Article

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An Analysis of Annual Turnover Rates for Canadian Union Presidents

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This paper re-examines the common views that pre-sidential turnover occurs infrequently, is often the result of political forces and provides an adequate measure of union democracy. Moreover, the authors try to determine to what extent environmental factors influence annual pre-sidential turnover rates among Canadian national unions.

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on union government and the nebulous concept of union democracy. The literature in this field is frequently based on explicit or implicit assumptions regarding the stability of union leadership. Throughout these works one encounters the views, stated with varied degrees of certainty, that:

(1) there is a very low incidence of turnover among national union presidents;

(2) turnover, when it does occur, is primarily the result of political opposition within the union;

(3) turnover, however measured, is a general indicator of the level of union democracy; and

(4) there is a predictable relationship between the frequency of turnover and such environmental factors as union structure, strike activity and economic indicators.

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The above assumptions can be found in either detailed case studies of internal union affairs or in theoretical works on the dimensions of union democracy. The purpose of this study is twofold. First, we will re-examine the common views that presidential turnover occurs infrequently, is often the result of political forces and provides an adequate measure of union democracy. Second, we will develop and test hypotheses drawn from studies of union democracy to determine the extent to which environmental factors influence annual presidential turnover rates among Canadian national unions. This will be a longitudinal survey covering the period 1912-1971 and the results should provide us with a greater understanding of those factors which may affect the stability of trade union leadership.

TURNOVER AND UNION DEMOCRACY

Students of union government have approached the subject of union democracy from a number of perspectives.[1] While some studies have concentrated on the problems of internal discipline and membership participation, many others have stressed the central role of union election practices.[2] If majority rule is considered to be the cornerstone of the unions' claim to democracy[3], then concern over the procedures and outcomes of union officer elections is understandable. This concern is heightened in large labor organizations where union leaders can be distinguished from the rank-and-file in terms of skill, status and compensation,[4] and seldom face stiff political opposition.[5]

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[1] While this analysis deals with turnover among the presidents of Canadian national unions, the analytic framework and hypotheses have been drawn largely from works in union democracy and government in the United States. This appears justified in light of the common collective bargaining traditions in North America and the general similarity in union structures and politics.

[2] For example, election procedures and the institutionalization of opposition is a major theme in Seymour Martin LIPSET, Martin A. TROW and James S. COLEMAN, *Union Democracy* (New York: Doubleday, 1956). Also see Philip TAFT, *The Structure and Government of Labor Unions* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 35-64.

[3] Alice H. COOK, *Union Democracy: Practice and Ideal* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963), p. 20.

[4] For example, see: LIPSET, TROW and COLEMAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

[5] The infrequency of opposition in union elections has been noted by: TAFT *op. cit.*, p. 12; Arnold S. TANNENBAUM, "Unions" in James G. March (ed.) *Handbook of Organizations* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 745; Derek BOK and John T. DUNLOP, *Labor and the American Community* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1970), p. 73; J. David EDELSTEIN, "An Organizational Theory of Union Democracy", *Ame-*

Observers of union democracy appear to have accepted the view that turnover is infrequent among national union leaders. They point to the higher rates of turnover experienced by local union officials and the relative ease with which political opposition can be organized at the local as opposed to the national level.[6] Although turnover rates are higher for local union presidents, there is little evidence to support the view that turnover of national union presidents is infrequent. Indeed, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that during the period 1961-1970 three-quarters of the national union presidents were replaced.[7] A similar proportion of turnover has been found among the officers of Canadian national unions.[8]

There also appears to be a tendency to over-emphasize the importance of political factors, especially elections, as a cause of turn-

rican Sociological Review, v. 32, n. 1 (1967), p. 22; Lois MACDONALD, Leadership Dynamics and the Trade Union Leader (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 180-115; Woodrow L. GINSBURG "Union Growth, Government and Structure," A Review of Industrial Relations Research Volume 1 (Madison, Wis.: IRRA, 1970), p. 242.

    [6] The tenure of the local union leader appears to be considerably less secure than that of the national leader and studies have indicated that local leader turnover is related to the levels of compensation and local size. Moreover, there is some doubt whether local leader turnover is an indication of union democracy. It may be more of a sharing of leadership tasks and privileges by a local elite. Arnold S. TANNENBAUM and Robert L. KAHN, Participation in Union Locals (Evanston, Ill.: Row and Peterson, 1958), p. 12; Philip TAFT, "Democracy in Trade Unions," Proceedings of the American Economic Association, (1946), pp. 362-363; George STRAUSS and Don WILLNER "Government Regulation of Local Union Democracy", Labor Law Journal, v. 4, n. 8, (August 1953), pp. 250; Leon APPLEBAUM, "Officer Turnover and Salary Structures in Local Unions," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, v. 19, (January 1966), pp. 224-230; Leon APPLEBAUM and Harry R. BLAINE, "Compensation and Turnover of Union Officers," Industrial Relations, v. 14, n. 2 (May 1975), pp. 156-157; and Leon APPLEBAUM and Harry R. BLAINE, "The Iron Law Revisited: Oligarcy in Trade Union Locals," Labor Law Journal, v. 26, n. 9 (September 1975), pp. 597-601.

    [7] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations, 1971 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 51. While election defeat is rare, there has been a fairly high annual turnover rate among the presidents of national unions in the United States. These rates are discussed in: Marvin SHOWBARGER and Sam PINTZ, "Landrum-Griffin and Union President Turnover", Industrial Relations, v. 9 (October 1970), p. 475; A Quantative Appraisal of Presidential Turnover Rates Before and After the Landrum-Griffin Act (San Jose, Cal.: San Jose State College, Institute for Business and Economic Research, 1970). A comment and updating of the Snowbarger-Pintz analysis is found in: Karen S. KOZIARA, "Landrum-Griffin and Union President Turnover," Industrial Relations, v. 11, n. 1 (February 1972), p. 118.

    [8] Gary N. CHAISON and Joseph B. ROSE, "Reasons for Turnover Among the Presidents of Canadian National Unions", Industrial Relations, v. 16, n. 2, (May 1977).

over. We contend that there are three categories of reasons for vacating union office. The first involves election defeat and is the most closely related to the potential for opposition and union democracy. In contrast, there are numerous reasons for turnover which are independent of political forces, including death in office, retirement because of age or health, and constitutional bars against successive years in office. Finally, there exist reasons which are difficult to classify as political or non-political. For example, some leaders may leave office because the position was too onerous or because they desire to work in another position in the same or a different union. Thus, it is necessary to carefully differentiate between the *stated reasons* for turnover and the *underlying causes*. What may initially appear to be voluntary withdrawal from union office may actually be a face-saving device employed by a vulnerable incumbent leader.

Reports on the reasons for turnover are limited to American unions, but even these fail to specify the underlying causes. In the period 1969 to 1973, 83 union presidents left office. Only 9 officers faced election defeat whereas many more failed to return for non-political reasons, e. g., health (11 cases) or limitations on the number of terms in office (8 cases). In a large number of instances it is very difficult to discern the extent of political motivation. Examples include such categories as resignation or failure to seek re-election (23 cases) and retirement (22 cases).[9] A study of turnover among the presidents of Canadian national unions has revealed that more than half of the reasons given for turnover could not be clearly classified as either political or non-political.[10] Although these findings do not provide a precise indication of the extent of political vs. non-political turnover, they do reveal two things: first, a substantial amount of presidential turnover is not politically motivated and second, election defeats account for only a small percentage of total turnover.

It should be further recognized that turnover is not the only nor is it necessarily the best indicator of union democracy. Edelstein has pointed to other measures of union democracy, e.g., the closeness of elections and the degree to which it is produced by formal union

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[9] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations, 1971* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 59; and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations, 1973* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), p. 62.

[10] CHAISON and ROSE, *op. cit.*

structure and procedures.[11] Other writers have questioned the general relationship of leadership elections to the overall democratic functioning of unions. Faunce states that:

> Rank and file participation in elections and turnover of elected leaders may have no relevance at all to union democracy if elections and other formal procedures are not important aspects of the control structure of the union.[12]

It is also noteworthy that union democracy may be more strongly linked to turnover among local rather than national union leadership. As Taft has observed:

> One could invoke the long tenure enjoyed by many union officers. It does not appear that it indicates the absence of democracy... The most important level is likely to be the local union, and members can if they choose mount opposition tickets. They can do it on other levels but success in those is less likely.[13]

Consequently, there appear to be some limitations to viewing turnover as a measure of democracy at the national union level.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE ON TURNOVER

Research on union democracy suggests that the frequency of *politically-motivated* turnover will vary over time in relation to measures of union structure, strike activity and economic activity. In this analysis, we shall explore and evaluate the ability of these broad measures to explain the variance in annual rates of aggregate presidential turnover. The measure of presidential turnover (PT) is discussed in a later section. Below is a brief description of the environmental variables and the hypotheses to be tested.

Union Membership and Structure (UMN, AMNL)

The growth of a union can enhance the power of an incumbent leader while increasing the barriers to effective political opposition. This size factor has been noted by Lipset, Trow and Coleman:

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[11] EDELSTEIN, *op. cit.*, *passim.*, "Democracy in a National Union: The British AEU," *Industrial Relations*, v. 4, n. 3 (May 1965), pp. 105-125.
[12] William A. FAUNCE, "Size of Locals and Union Democracy," *American Journal of Sociology*, v. 68, n. 3 (November 1962), p. 297.
[13] Philip TAFT, "Internal Union Structure and Functions," in Gerald Somers (ed.) *The Next Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Relations* (Madison, Wis.: IRRA, 1973), p. 7. Also see Footnote 6, *supra*.

> The smaller the political unit, the greater the possibility of democratic
> control. Increased size necessarily involves the delegation of political power
> to professional rulers and the growth of bureaucratic institutions. The smaller
> the association or unit, the greater membership control. There can be little
> doubt that this is so in the trade union movement. [14]

In other words, as national unions increase in size, the gulf between
leaders and members is likely to expand. This enables union officials
in large-scale organizations to control the formal means of com-
munication and maintain an almost complete monopoly over political
skills. As a result, formal opposition has little opportunity to develop
and the likelihood of politically motivated turnover is minimized. [15]

Studies of turnover rates in the United States have described the
effect of union size on turnover. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
found that in the period 1971-1973, 16 of the 36 unions which
experienced presidential turnover had fewer than 10,000 members while
25 had fewer than 100,000 members. [16] Moreover, this source reported
previously that, "death and retirement, rather than incumbent oppo-
sition, resulted in the great majority of turnover of presidents in the
largest unions." [17] Koziara's findings also stress the importance of size;
between 1968-1969 the presidential turnover rate for larger unions
(100,000 or more members) was 26.7 percent compared with 34.4 per-
cent for smaller unions (less than 100,000 members). [18]

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[14]   LIPSET, TROW and COLEMAN, op. cit., p. 14.

[15]   The influence of union size on leadership control, centralized structure, the
emergence of staff specialists and the difficulties faced by opposition movements is dis-
cussed in: LIPSET, TROW and COLEMAN, op. cit., passim; J. SEIDMAN, Demo-
cracy in the Labor Movement (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1958), pp. 10-11.
Seymour Martin LIPSET, "The Political Process in Trade Unions: A Theoretical State-
ment", in Walter Galenson and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.) Labor and Trade Unionism
(New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1960), passim.; William HERBERG, "Bureaucracy
and Democracy in Labor Unions", in Joseph Shister (ed.) Readings in Labor Economics
and Industrial Relations (Chicago: J. B. Lippincott, 1951), pp. 99-107; John R. COLE-
MAN, "The Compulsive Pressures of Democracy in Unionism", The American Journal
of Sociology, v. 61, n. 6 (May 1956), pp. 519-526; Emanuel STEIN, "The Dilemma of
Union Democracy," in Richard A. Lester (ed.), Labor: Readings on Major Issues (New
York: Random House, 1967), pp. 185-195. Many of these works are based upon the
concepts developed in Michel's "iron law of oligarcy". Robert MICHELS, Political Par-
ties (Glencove, Ill.: The Free Press, 1958).

[16]   U.S. Department of Labor, BLS, Directory of National Unions and Em-
ployee Associations, 1973, op. cit., p. 62.

[17]   "Tenure of Union Officers", Monthly Labor Review, v. 92, n. 2 (February,
1971), p. 62.

[18]   KOZIARA, op. cit., p. 119.

As the Canadian labour movement expands over time, we would expect a commensurate increase in the size of the average national union. Therefore, it is hypothesized that the annual rate of presidential turnover will be negatively related to increases in total union membership.[19] The variable UMN denotes the total membership of those Canadian national unions for which the presence or absence of turnover could be determined.

Increases in membership among national unions can be achieved through the expansion of existing locals or the creation of new ones. If union growth is achieved primarily through the expansion of existing locals, this may counter the predicted negative effect of union size on turnover rates. In many ways, the leaders of large local unions enjoy the same advantages as national leaders, although not to the same extent. For example, a number of studies have shown that the leaders of large local unions are more secure in their positions than officers in smaller locals. This greater stability can lead to national prestige, the development of political skills and the establishment of an organized opposition strong enough to challenge the national leadership.[20] As Faunce notes, large locals are a more significant force for democracy in the national union primarily because they are less dependent on the national office and therefore in a better position to express opposition to it.[21]

In which direction, then, has union growth occurred? Tannenbaum emphasizes the creation of new locals.

> The growth of national unions has occurred largely through the addition of new locals rather than through increasing the size of existing locals, so that the net effect of growth has militated in the direction of a larger number of small unions dependent upon the national.[22]

While this may be the case in the United States, it remains to be seen if it applies to the growth of Canadian unions. Based on the foregoing,

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[19] It is assumed that as total union membership increases, unions in general will also increase in size. In other words, the gains in membership will not be completely offset by the creation of new Canadian national unions. The average union size was not used as a union structure variable because of the extreme variation in union size in Canada.

[20] FAUNCE, *op. cit. passim*. Also see L. APPLEBAUM and H. R. BLAINE, "Compensation and Turnover of Union Officers", *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157; A. S. TANNENBAUM, *op. cit.*, pp. 754-755.

[21] FAUNCE, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

[22] TANNENBAUM, *op. cit.*, p. 755.

it is hypothesized that there will be a positive relationship between annual presidential turnover and the average size of locals. The variable AMNL denotes the average annual membership per national union local for those unions in which turnover could be determined. [23]

Measures of Turbulence or Crises

Incumbent leadership is often faced with its most serious challenges in times of turbulence or crises. Lipset points out that such crises as shifts in the business cycle or prolonged strikes may cause the leadership to make major policy decisions and reverse traditional practices.

> The consequence may be the loss of relative position or privilege by one section of the union compared with another or perhaps a loss in economic position for the entire union. A major shift in policy may upset the support for a given leader among the rank and file and among sections of union officialdom. [24]

Accordingly, crises may alter stable internal relations and erode rank-and-file support for the incumbent. Under such circumstances, subordinate officials may emerge and challenge the existing leadership's ability to manage union affairs. [25]

Strike Activity (NS, TL)

It could be hypothesized that measures of strike activity would be positively and significantly related to annual turnover rates. Intense or widespread strike activity might appear to serve as a convenient and adequate measure of turbulence or crises of the form discussed above. However, we believe that annual strike indices are too broad to be *directly* linked to serious political challenges to incumbent leaders. Firstly, the use of aggregate strike measures prevents us from determining if strike activity was evenly distributed among the national unions or whether a few unions accounted for a disproportionate share. In addition, it remains unclear whether greater stress would be felt at the national or local level. The fact that collective bargaining is decentralized in Canada and local unions are responsible for strike decisions, suggests that local presidents may be more vulnerable to these crises than

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[23]   The time series for UMN and AMNL were extracted from: Canada Department of Labour, *Labour Organizations in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1911-1972).

[24]   LIPSET, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

[25]   *Ibid.*, pp. 230-231.

national leaders. Another shortcoming of aggregate strike measures is their failure to distinguish among the causes of industrial conflict. A significant number of strikes prior to World War II were recognitional disputes rather than "economic" strikes. There may well be a positive correlation between the *underlying causes* of strike activity and leadership stability.

Two frequently used measures of strike activity have been included in this analysis. [26] Time lost due to strikes as a proportion of total time worked (TL) indicates the intensity and economic impact of work stoppages. The number of strikes per one million members of the labour force (NS) measures the widespread nature of industrial conflict. [27] Both TL and NS will be lagged one year behind PT to indicate the relationship between turnover and the strike activity of the immediately preceding period. We hypothesize that TL and NS, because of their limitations as measures of stress or crises faced by *national union leadership in general*, will not be significantly related to annual turnover rates. *Economic Activity (P,Y)*. Seidman has suggested that many union members are primarily concerned with economic benefits rather than with internal union politics, and would support the incumbent union administration provided it secured satisfactory gains in wages and fringe benefits. [28] Furthermore, a leader's tenure in office may depend largely on his ability to match or exceed the collective bargaining gains of rival unions. [29] If leadership performance is judged from an economic perspective, then the task of satisfying members' expectations may be more difficult during periods of rapidly rising prices. In line with this reasoning, Koziara states that the increased presidential turnover rates during 1968-1969 in the United States may have partly resulted from dissatisfaction with escalating prices. [30]

[26]   A discussion of the meaning of the selected strike measures is found in: John VANDERKAMP, "Economic Activity and Strikes in Canada," *Industrial Relations*, v. 9, n. 2 (February 1970), p. 221.

[27]   The data source for the variables TL, NS is: Labour Canada, *Strikes and Lockouts in Canada, 1972* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), pp. 28-29; and VANDERKAMP, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[28]   Joel SEIDMAN, "Some Requirements for Union Democracy", in Richard A. Lester (ed.), *Labor: Readings on Major Issues* (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 168.

[29]   See, for example, *Ibid.*, p. 163.

[20]   KOZIARA, *op. cit.*, p. 119. This finding is disputed by Marvin SNOWBARGER, "Reply to Professor Koziara", *Industrial Relations*, v. 11, n. 1 (February 1972), p. 120.

It has also been claimed that the business cycle may be related to leadership turnover. Lipset has stated that shifts in the business cycle (another "crisis" variable) could produce leadership changes because of the reduction in wages and the weakening of the union through unemployment of its members.[31] Swindinsky's study of union growth in Canada also suggests a relationship between the business cycle and the member's perception of his organization (and presumably its leaders):

> The benefits of union membership are likely to be assessed more favourably during the expansionary phase of the business cycle when unemployment is low and an increased number of workers might feel that union membership yields a positive net benefit.[32]

The rate of price increases is measured by the annual Consumer Price Index (P).[33] The business cycle fluctuation (Y) is represented by the Gross National Product per capita as a percent of a log linear trend.[34] It is hypothesized that Y will be negatively related to annual turnover while P will be positively related. The time series for Y and P will be lagged to indicate the relationship between turnover and the economic activity of the preceding year.

THE ANNUAL PRESIDENTIAL TURNOVER RATE

Development of the Time Series

Published annual indices are available for the selected measures of union structure, strike activity and economic activity. In contrast, the annual rate of presidential turnover (PT) for Canadian national unions had not been previously calculated. For the purpose of this study a time series of PT was derived from information contained in *Labour Organizations in Canada*, published by the Canada Department of Labour.[35] Lists of presidents and their unions were compiled begin-

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[21]   LIPSET, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

[22]   R. SWINDINSKY, "Trade Union Growth in Canada 1911-1970", *Relations Industrielles-Industrial Relations*, v. 29, n. 3 (1974), p. 440.

[33]   The data source for the variable P is: VANDERKAMP, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30; and Statistics Canada, *Canadian Statistical Review, Historical Summary, 1970* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1971) (Cat. 11-505), Section 5, p. 68. The base year is 1957.

[34]   The data source for the variable Y is: O. J. FIRESTONE, *Industry and Education: A Century of Canadian Development* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1969), pp. 262-263; Statistics Canada, *Canada Yearbook, 1974* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1974), Table 21.1. The base year is 1957.

[35]   Canada Department of Labour, *Labour Organizations in Canada, op. cit.*

ning with the first edition of this annual directory in 1911. When the name of a union's president failed to match that of the prior year, the case was recorded as one of turnover. [36] The specific reasons for turnover were not identified. The annual rate of turnover was computed for a sixty-year period (1912-1971), but data for 1941-1943 were unavailable because the names of presidents were not published during those years. [37]

For the period under consideration, the identities of 241 unions were recorded along with the names of 718 individual union presidents. In 2,104 of the total 2,526 cases it was possible to determine whether or not presidential turnover occurred. Among the principal reasons for coding a case "turnover can not be determined" were the listing of a union for the first time or the occasional failure to list a president's name.

The Trend In Turnover Rates

The trend in annual presidential turnover rates is presented in Figure 1. The annual rates were very erratic in the pre-World War II period with wide fluctuations from 1912 to about 1930. From 1912 to 1919 the average annual turnover rate was 33.7 percent. The corresponding figure for the following decade was 37.6 percent. In the 1930's a declining but still widely fluctuating trend was found and the average turnover rate for that decade fell to 24.3 percent. In the 1940's, the average rate increased to 31.5 percent, but this is largely attributed to the very high rate (51.5 percent) found in 1944. These figures might suggest that turnover was relatively higher during the early wartime period. However, this conclusion cannot be confirmed because of the three-year gap in the time series. The 1950's and 1960's were marked by generally declining turnover rates (24.2 percent and 21.8 percent, respectively). For the entire sixty-year period a widely fluctuating but generally declining trend in annual turnover rates is apparent.

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[36] It should be noted that this procedure does not permit the recording of more than one case of presidential turnover per year. It was assumed that this was very unlikely to occur. Moreover, when a union ceases to be listed after a merger, there is no means to record any resulting presidential turnover for that union.

[37] While a turnover rate could be calculated for the entire three-year gap, there is no means to determine the annual turnover rate. Furthermore, if there was more than one case of presidential turnover for a union during the three years, this would not be indicated by comparing the name of the president in 1944 with that of 1940.

FIGURE I

**Annual Presidential Turnover Rates
of Canadian National Unions
(1912-1940, 1944-1971)**
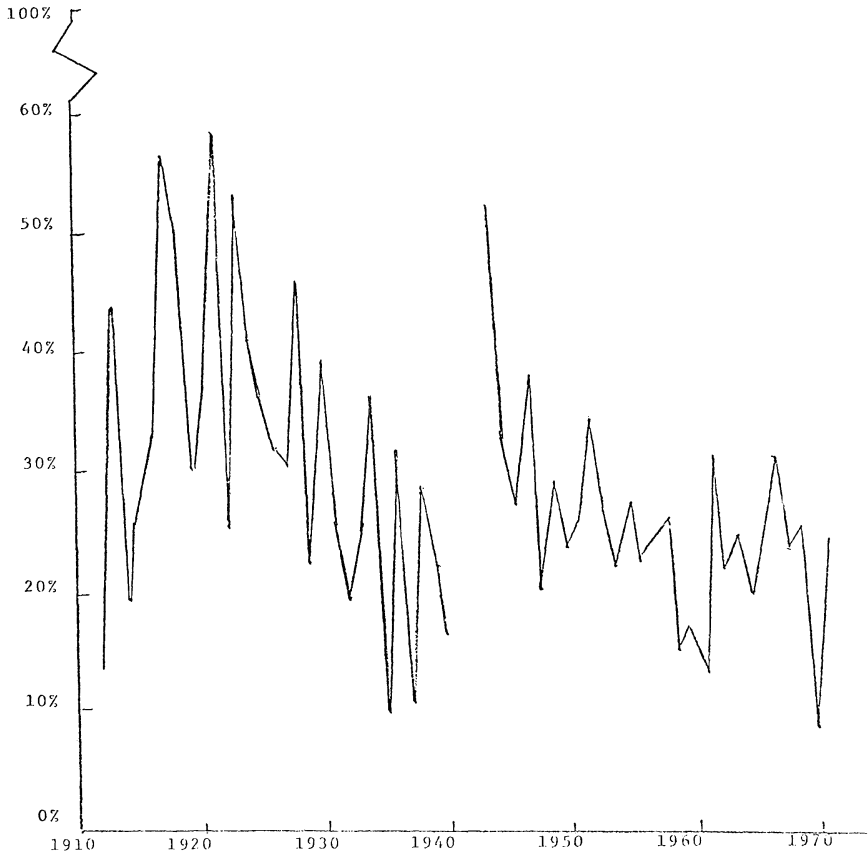
SOURCE: Canada Department of Labour, *Labour Organizations in Canada*, (Ottawa:
          Information Canada, 1911-1972).

   The downward trend presented in Figure 1 might be interpretated
as confirming the view that union leadership follows a recognizable pat-
tern of evolution. Barbash has observed that initially union leadership
struggles with the problems of organizing workers and collective bar-
gaining, and there is little time for internal conflict or factionalism. In a
later stage, attention shifts toward control of internal union matters and
contests for union office develop. In the final stage, the dominant group
of leaders establishes itself and becomes increasingly difficult to unseat.

While there may be a lack of conformity in the time span of this evolu-
tion, it is believed that the leaders of older unions will fall into the later
stages of development.[38] It should be recognized, however, that
controls on union identity were not exercised and therefore it is not
possible to confirm Barbash's views. As new unions were formed in
different periods and old ones were dissolved or merged into others,
the composition of the sample changed over time. The total number of
unions contained in the study is 241, but the number appearing in the
annual tabulations range from 8 in 1912 to 63 in 1971.[39] In earlier years
as well as later ones, the sampled unions could be at any of the stages
of evolution.[40]

Data Analysis

The research literature on union democracy and government has
suggested that the stability of union leaders will be affected in a predic-
table manner by aspects of union structure, strike activity and econo-
mic activity. This has enabled us to hypothesize that specific rela-
tionships would be found in a longitudinal analysis of annual turnover
rates. The strength and direction of these relationships is examined by
using multiple regression analysis for all of the independent variables.
A stepwise procedure is used to arrive at a multiple regression equation
containing the six independent variables. These variables were entered
into the equation in the order of their presentation in this paper rather
than any specific order of inclusion which would assume cause and ef-
fect relationships. Low default limits were set to insure the inclusion of
all variables in the equation.

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[38]   Jack BARBASH, *Labor Unions in Action* (New York: Harper and Brothers,
1948), p. 200. It has also been suggested that the "career union leader" is most likely to
be found in the long established union, while the "ideological" leader, less concerned
with tenure, would be found in the younger union. LIPSET, *op. cit.*, p. 233. VanTine, in
his study of the development of the labour bureaucrat in the United States, also suggests
that length of tenure in union office is proportional to the length of time the union has
been in existence. William R. VANTINE, *The Making of the labor Bureaucrat* (Amherst,
Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1973), p. 30.

[39]   These figures refer to the number of cases in which it could be determined
whether or not there was turnover.

[40]   In addition, some unions, such as public or professional employee associa-
tions, could have been in existence for a considerable amount of time before being listed
in *Labour Organizations in Canada*.

TABLE I

Multiple regression results

Regression Equation:

$$PT_T = -1.3486 - .0621\ UMN + .0068\ AMNL + 0106\ NS_{T-1} + 6.3754\ TL_{T-1} + .1440\ Y_{T-1} + .3380\ P_{T-1}$$

$$(2.4931)*** \quad (.1261) \quad (.7274) \quad (.5455) \quad (1.3855)* \quad (2.1725)**$$

$r^2 = .31$

$F = 3.6279***$

	Correlation Coeficients		
Variable	*Multiple r²*	*r² change*	*Simple r²*
UMN	.17	.17	.17
AMNL	.18	.01	.16
NS_{T-1}	.19	.01	.02
TL_{T-1}	.21	.02	.00
Y_{T-1}	.24	.03	.03
P_{T-1}	.31	.07	.09

(t values are in parenthesis)

***   Significant at the .01 level.

 **   Significant at the .05 level.

  *   Significant at the .10 level.

The regression results are presented in Table I. The overall equation is statistically significant at the .01 level and accounts for almost a third of the variance in PT.

As hypothesized, a significant negative relationship exists between UMN and PT (at the .01 level). Apparently, a reduction in turnover coincides with overall union growth, a finding which supports the widely held belief that as unions *in general* become larger the frequency of presidential turnover declines. When we consider that the presidents of large national unions are less likely to encounter political opposition, and that the attributes of their jobs, e.g., financial remuneration and status, mitigate against them voluntarily leaving office, it is hardly surprising that these leaders enjoy longer tenure.

It was also hypothesized that AMNL would be positively related to PT. This was based on the notion that when union growth occurs primarily through the expansion of existing locals, local leaders will be in a better position to challenge national officers. Our findings reveal there is no statiscally significant relationship between PT and AMNL, and that the direction of the relationship is negative rather than positive as we hypothesized. It is suggested that a growth in total membership is followed by a corresponding growth in *both* the number of locals and an increase in average local size. One possible explanation for the absence of a positive relationship between the dependent and independent variable is that membership gains may have been distributed between new and old locals in such a way that the relative position of large and small locals within the national remained unchanged. It should also be noted that the positive relationship between these two independent variables and their order of entry into the equation may have minimized the contribution of AMNL to the variance in PT. The simple r^2 for UMN is .17; the corresponding figure for AMNL is .16. However, UMN was entered first in the equation and UMN and AMNL are positively interrelated. Thus, the addition of AMNL to the equation resulted in a change in the overall r^2 of only .01.

It was hypothesized that the two measures of strike activity (NS_{T-1} and TL_{T-1}) would not be significantly related to PT. It was believed that these strike indices, (though common measures of strike activity), were inadequate indicators of crises faced by national union leaders in general. The regression results support our hypothesis. A significant trend could not be undercovered for the two strike measures and the inclusion of NS_{T-1} and TL_{T-1} in the equation resulted in changes in the r^2 of only .01 and .02, respectively. Examination of the

simple r^2 for both variables indicates that each considered alone would account for little variance in PT.

The two measures of economic activity were hypothesized to be significantly related to PT. It was predicted that union leadership would encounter the most serious crises soon after both downswing in the business cycle and rises in price levels. The inclusion of Y_{T-1} and P_{T-1} in the equation resulted in an r^2 change of .10, most of which (.07) is attributable to P_{T-1}. As predicted, turnover was greatest during periods of rapid price rises. As noted earlier, it would be during these periods that membership expectations would be highest and the collective bargaining gains of the leadership would be most critically evaluated. However, it was also found that leadership stability was greater during downturns in the business cycle. It may well be that the subset of economic variables are related to different forms of presidential turnover. Weaker officers might face serious political challenges soon after periods of rapid price rises whereas well entrenchend presidents vacate office for non-political reasons, e.g., retirement, when economic conditions are good.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined turnover of Canadian national union presidents during the period 1912-1971. In the first part of the paper we reviewed some common assumptions about the frequency and causes of turnover, as well as the link between turnover and union democracy. The analysis then considered the relationship between annual changes in aggregate presidential turnover and union structure, strike activity and economic indicators.

Many of the hypothesized relationships were supported by the regression results. In accordance with earlier findings, union growth appears to have increased the ability (or desire) of presidents to remain in office. While union growth was accompanied by increases in average local size, this change was not found to be significantly related to presidential turnover.

Two subsets of variables were used to measure crises or turbulence which could affect leadership stability. Emphasis was placed on the serious limitations of aggregate strike measures as indicators of crises. As hypothesized neither strike measure was significantly related to turnover rates. On the other hand, significant relationships were found for both measures of economic activity. Turnover rates were positively correlated with shifts in the business cycle and price changes.

The ability to generalize from these results is limited to some degree by our measure of turnover and because our hypotheses were based on micro-level studies. As noted earlier, some cases of presidential turnover may be independent of political factors and it may be extremely difficult to differentiate between political and non-political turnover except in such cases as death in office, retirement because of age or health, and election defeat. It may well be that a very large proportion of the cases of turnover were non-political and independent of the measures of union structure, strike activity and economic activity. Some support for this view is found in the relatively low explanatory power of the three classes of independent variables. The overall regression equation can explain less that one third of the variance in the annual turnover rates.

The results of this study have pointed to some factors underlying the general decline in turnover rates among national union leaders. A more direct measure of strike activity remains to be developed before we can fully explore the link between this form of crisis and turnover. In addition, the explanatory power of the regression equation would have been enhanced if some means were devised to isolate that proportion of annual turnover caused by internal union politics. This study has been conducted as both a test of and supplement to the large body of primarily theoretical research and case studies of aspects of union government. It is hoped that future works in this area will explore the research questions posed in this analysis.

Taux de roulement des présidents de syndicats canadiens

On a fait beaucoup de recherches sur la direction des syndicats et le concept fumeux de la démocratie syndicale. Les études en la matière portent sur le postulat explicite ou implicite de la stabilité de la direction des centrales syndicales au Canada. De ces travaux, on tire généralement des conclusions d'une certitude plus ou moins assurée.

C'est ainsi qu'on soutiendra qu'il n'y a que peu de roulement parmi les présidents des centrales canadiennes, que ce roulement, lorsqu'il advient, résulte d'oppositions à l'intérieur du syndicat, qu'il est un bon indicateur du degré de démocratie syndicale et qu'il y a une relation entre le taux de fréquence du roulement et certains facteurs ambiants comme la structure du syndicat, l'action de grève et la situation économique.

On retrouve de telles hypothèses tant dans des études de cas sur l'activité interne des syndicats que dans des travaux théoriques sur la démocratie syndicale.

L'article précédent étudie de nouveau l'affirmation selon laquelle le renversement des présidents est plutôt rare, qu'il est souvent la résultante de forces politiques et qu'il est une mesure valable de la démocratie syndicale. En outre, il expose et vérifie

les postulats qu'on a tirés de ces études pour déterminer dans quelle mesure les facteurs ambiants ont pu avoir d'influence sur le taux de changement de présidents dans les syndicats canadiens. L'étude porte sur une très longue période, c'est-à-dire de 1912 à 1971, et les résultats permettent de mieux comprendre les facteurs qui peuvent exercer une influence sur la stabilité de la direction des syndicats.

De cette étude, sont tirées les conclusions suivantes. On note que la croissance du syndicat semble être une motivation de la capacité et du désir des présidents de demeurer en poste et que celle-ci n'a pas d'incidence marquée sur les changements de président. Le recours à la grève ne paraît pas non plus jouer un rôle majeur dans le renversement ou le départ des présidents. L'activité économique, par ailleurs, est plus déterminante, les mutations coïncidant avec les changements de cycles économiques et de variations dans les prix.

Un certain nombre de changements ne sont pas attribuables à des facteurs politiques. Aussi, est-il extrêmement difficile de distinguer entre un changement qui est d'ordre politique et un autre qui ne l'est pas, sauf en certains très précis comme la mort pendant la durée du mandat, la prise de la retraite en raison de l'âge et une défaite électorale. Il se peut fort bien qu'une très forte proportion des cas de départ n'aient rien à voir avec les modifications des structures syndicales, l'activité de grève ou la situation économique.

Dans l'ensemble, les résultats de l'étude tendent à indiquer un certain déclin dans le taux de roulement des présidents de syndicat. Reste à faire une analyse plus approfondie du rapport entre l'activité de grève et le taux de roulement et il est souhaitable que de nouveaux travaux contribuent à résoudre les questions que pose la présente analyse.

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