

[94] Elliot Jaques, *The Changing Culture of a Factory* (London, 1951), 86.

[95] Ibid., 318.

[96] Extracts from a statement prepared at the request of the Working Party on Research and Productivity, TNA, FD 1/308.

[97] T. T. Paterson, *Morale in War and Work: An Experiment in the Management of Men* (London, 1955).

[98] He heard utterances such as "the mess is getting new chairs," never "we are getting new chairs." Ibid., 85; emphasis added.

[99] Ibid., 115; emphasis in the original.

[100] Ibid., 225.

morale and group solidarity were promoted by choosing a unified color scheme for beams and equipment in a particular colliery (the pit closed after ten months so it was impossible to draw conclusive results). Initially, the experiments were funded by the Psychological Committee of the MRC, but it was not long before funding was withdrawn. It was Bartlett's committee by now, and it voted to withdraw funding from both Paterson's and Jaques's studies. Paterson's work, it was argued, "shows the most striking lack of appreciation of the nature of scientific evidence." Similarly, Jaques and his associates working on the Glacier project had shown "no sign of any appreciation of the nature and requirements of the scientific methods. Many conclusions are expressed, and they may be right or wrong. There is no means of telling."[101] Paterson's work was left unfinished and fell into oblivion; Jaques found additional sources of funding, and his work endured, although with the fading of collective morale as an industrial managerial problem in the 1960s, the original questions that animated this study were hardly mentioned.

MORALE, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, AND THE SHOP FLOOR

If the DSIR and the MRC were interested in human relations from the point of view of applied scientific research, other departments, led by the Ministry of Labour and the National Service, developed an interest in human relations as a derivative of the problem of industrial relations.[102] Within the ministry, significant effort was invested by the National Joint Advisory Council (NJAC), established in 1939 in an attempt to bring together representatives of the new tripartite "coalition" (employers, workers, and the state).[103] It now took a broad view of human relations management and its promotion.[104] Furthermore, it adopted the view that because "improvement in human relations," which it had defined as the development of team spirit, "should be considered as an end in itself," the council should distance itself from any association with the productivity drive.[105]

The NJAC launched myriad initiatives in this direction, but it is most remembered for its campaign to promote practices of joint consultation. Such schemes had a long and troubled history and had been heavily contested during the interwar years.[106]

[101] The committee also noted that Paterson's work did not involve psychology and therefore had nothing to do with the MRC. The only study that received funding was for work undertaken at the University of Cambridge on individual factors at work: "readily intelligible to any scientific reader." Notes on research sponsored by the Human Factors Panel of the Committee on Industrial Productivity and administered by the Medical Research Council and the Recommendations of the Psychology Committee, MRC, 13 February 1951, TNA, FD 1/304.

[102] Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Industrial Relations Handbook* (London, 1944), 107–16.

[103] On tripartite "corporatism," see Keith Middlemas, *Politics in Industrial Society: The Experience of the British System Since 1911* (London, 1979).

[104] Ministry of Labour and National Service, Industrial Relations Department, proposal to set up subcommittee of National Joint Advisory Council to consider action to promote still higher standards of human relations, 1953, TNA, LAB 10/1215.

[105] Brief to the minister on the meeting of the NJAC, 22 October 1952, TNA, LAB 10/1151; Godfrey Ince to Thomas Hutton, August 3, 1954, TNA, LAB 10/1215. For a discussion of the ministry's general efforts in this direction, see Tiratsoo and Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency*, 97–99.

[106] See, for example, James Stitt, *Joint Industrial Councils in British History: Inception, Adoption, and Utilization, 1917–1939* (Westport, CT, 2006).

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Significantly, management theorists in the interwar period, including those who were considered "progressive," did not support granting such committees any managerial authority, either because this did not fit within a characteristically paternalistic world-view, or on the grounds of professional jealousy: management, they argued, was a matter for "experts," not for "representatives." Rowntree, for instance, thought that women in particular were not interested in such questions.[107] This attitude now completely changed. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the government actively encouraged the creation of such committees (with few exceptions, such as Royal Ordnance factories, the Royal Dockyards and pit-production committees, which were made compulsory). Official statistics do not give us an exact number, but we know that thousands of such committees were established. In 1942 there were already 2,644 registered joint-production committees (JPCs) in the engineering and allied services alone; in 1943, there were 4,567.[108] It has been estimated that by 1944 joint-consultive schemes had covered more than three and a half million workers, mainly in the engineering, shipbuilding, coal mining, and building industries.[109] "A War Innovation That Will Remain," the *Birmingham Mail* termed them in 1944.[110]

Management writers and government officials were highly enthusiastic.[111] It was understood that despite the government's insistence that JPCs should be encouraged rather than enforced, thus heeding the voluntary tradition in British industrial relations, the state's role in the success of JPCs was critical.[112] An official recommendation regarding the structure of joint-consultive schemes was issued in 1947. It suggested that their creation should be voluntary (rather than mandated), that such committees would not deal with issues regarding conditions of employments, such as wages, and finally, that each industry should decide whether such committees would be established at the factory level or as a collaborative effort within each industry. The ministry followed with a campaign to promote consultive practices and offered assistance to individual firms through its Regional Industrial Relations Officers and the Personnel Management Advisory Service. Numerous government and private agencies published practical guides on joint-consultive machinery.[113] There was hardly an institutional manifestation of the new desire to promote human relations that drew more support and generated more enthusiasm than joint consultation.[114]

[107] B. Seebohm Rowntree, *The Human Factor in Business* (London, 1921), 128–36.

[108] TNA, BT 171/210.

[109] Tomlinson, *Industrial Democracy*, 8–11.

[110] *Birmingham Mail*, 27 September 1944.

[111] G. S. Walpole, *Management and Men: A Study of the Theory and Practice of Joint Consultation at All Levels* (London, 1944); C. G. Renold, *Joint Consultation over Thirty Years* (London, 1950); Institute of Personnel Management, *Joint Consultation: A Practical Approach* (London, 1950).

[112] Tomlinson, *Industrial Democracy*, 8–11.

[113] Great Britain Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Industrial Relations Handbook. Supplement No. 3, December 1949, Joint Consultation in Industry* (London, 1950); Great Britain Ministry of Labour and National Service and the Central Office of Information, *This Is a True Story: Its About Joint Consultation and It Happened Like This . . .* (London, 1950); Institute of Personnel Management, *Joint Consultation*; National Institute of Industrial Psychology, *Joint Consultation in British Industry* (London and New York, 1952).

[114] Report of Conference on Joint Consultation Training within Industry, 15 September 1948, TNA, LAB 18/543.

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As Tiratsoo and Tomlinson have persuasively argued, the impetus for joint-consultive schemes came from the trade unions who desired greater industrial democracy, but what the ministry created was a radically different type of institution: joint-consultive machinery remained at the factory (rather than the regional) level, and questions such as wages or conditions of employment were not discussed.[115] From the ministry's point of view, these measures were essential to their success, for the value of joint consultation was measured not only in terms of greater productivity or improved management but also in terms of morale and team spirit: "The most important and permanent advantage to be gained from successful joint consultation is the improvement of relations between management and employee *within* the undertaking."[116] Consultation was what made the difference between the management of old times and the form of management appropriate for a democratic age. Brech had lamented that during the war, despite the existence of an "over-riding common motive," the outlooks of capital and labor were not unified.[117] Consultation was to remedy rift: "[A]ll will see that they have the same interest."[118]

CONCLUSION: INDUSTRIAL MORALE AND THE POLITICS OF CONSENSUS

In his seminal *Citizenship and Social Class* (1950), T. H. Marshall notoriously placed democratic citizenship, not social rights or the welfare state, at the heart of his argument about the postwar social-democratic state. Marshall was never really clear what he meant by citizenship; he defined it as "full membership in a community," understood in terms of rights and duties, entitlements and responsibilities.[119] Marshall suggested that because citizenship rested on shaky foundations, a solution could be found in the inculcation of "industrial citizenship." Marshall's use of the term "industrial citizenship" is itself indicative: when describing it historically, he used it to mean association in trade unions, but when writing about the new Britain that had just emerged from war, he used it to refer to the internal life of the factory. Here was the solution to the grave problems of reconstructionist politics, namely, that "a successful appeal to the duties of citizenship can be made in times of emergency, but the Dunkirk spirit cannot be a permanent feature of any civilization." Industrial citizenship, inculcated through the development of loyalties to the small working group, "might supply some of the vigour that citizenship in general appears to lack."[120]

[115] Tiratsoo and Tomlinson, *Industrial Efficiency*, 99–101; Nick Tiratsoo and Jim Tomlinson, *The Conservatives and Industrial Efficiency, 1951–1964* (London and New York, 1998), 17. Brech, too, thought that joint consultation would benefit morale only if employees were invited to truly "share in its [i.e., the factory's] governance." Brech, "Management Lessons," 49.

[116] Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Industrial Relations Handbook*, Supplement No. 3, 3; emphasis added. Saunders, *Factory Organization*, 108.

[117] Brech, "Management Lessons," 38.

[118] Institute of Personnel Management, *Joint Consultation*, 6.

[119] T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class* (London, 1992), 6. Marshall has remained the ground zero for "citizenship studies" in postwar Britain. Of the many publications on Marshall and his relevance, see, for example, Bryan S. Turner, ed., *Citizenship and Social Theory* (London, 1993); Martin Bulmer and Anthony M. Rees, eds., *Citizenship Today: The Contemporary Relevance of T. H. Marshall* (London, 1996).

[120] Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class*, 40, 45–47.

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Marshall, as we have seen, was not the only one to view the workplace as a privileged site for the manufacture of consensus.

Within a decade, the forces that underpinned the politics of consensus were no longer in place. On the one hand, similar managerial practices were to be continuously promoted in various mutated forms, from the care of the moral well-being of workers to psychological understanding of workers' motivation (of which the hype around "nudge" economy is a recent manifestation). There were other efforts to promote workers' participation and greater industrial democracy, culminating in the Bullock Report on the eve of Thatcher's election. Yet, on the other hand, the particular form of such politics of consensus that was discussed here, human relations management, and the obsession with the manufacture of shop floor morale, enjoyed a relatively brief life. Criticisms of human relations management abounded and were not limited to either side of the political map. Some, for instance, argued that what was needed was not human relations but actual participation of workers in the government of industry and that human relations management was largely an exercise in manipulation of affect.[121] Others argued that the obsession with human relations diverted attention from the real task of management, which was to manage the economic affairs of the business enterprise.[122] It was quickly becoming apparent that the technopolitical solution of morale management at the plant level was fractured and contested. Enthusiasm for joint consultation as a form of manufacturing harmony within the factory waned as well. It was argued, for instance, that successful schemes of joint consultation depended on morale rather than vice versa.[123] As early as 1950, a study undertaken by the NIIP revealed widespread dissatisfaction with consultive machinery (with the exception of top executives and workers' representatives themselves).[124] The records all tell a familiar story of disappointment and disintegration.[125] The third edition of the Ministry of Labour's *Industrial Relations Handbook*, published in 1961, devoted little over two pages to the subject.[126] The perceived failure of such committees in nationalized industries only meant greater disappointment, because even public ownership did not seem to bring greater industrial democracy.[127] In the final analysis, broader transformations in the nature of British society meant that a more individualist and consumerist understanding of the nature of work made it increasingly difficult to discuss it in terms of collective attitude and mobilization.[128] As Paterson lamented in a

[121] This was, in effect, Child's critique of this endeavor. A detailed discussion is offered in Child, *British Management Thought*, 151–214.

[122] "Probably management's greater error was to see itself as the wielder of disinterested power." R. Appleby, "Management and Work," *British Management Review* 10, no. 4 (1952): 17.

[123] Brown, *Social Psychology of Industry*, 101; W. H. Scott, *Industrial Leadership and Joint Control: A Study of Human Relations in Three Merseyside Firms* (Liverpool, 1952), v.

[124] National Institute of Industrial Psychology, *Joint Consultation*, 62–89.

[125] See, for instance, the Report of the Shipbuilding Committee, 1965, TNA, LAB 10/2362.

[126] Ministry of Labour, *Industrial Relations Handbook*, 3rd ed. (London, 1961), 26–28.

[127] For a thorough analysis of nationalization and human relations, with particular reference to joint consultation, see Tomlinson, *Democratic Socialism*, 94–123.

[128] The individuating language on work and its management is discussed in Rose, *Governing the Soul*, 103–22.

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later work, by the 1960s morale came to simply mean "mood," a far cry from its earlier resonance with collective sacrifice and endurance.[129] The postwar politics of consensus, which had emerged during the period of social reconstruction, now came to an end.

[129] T. T. Paterson, *Glasgow Limited: A Case Study in Indsturial War and Peace* (Cambridge, 1960), 199n2.

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