

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

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A. Introduction

In developed as well as in developing countries, one of the problems, most central to the average man in our century, is employment. The majority of people, on reaching the age at which they are able legally permitted to work, go and look for a job; but some, fundamentally too many, are unable to find one. One school of thought (Izraelewicz 13.3.93) sees that the source of this inability of work-seekers to find employment, at least in part of Western Europe that demand for labor in the economy is not large enough and that the real interest rate in some countries in Western society is too high. One of the standard answers is that economic growth in a given country will provide more jobs, thereby helping to solve the problem of unemployment. It is becoming clear that this is not so. There are examples of growth which have not led to more employment. It has been observed that after a rise in unemployment, it does not tend to diminish as expected. Today, according to Izraelewicz at least, fewer economists believe that full employment can be attained by a "good" macro-economic policy. It appears to him, that labor is not a commodity like others; its cost - wages - is not determined alone by the simple correlation of supply and demand. Labor is not a flexible commodity and, according to him, the labor market is imperfect. This is contrary to Milton Friedman's theory.

In this article, we will try to examine the nature of employment and of unemployment in its various forms, particularly in the light of what has been done in the last decade in many countries that have been obliged to go in the direction of privatization and structural adjustment policies. We will try to examine the phenomenon of unemployment in industrialized states today and the response of various non-governmental organizations - to the problem. A section will be devoted to the problem in the form it takes in the developing countries and the various programs aimed at a solution. We will also try to examine the response and the role of the trade unions with regard to this problem. In this essay we will try to study the problem. If, in the course of study, ideas come up which might lead to possible solutions, then a part of the task has been accomplished.

B. Employment and unemployment

It is worthwhile to begin this discussion by examining the terms "employment" and "unemployment" and their full meanings. To this purpose, we will avail ourselves of the definitions by the International Labour Organization - I.L.O. (DOSS, 1988). Employment is defined by the I.L.O. as including all persons above a certain age who have been employed in a given period of time, a week or a day, in the following categories :

- "Salaried employment"

1. "At work" - includes those who, in the stated period, were employed and received for it a money wage, or its equivalent.

2. "Employees, but not at work" - includes those who are already working, or have worked, and are connected formally to the place of their work although they are not currently working there. This state is conditional on:

- continued payment of wage and salary

- assurance of returning actively to work at the end of the agreed period

- the period of absence not exceeding the period agreed by law in which the employee is obliged to seek another place of work.

The second group of those having employment is:

- "Self-employed"

1. "At work" - includes those who, during the agreed period, perform a job to secure profit or an income for a family, for a money return or equivalent.

2. "Within the enterprise, but not at work" - those who are associated with a particular enterprise, which can be a business, a farm, or a supplier of services, and who are temporarily not working at a given time, for whatever reason. The definition goes on to explain that the term "some work" means at least an hour's work. People who are temporarily not at work as a result of sickness or in jury; national, religious or personal holiday; strike or lockout; study leave or professional extension studies; maternity leave; reduction of economic activity; temporary reduction in activity because of bad weather; mechanical problems in the work place or shortage of raw material or fuel; temporary absence; etc. All these are included in the category of salaried employees, on condition that they have a formal connection with their place of work.

The second part of the I.L.O.'s definition deals with unemployment (DOSS,1988).

"Unemployed" are those above a certain age who have been, for an agreed period: 1. "Jobless", i.e., do not fall into the category of salaried employees or self-employed, as defined above;

2. "Available at any moment for work", i.e., all those ready to accept any employment suggested to them, for a salary, or as self-employed;

3. "Work seekers", i.e., those who have taken substantial steps within the defined period to seek salaried employment or self employment. "Substantial steps" may include registration with a government or private employment bureau; application to an employer for work; a personal search for work, at a place of work in agriculture, at a factory gate, in the markets, or any other public place; placing or answering a job advertisement; seeking help from family or kin; taking steps to acquire land, buildings or equipment in order to start an independent business; seeking credit arrangements or financing; and arranging permits.

To this category of unemployment and unemployed we should add an explanation of what is intended by the terms: "visible under employment" and "invisible unemployment".

"Visible under-employment" :

This includes all those whose under-employment is easily observable. It also includes all salaried employees, or self-employed, whether at their work place or not who, not by choice, work shorter hours than the norm laid down for their specific jobs, and who are looking for and capable of doing additional work within this time frame. In order to determine the normal length of the working day, we must refer to the national situation in each case and in each country, as reflected in the national legislation or to the collective agreements in the case under discussion. Visible under-employment seems to be characterized by three converging:

1 Work time, or length of working period. Included under this are people whose work time is less than its normal length.

2 Arbitrary determination of the time. An under-employed person is one whose work time is imposed on him and in which he has no choice.

3 Also included here are people who are seeking, or capable of seeking additional work within the normal working hours.

"Invisible under-employment":

This situation is characterized by workers on low wages and particularly by very low productivity. far below the workers capacity. This is under-utilization of the

workers' abilities (DOSS, 1988). We recognize society's obligation to supply work for all who seek it as far as this is possible. Historically, the term "unemployment" is relatively new, and we do not encounter it until the end of the 19th century. Thus in 1894, Auguste Keufer, founder of the C.G.T in France asked to what extent it would be the task of the state to invest money in order to provide employment for the unemployed. Until 1945 there was no talk of an obligation to provide employment. The unemployed were employees who had been dismissed by their employer; women were not included in this category. (Salais, 10.3.93)

Today, unemployment hits a considerable part of the western world and also in other parts of the world, it is getting worse and worse. In Western Europe, in the countries of the European Community, there were 16 million unemployed in 1993, which constituted 10% of the active population. These are average figures, and there are areas like Andalusia in Spain, southern Italy and Sicily, where the percentage of unemployed is as much as 30% of the active population. In Ireland, in north-western Spain, the percentage of unemployed is around 20%. In some areas of France, for instance Corsica, in part of Scotland and in former East Germany, the percentage of unemployed reaches 15%. Only Western Germany is below the average, with around 7% unemployed. (Geopolis, 1.5.93).

The system whereby the government pays an unemployment allowance arose in France only at the beginning of the 60's, when General de Gaulle established a national fund for the unemployed called UNEDIC (Union -Nationale pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce). At this time there were only 113,000 unemployed in France, the lowest number in Europe. In England, on the other hand, unemployment benefit was already being paid in 1911 and in Germany payment of unemployment insurance began from 1927.

Unemployment in Western Europe in recent decades is characterized by its long-term nature, i.e., people are unemployed for a period longer than a year. In England, the government used the war on inflation as a justification for the increase in the number of unemployed (Geopolis, 1.5.93). The economic crisis which causes the increase in the number of unemployed, and the inability of countries to deal with the situation, led to a policy of structural adjustment at the beginning of the 80's, which was expected to improve the situation, but in most of the countries where it was adopted, it resulted in an economic recession. The poor, mainly in urban areas, lost their jobs while both the public sector and many industries scaled down their activities. Consequently a policy of privatization of the nationalized sector was adopted as far as possible, accompanied by a policy of loosening government restrictions on economic activities. In most cases, the

results were not as hoped, either in the private sector or on the supply side. The decade's slump was too deep, and outside financing to support the process too limited by international aid organizations (I.L.O., 1993). From the early 80's on, a new policy began to be applied in various countries. This policy was called "growth and human development". Underlying it was the assumption that there is actually no speedy solution for the problems of development and employment. Furthermore, the policy-makers tried not to disregard the social factor. The growth of any economy depends on people who are healthy, well nourished and educated. An added factor - the most important - is the participation of the people themselves in the heart of the development process, and the awareness that the success of a development process in any country depends first and foremost on true national consensus (I.L.O., 1993).

B-1: The Keynesian approach to the topic of employment

The various economic approaches influenced by the teaching of Keynes were beginning to develop already before the second world war, but they continued more so after it. The central approach influenced by his theories, which was called "social Keynesianism", was widely current many years. This means a fiscal and monetary macro-economic policy designed to assure full employment. At the same time, there was micro-economic policy designed to regulate inflation. The fiscal policy which is part of this approach is meant to serve stabilizing, counter-cyclical tool; it uses tax cuts in periods economic recession in order to increase the aggregate demand and, in the opposite case, raises taxes in a growing economy in order to cut back economic activity.

An important element is the tax structure which is always progressive so as to reallocate public capital, and so as to adapt better to function of aggregate consumption. Long-term social reforms are supported, at least partly, by increased public spending in the framework of the welfare state with the long-term aim of giving every citizen security "from the cradle to the grave".

There is therefore an assumption that social Keynesianism suits countries whose economy has a broad industrial sector, where industrial relations are stable and when a state of full employment prevails. Another characteristic feature is the presence of a mixed economy with a strong public sector, consisting of public investments and public ownership of some industries, and complementing private investments and ownership in part of the economy (Standing 1991). Most of the variations on Keynesianism stress the importance of the means of fiscal policy for counter-cyclical stabilization. There is a certain difference in the model applied

in the U.S. chiefly after the second world war, which is called "Market Keynesianism". In this version, the government was inclined to intervene less in the market and adopted a policy of steering clear of nationalization possibilities and control of private capital, as part of its general outlook for the purpose of reallocation.

There are two other variations on the model of social Keynesianism, both named after the country or area in which they operated. The first is the Scandinavian model. Principally, this model tried to attain a market in which there would be full employment. In order to assure this, an active policy with regard to the labor market was adopted, the word "active" relating to government steps in the fiscal area. This means, that in a period of economic recession and structural changes, more measures would be taken to promote professional training together with an increase in subsidized employment, but these measures would be scaled down in periods of economic growth. The other variation is Austro-Keynesianism. This is characterized by a policy of currency exchange rate designed to minimize imported inflation by lowering the price of consumer imports and imported capital, while simultaneously imposing a strict regime and restrictions on wages and prices. It is further characterized by the rôle of the state in the production system resulting in more nationalization - one aim being to put economic surpluses into the hands of the state, which can then re-invest them as it judges. (Standing, 1991).

B.2: The Structural Adjustments Policy.

In the seventies, and especially at the end of the decade, the Keynesian policy was severely criticized. The main argument of the opponents is that the structural adjustment policy will result in a market which has no restrictions and is efficient. This policy is based upon four main constituents, namely: the theory of comparative advantage, within which the frameworks, the forms and the directions of commerce are determined; the quantity theory of money, which determines the absolute price level and the nominal aggregate supply; the general equilibrium theory, formulated by Walras; and the last theory, the one concerning marginal production, which also gives the market analysis component (Weeks 1991). As already mentioned, this approach raised very strong criticism; John Weeks even claiming, this was not science, but ideology.

How did the approach to structural change evolve? The answer is that at the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties, a reaction to Keynesianism appeared in support of economic orthodoxy. To this, Standing adds that some

researchers see complete identity between the structural adjustment policy, and the supply side approach. To them, both are the same. Supply side approach is so called because of the emphasis it puts on limitations which exist on the supply side of capital and the restrictions on the labor market in other approaches. According to the supporters of this approach, the keynesianists, who strive for full employment and fast growth by means of macro-economic policy, are the cause for inflation and rigidity in the labor market, a situation which does not permit the necessary adaptations in the labor market. (Standing 1991).

The supply sideists believe that at macro-economic level, the monetary and fiscal policy must aim at curbing and controlling inflation, whereas at micro-economic level, this policy is meant to influence the growth of employment as a result of the growth of economy. The supporters of this approach believe in the market economy and decentralization of the economic system, and they are chiefly against official minimum wages because of their "market rigidity" effect, the price perversions they cause and the growth of unemployment. They are against trade unions and any form of organized labor market. They are in favour of prohibiting the involvement of trade unions in labor relations issues as well as in conditions of employment. The supporters of this opinion do accept differences in salary in order to encourage labor mobility, while at the same time, they favor low direct taxation in order to boost the economy. In conclusion, they are in favor of privatizing all the economic and welfare activities and withdrawing them from the hands of the state. (Standing 1991).

The supply side approach to structural adjustment also advocates a new direction in public expenditure, thus the need for a new drive towards privatization of state-owned enterprises. Since the eighties, privatization has become a crusade in over 100 countries.

There is the belief that privatization will foster economic efficiency. The supply side approach considers the public sector as the vehicle through which public expenses flow, thus distorting the economy. The approach was that the public sector must be restricted, What seems to be the outcome is also a restriction of public services. One of the more serious problems in African countries, as a result of this policy, was that in many of these countries, health and education budgets were curtailed, but security budgets were not affected at all. At this point, it is worthwhile mentioning and adding another reason of criticizing the supply side method. The issue is the restrictive regulations. The supporters of this approach spoke about release from agreements and deregulations. Over regulation and minimum wage bring about, so they say, a growth of the informal

sector and stagnation of the formal sector. They advocate maximum reduction of regulations, so as to bring back workers from the informal sector to the formal sector, all this in order to foster employment.

In his analysis, Standing expresses severe criticism towards the supply-side approach. He argues that the supporters of the supply side approach do not really believe in releasing the labour market from regulations, but that they believe regulations must be maintained to limit workers freedom to organize themselves. They render to the employers all power and regulations, while leaving the workers defenseless (Standing 1991). It is worth adding here the words of Prof. Amira Galin published in the Israeli newspaper "Haaretz" (Galín, 2/12/1993). According to her, all those in favour of personal work contracts and against collective agreements intend in fact to bring about a situation where workers can be fired without any cause. Is this good for the enterprises? Her answer is negative. She believes that a solution attained by agreement between two sides can result in a decrease in labour costs, and in an easier recovery of the enterprise. Studies have proven, she points out, that within the framework of a collective agreement, it is easier and quicker to change working methods in the course of negotiations between management and workers' committees, than with every individual worker. As a reaction to the supply side approach, which has been detrimental to so many countries during the decade of the eighties, the idea of growth was raised and gained support at the end of the decade, including welfare protection for the people. This approach advocated steps such as subsidies on food and basic products, price support in order to fight poverty, and the encouragement of production for local consumption. Another step was the enactment of the minimum wage to reduce exploitation of hired labour. Public institutions were created or preserved in order to protect the workers, ensure health and safety, and to deal with employment regulations, limitation of working hours, and anything against worker exploitation. This approach stands for the existence of trade unions as organizations that protect the workers. This approach supported public expenditure as complementary to private investment, and as a means for national development plans with the use of national resources. (Standing 1991).

B.3: The Labour Market

At this stage in this article, it is worth examining with an additional issue necessary to understand the many variables that influence employment and unemployment. This issue is the Labour Market.

There is a difference between the labour market in developed and developing

countries. The developing countries are those in which most of the labour force is not connected with formal hired employment. Therefore the labour market is characterized by its dualism, where the informal labour market is related mainly to retailers, small craftsmen and small-scale businesses. This market, in fact, absorbs the surplus manpower that is ejected from the formal labour market. In developed countries, the attitude towards the labour market is based on institutionalized agreements, by which the majority of people sell their work to various employers, for a determined period of time, in return for a remuneration that is economic by nature. The classical approach to the labour market assumes that mutual obligations exist between the employer and the employee and, vice versa, that they are on a personal basis, the unique connection being the service given by the employee and the salary paid by the employer (Weeks 1991).

This assumption gives rise to another one, claiming that the employers determine the level of employment according to the maximum profit level that they can attain. As against this, workers choose work according to salary, working conditions, and the attractiveness of the task. The approach to the labour market in developed countries does not suit the situation in developing countries. A relationship such as described above, is not suitable to the work of a self-employed person, who works himself or with other members of his family, and the relations between them are not only based on economic considerations, as described above. The entire system of apprenticeship in developing countries, is also not suitable to the model described (Weeks 1991).

The labour market in developing countries is a heterogeneous collection of relations of dependence, that are parallel and sometimes identical, but cannot intermingle with one another as a result of different mechanisms of non-integration which are usually not only economic by nature. In these countries, visible unemployment is quite rare, because the state is incapable and does not want to grant a minimum means of living to those unemployed. Other terms also take on different meanings in developing countries. For instance, what are normal working hours, when we speak about an informal labour market? When does someone work, and when doesn't he work, when we speak about a residual work relationship? Also, a change in working hours does not necessarily imply a salary reward. In these countries, the principal problem lies in the fact that there are no direct and objective indices for excess supply in the urban labour market. The indices are indirect and their meaning is sometimes ambiguous. Another characteristic of these countries is the government's policy which tries all means of denying the achievements of organized workers and weakens them in collective bargaining, while ensuring advantages to owners of capital. All of

this from a direct interest of the government as a central employer (Weeks 1991).

The supporters of the supply side approach claim that an era of a new distribution system is dawning, through commercial liberalization and the release of the market from regulations. These measures will cause, at the initial stage, an increase of unemployment for a transit period, especially in the countries that have encouraged an import-exchange economy.

They believe that, given time, and through the market forces, unemployment will drop to its natural level. They also add that high-rate and prolonged unemployment are linked to "market failure" and to "voluntary unemployment". This situation happens when an informal sector of professional workers exists, who refuse to be employed by the low-paying informal sector; a refusal that the poor cannot afford. A more precise study of the situation in developing countries shows that, in reality, the vast majority of the unemployed are also the poor, those who have no land. Many of the "educated" unemployed are young, who are unable, because of their insufficient personal potential, to find their place in the informal productive sector (Standing 1991).

B.4: Additional categories of unemployment.

In recent years, literature has been published dealing with new categories of unemployment, trying to explain its emergence and the ways for it to be overcome. A first approach speaks about frictional unemployment. This unemployment exists in the imperfect market. It explains that the unemployed person who seeks a job has only limited information on job availability. He is not mobile enough. As a result, he is not able to respond to every offer, which if he could, he would have responded to. Consequently, he remains unemployed. Thus, there is a permanent mass of temporary unemployed and they constitute the frictional unemployment.

Other specialists, mainly the human resources theoreticians, emphasized the discrepancy between the quality of the supply and the demand of the labour force. The issue here is unemployment that relates mainly to the gap between the workers' level of training and the required qualifications. Other economists have tried to make a connection between unemployment and inflation, although the facts contradict a linkage between invisible unemployment levels and the rate of price increases. On this issue, economists today, seem to be quite mystified (Izraelewicz 13/3/1993).

Modern studies try to explain the present unemployment in Western Europe by a situation of "oligopoly", the situation where the market is controlled by a limited number of sellers, against a large number of customers. On one side, the side of the labour supply, we also find the trade unions, who defend only those who are inside, the employed, as against the unemployed, who are outside. The side of the demand is represented by the huge purchasing power of the firms. All these factors contribute together to low flexibility of wages, and they are the source of increased unemployment in Western Europe (Izraelewicz, 13/3/1993).

Another phenomenon, diagnosed in recent years, is that economic growth did not lead to an increase in the sources of employment. This situation created a stream of thought in support of a more flexible labour market, followed by more flexible salary scales. Naturally, the hired workers pay the price, ready as they must be, to accept lower wages, for the sake of development and economic growth. An additional actual trend is that of the so-called "structuralists". They are convinced that the main constituents determining the labour market are not only economic, but that also cultural, individualistic and demographic factors have a significant influence. Another constituent is their attempt to discover the logic of the different institutions within the labour market, and the value of signed agreements and contracts. They try to study the labour market in a more comprehensive form: "Domaine tres actif de la theorie economique actuelle, l'economie des conventions." - Very active field in actual economic theory, the economy of conventions (Izraelewicz 13/3/93).

The problem of minimum wages is one that very much preoccupies the supporters of the supply side approach. They claim that minimum wages cause unemployment and hinder mobility of workers on the labour market. A number of arguments against this are stated below:

Low wages foster low productivity. The American economy in the last decade is a proof of a crisis created by the supporters of this policy. This approach encourages enterprises to pursue a situation where there are no organized long-term management-workers relations. Minimum wage is a factor urging enterprises to raise productivity by technology changes and by professional training of workers. Low wages to non-professional untrained laborers guarantee that they will stay on this level indefinitely.

The right way to advance, first the workers and then the plant, is by professional training, as well as by redefining the functions in order to attain better use of human resources. The supply side supporters ignore the fact that a suitable salary

has also the effect of creating a commitment of the worker to his job. Minimum wages also prevent employment of children. The issue can still be seen from another angle. The supporters of the supply side approach look towards decreasing the cost of the work unit by decreasing the wage inside the unit at the same productivity level. An equal result can be obtained by keeping the same salary level, and increasing productivity. Studies have been published, showing that minimum wages bring about lower wage gaps, and do not cause higher unemployment, as the supply side supporters try to claim (Standing 1991).

B.5: The search for solutions to unemployment

This chapter will not deal with all the proposed solutions, which will be described later, but with only one important suggestion for solving the problem of unemployment, implying the division of labour. We shall also deal with the different aspects of the cost of work. Before the discussion, it is worthwhile to examine some of the accepted conventions on the nature and source of unemployment that we tend to accept as truth itself.

One thesis pretends that unemployment is a global inevitability. This is not true. Indeed in France, statistics give a figure of 11% of the labour force as unemployed, and of 25% of the youth jobless. Opposed to this in Japan, there are only 2.5% of the labour force unemployed, and in the USA, the figure is 7%. Another argument claims that strong growth is needed in order to create employment. This is also not so. For 20 years, the American economy has grown at a yearly rate of 2%-3%, and the number of employed people has grown accordingly at a yearly rate of about 2%, or a growth of approximately 2 million workers per year. Yet another argument claims that in order to increase employment, professional training is needed. Not true. There is a very large amount of jobs for which professional training is not needed at all. Most of the addition in employment in the USA is in the category of services, catering, guarding, etc. (Vasseur 2/6/1993).

One of the main ideas on the agenda in several high-rate unemployment in European countries and especially in France, is the partition of labour ("Partage de l'emploi"). The idea starts with the assumption that the amount of available work is constant and it must be divided among the highest possible number of workers. However, the basic situation is as follows: When productivity in the French economy increases by 5-6 percent yearly, and when production itself increases by only some 2 Percent yearly, it is obvious that the amount of labour needed decreases by 2 percent yearly, or by 30 percent in 15 years. The data shows that productivity is not going to stop its ascent; on the contrary it will continue rising.

The technological changes and developments disturb the rules of the social game and all the values attached to them.

When the decreasing amount of work is divided among a fixed number of people, then our society divides into two main groups: an active center which is entirely production, and a marginal and fragile periphery, concentrating on small or accessory jobs, almost non-existent employment, and severe unemployment. This is the emergence of a new social class. The fully-employed population fears being expelled towards the marginal periphery. We live in a society of worry, escape, and disagreement (Lenoir 18/11/1993). This opinion, of less and less workplaces caused by the increase in productivity, is shared also by other researchers (Rozner 2/6/1993). Lenoir analysis goes to present a situation whereby there exist two alternatives:

On one side, we shall pursue our support for the actual welfare state (Tout-Etat-Social). The Social Security budget -in France the UNEDIC - will increase. The aid fees will rise and double, many people will live on welfare allowances and minimum income. Society will continue its economic schism.

Another possibility, in his opinion, is to take the existing amount of work, and to divide it among the highest possible number of people. For the plan to be realistic, attention must be given to keep the paid wages (including all social benefits) unchanged.

Is this possible without reducing the paid wages? The answer is not categorical. However, Lenoir brings up an important argument, saying that if we add two million unemployed to the number of employed people, we shall exchange social and unemployment charges against wages paid for work and thus presumably reduce the social burden on wages. Lenoir's criticism is that neither politicians nor economists give ear to these suggestions, and they continue to adhere to the view that only growth will bring more employment. Observing from a distance, trade union leaders still do not understand the full significance of the phenomenon.

Lenoir advances three alternative suggestions for the partition of labour, whereas it must be remembered that even today, there is still no agreement on the correct way.

The first solution is of a 35 hour week. Wages will be compensated by up to 1.8 above minimum wages, and beyond this, it will decrease. He claims that, as a result of the failure of the 39 hour week, it became evident that a small and

progressive reduction in work time compensates itself immediately in higher productivity and not in the search for additional work force.

The second solution is the passage to a four day work week, each day eight and a quarter work hours, with a salary reduction of up to five percent. He thought that such a solution may create up to two million new jobs, but it is not entirely feasible in all industries.

The third solution is much more drastic. It suggests that everyone will have an income, divided in two components - their division being everyone/s choice.

The first part of the income will be for work, and the second in remuneration for various sorts of social activity, each one paid on a separate pay-roll. This division will compensate for the redivision of work sources, which can then take new forms in various fields of the community, and will have some bearing on reducing social charges to the employer, and partial tax- exoneration to the employee. Another French researcher as well, (Lesourne 8/7/1993), presents the problem of unemployment in conjunction with technological progress. Non-professional or low-level workers cannot adapt themselves to many plants. In addition, the price of work and particularly the burden of social benefits contribute to the gravity of the problem.

This part of the salary is one that many like to attack and blame for the increase in unemployment. The French man Bourgeois, in his article in Le Monde of 7 April 1993, explains that, in fact, the social benefits are meant to finance the inactive elements of work, such as: illness maternity, disability, old age and unemployment. The level of social benefits is, in direct relation to the level of employment. There are times of work restrictions, but the overall price of labour remains unchanged, especially in periods of recession or with the growth of productivity. Such a situation endangers the plant's existence. The conventional remedy is dismissal, or a reduction of the total wages expenditure. What can be done against this method, which causes a decrease in the work force?

In France, the solution in times of crises of this sort, which is usually acceptable to politicians, is a reduction in social benefits charges to employers. On the one hand, the number of unemployed grows, those who need the allocations from the national fund designed for this purpose. On the other hand, the sum available to this fund from all its sources, is constantly decreasing, because less workers pay levies from their salaries, with a consequential decrease in charges collected from the employers by the state.

The idea brought up by Bourgeois is to separate social payments from the salary. He proposes that every plant should be charged a given percentage for social fees according to the added value of its production. A successful business will pay more than a business in trouble. More important is that the wages will be detached from the threatening link existing now. Bourgeois goes on to develop his idea and suggests a method by which the social fees will in fact constitute the way to encourage employment in the business. He proposes a linkage between the fees for social benefits and the plant's efficiency and productivity, which will be calculated by dividing the total added value by the work factor.

For instance: a plant employing ten workers, and its value added is one million francs. Its productivity is one hundred thousand francs per worker, and the plant will pay social fees based on this figure. Let us assume that, at one point, the value added of the plant's product dropped to nine hundred thousand francs. This means that each worker's productivity is only ninety thousand francs, and in proportion, the total social charges will also decrease by ten percent. In the past, if production dropped, the plant used to dismiss workers. If it does so, according to the same suggestion, the worker's productivity will rise again, and so will the social charges. Hence, the formula in fact creates an incentive for increasing the number of workers in the plant. In the case of the same production level, if the plant decides to employ eleven workers, the worker's productivity will drop, so will the social charges, and again we have an employment incentive.

The result of this philosophy is a penalty on dismissals, and a bonus on increasing employment. This method induces an incentive against undeclared ("grey") labour, and an incentive for the division of work. It will be more worthwhile for the employer to employ four non-professional workers, each at a 5000 francs monthly wage, rather than one worker at a 20000 francs monthly wage.

In France, the issue of dividing the work and the shortened work week gives rise to many controversies (Sue 26/5/1993). The core of the argument resides around the question whether or not the suggested solution will really provide an answer to the problem. On the one hand, calculations seem to show that even a sharp change in the thirty hours week will affect only the margins of the severe unemployment, the long-term unemployed. On the other hand, some trades demand professional training and high technical skills, which are not easily found, today, among the unemployed. Some jobs, above the level of simple mechanical repetitive work, demand the personal touch of a worker who has previous experience and practice. Another obstacle lies in the assumption that the duration

and length of work are the main elements when measuring productivity. In reality, it is not the length of the work that determines the level of performance but rather the frequency, quality and outcome of the operations.

The author claims that it is reasonable to assume that plant owners will demand equal results for shorter work time and lower wage-demands probably not acceptable to workers. The author summarizes that the present period bears witness to the end of the modern era, where one of the main components was work culture. Today, less and less work is needed. As far as he is concerned, the trenchant social issue is not production, but the distribution of resources, of which work is one component among others.

c. Unemployment in industrialized countries.

In western countries, the period between 1945 and the mid-70's was characterized by economic growth, the rise in the standard of living and a high employment rate, with unemployment almost non-existent. From the mid-70's and during the decade of the 80's, we witnessed a rise in unemployment.

Today the characteristics of unemployment are: the length of individual unemployment, and the fact that there is no one single reason for the increase in unemployment, therefore no one single solution to the problem. (Blyton, 1984).

According to Blyton, there are several reasons for unemployment. The number of work applicants is constantly on the rise, and especially the number of women joining the labour market. There is also the ongoing process of the change in industry, from being essentially manual labour to being essentially a capital investment. Furthermore, the global process of development has brought about the emergence of industrialized countries in new parts of the world, where wages are relatively low.

Technological developments and the materialization of new technologies decrease the demand for manpower. An additional problem is long-term unemployment. The tendency, Blyton concludes, is towards a growth of the number of long-term unemployed, particularly those of higher age, who almost totally lose their chances to find a new job.

Blyton touches another aspect of the problem. In this process, the employers gain power, whereas the organizations that represent the employees weaken. There is a decline in the strength of organized labour and almost no representation

of the unemployed. The increase in unemployment, the growth of productivity and of production capacity, as well as the decrease in aggregate demand, have all contributed to the decline of the strength of workers organizations. In Britain, for instance, between the years 1979-1981, a decrease of 9.4% has been noted in the number of trade union members. At the same time, there was a dramatic decline in the capability and strength of trade unions to defend the unemployed.

In France, it was eventually understood that a return to full employment like in the 60's can no longer be attained. Every year, in France, 250,000 people join the lines of work applicants. Economic forecasts show that at the expected population growth rate for the years 1994-1998, estimated at 2.7% yearly, a yearly growth rate of the economy of 3.5% will be necessary to stop the rise of unemployment and a yearly growth rate of 5% in order to restrict it. These are figures that no-one believes are attainable (Noblecourt, 20/3/1993).

In 1974, the year when Giscard d'Estaing became President, there were in France 425,000 unemployed. In 1981, the year when Mitterrand became President, the number of unemployed reached 1,656,000. In 1986, the number had risen to 2,367,000. Within five years, France lost some half a million jobs and, in the same period, in spite of shortening the work week to 39 hours, only some 50,000 new jobs were created. In the 80's, in France, a policy of fighting unemployment was launched, but it failed. All the attempts, such as shortening the work week already mentioned, lowering the age of retirement to 60, professional training, public work policy, all these did not succeed. A new class of poor came into being, and as a reaction, the restaurants for the needy, the "Restos du Coeur" were created (Geopolis, 1/5/1993).

In Britain, from the 70's, the unemployment situation worsened. The accession of Margaret Thatcher to the post of Prime Minister exacerbated the problem. The number of unemployed reached 1,300,000, and in 1984 their number exceeded three million. In the same period, over three million industrial jobs were abolished. However, a characteristic of Thatcher's policy was the creation of one million new jobs in services, commerce and banking.

In general, and in Britain in particular, one of the most severely hit sectors was the managerial level, where the rate of unemployment rose, in recent years, by 130% (Geopolis, 1/5/1993).

The rate of growth in unemployment has been very high in Britain. In 1992, it grew by 65% compared to the previous year, and since 1990, unemployment has

risen by 183%. Another characteristic, not only in Britain, is the existence of unemployment islets. For instance, in Brighton, the rate of unemployment reaches 17.8%, and there is what is called in professional terms the "Centre des sous-emploi". (Zecchini, 19/3/1993). Two regions, the Manchester-Liverpool district and the Highlands of Scotland, are the poorest in Britain.

One of the most severely hit European countries by unemployment is Spain. In 1985, there were over three millions unemployed in Spain, and this level stayed the same in the 90 's. There are regions even more severely affected. For instance, in Andalusia, 40% of the young are unemployed. Many people work illegally ("grey labour"), while receiving unemployment benefit. An additional phenomenon which developed there and apparently spread to other western countries, is that many youngsters get a temporary job, for the period necessary to become entitled to unemployment benefit, and the rest of the time, they work in undeclared jobs, while receiving unemployment benefit (Geopolis, 1/5/1993).

73% of Spaniards think that unemployment is the worst disease of their country. 20% of the population of active age is unemployed. One third of salaried employees, in some sectors the figure goes up to 60 percent, are temporarily employed. Another problem is the "grey" economy which is estimated at 25% of the national economy (Bole-Richard, 19/3/1993). In Germany, the situation is completely different, and more complex. Whilst in former West Germany, the unemployment rate is relatively low, 6.6% during the decade of the 80's, in former East Germany, the rate of unemployment exceeds 40%. (Le Boucher, 19/3/1993). In East Germany, there are approximately one million unemployed, but two million are in professional training schemes, and thus are not included in official unemployment figures. Nobody can predict how they will integrate into the national economy when their training period terminates. In West Germany, some 60,000 people work in government initiated enterprises, whereas in East Germany, over 300,000 people have found employment in such programs. If in both Germanies, all the unemployed, all the participants in professional training programs and all those on government initiated schemes, are added together, a total is attained of 5.5 million Germans without permanent employment (Geopolis, 1/5/1993).

In Italy, 10% of the population are unemployed, but there is a difference between North and South. In the North, the rate of unemployment is 5.7%, while in the South, it is 16.1%. These figures do not take into account the fact that many Italians have a second, parallel, job. A study from five years ago disclosed that 54% of Italian clerks have an additional job and the figures do not

take into account the "grey" economy, so widespread in the South. As of today, most unemployment funds in Italy are empty, in spite of her paying the lowest level of unemployment benefit in the whole of Western Europe: that is 20% of the average wage received during the three last months of employment (Decamps, 19/3/1993).

in Eastern Europe, the situation is not any better. Since the change over market economy, the number of unemployed has increased a lot. Until the end of the 80's, the Hungarian economy was characterized by a demand of manpower, no unemployment, a high rate of worker replacement, and the inefficient use of the work force. Today, things have changed: economic growth rate is falling; non-profitable plants are being closed down; numbers of work applicants and school graduates are rising; and facing that, is an ongoing improvement of labour force use and a lower demand for workers. All these factors contribute to the growth of unemployment (Hars, 1991).

C.1: Some problems that have emerged.

General de Gaulle initiated the notion of unemployment insurance in France (Lebaube, 13/7/1993). In 1958 he created the UNEDIC, Union Nationale Interprofessionnelle pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce. The trade unions in France endorsed the agreement. In 1959, there were in France seven million insured salaried workers, in 500,000 different enterprises. At that time there were 25,000 unemployed. The fee paid for this fund was 1% of the salary. Between 1962 and 1967, rate dropped to 0.25% of the salary. An unemployed person was entitled to receive 35% of his gross salary for a period of 12 months. In 1979, all economic sectors joined the agreement.

The 80's were another story. In 1982, a deficit occurred. The workers installments increased up to 4.8%. This fund includes 53 organizations of ASSEDIC, Association pour l'Emploi Dans l'Industrie et le Commerce. It is managed by representatives of the employers and employees. The situation today is of a constant deficit. At the end of 1993, the deficit was evaluated at 38 milliards francs. It is estimated that by the end of 1994 the deficit will have grown by another 20-24 milliards francs. All this is due to the fact that the number of unemployed receiving insurance money increases every year.

In fact we are witnessing here one of the gravest problems of the countries that have high unemployment. The number of workers paying monies needed to finance the national unemployment funds is dropping, while the number of

unemployed increases and the deficit increases accordingly. Today, the amount taken off the gross wage reaches 5.7%; from that the employer pays 3.6% and the employee 2.07%. It is estimated that very soon, the debt of Unedic will attain 60 milliards francs (Lebaube, 8/6/1993).

Another problem observed in countries hit by high unemployment is "exclusion". This is a new phenomenon, not to be confused with exploitation or poverty. In exclusion, as opposed to exploitation or poverty, there are no more social relations. The excluded lose their interchange connections with the environment and with others. They are left alone. They have no more connections because they no longer represent any value.

These words of the French philosopher Jean-Baptiste de Foucauld are from an interview in *Le Monde* (Colombani, 16/3/1993). De Foucauld develops his ideas, explaining that the exploited, the relation of exploitation, can be changed, because the exploited is able to become organized, in order to improve the results for himself. The wage-earners have organized themselves, they have developed a group identity and their own means of expression. They are able to exert pressure, even to organize strikes. The excluded do not have any of these means. They are spread out. They do not have any platform from which they can express themselves. They do not have anyone to strike against. The excluded fight alone against everybody. This may not be new in itself, but what is new is the fact that ties that were strong in the past, such as family or community ties, are nowadays almost non-existent. Urbanization, geographic mobility, family instability, growing individualism - all these cause society to become full of the excluded.

D. Solutions to the problem of unemployment.

Analysing over 200 projects for boosting employment, in over 16 countries, leads to dividing these experiments into six main groups: professional training schemes, community work, subsidized wages, repartition of worktime, helping unemployed in creating new employing plants and early retirement (Doss, 1988).

Programs for boosting employment. Doss continues, may be detailed as follows. First, the vocational training programs. They are designed to prepare unemployed to adapt themselves, or to readapt into the labour market. Target groups are mainly young people seeking jobs, but also adults who have been unemployed for long periods. There are two categories of training. One takes place inside the plant, and the second outside a specific plant. The participants in professional

training schemes are usually not included in official unemployment figures of the given country.

Community work is devised for the benefit of the community, and is performed at the community level. It is usually job creating but not always on a long-term basis, and is mainly for young people under the age of 25 who are seeking jobs.

The third group includes the steps taken to subsidize the private sector, in order to help production or to maintain employment. The subsidies are paid sometimes to the worker and sometimes to the employer. The aid can be direct or through tax exemptions.

The approach advocating a repartition of worktime divides into two main streams; one is for shortening worktime to half-time jobs, and thereby employing more people; the second stands for reducing the hours that make up one post, thereby again increasing the number of jobs. The aim of shortening the work-week is to prevent dismissals, or to encourage the taking on of new workers. These measures are usually accompanied by various forms of governmental aid. In Italy solidarity rules exist to the effect of enabling the government to pay wage-earners, who have agreed to divide their jobs, up to 50% of the money they are about to lose. In Belgium, the 3-5-3 arrangement is customary, meaning that the plant can cut down wages by 3%, reduce the work-week by 5%, and increase the number of employees by 3%.

Doss goes on explaining that an additional way is by helping unemployed people themselves to open a plant or a business. They receive a capital sum as a grant, which is equal to a given period of unemployment benefit. To this, may be added complementary loans.

The last formula is early retirement. It is designed to facilitate the transition of workers to pension time. It is intended for workers who have reached a certain age, not far from retirement age, and for people about to be dismissed, also near retirement.

In France, many programs have been developed in recent years, designed to overcome problems of unemployment. The journalist Alain Lebaube gives a summary of the various formulas (Lebaube, 31/3/1993).

a. Solidarity Employment Contracts. (CES - Contrats Emploi Solidarity).

This is a new formula from 1990, designed to replace an older one named: TUC - Travaux d'Utilite Collective, which was not very successful: the jobs were refused by those for whom they were intended, namely groups of unemployed young people of ages 16-25. One who joins the new program gets a work contract limited in time, works 20 hours a week and earns the minimum salary (SMIC) for a half-time job. Such a contract lasts 3-12 months, in special cases up to 24 months, and in other special cases of long-term unemployment, even up to 36 months. In these cases, the employer is a local municipality or any other recognized public body. The state pays 65%-85% of the wages, while the employer is exempted from all social charges, except social security.

b. Prolonged. (CES - Perennises).

This formula deals with specially difficult cases. Lebaube reports that there are some 2500 cases of this sort. The state undertakes to finance the employment of the person for five years, but in a gradually reducing form and in return for the employer's obligation to employ the person on a permanent basis after five years.

c. Family Employment. (Emplois familiaux).

This formula started to develop in 1991, and received renewed momentum in 1992. It deals with part-time employment in housework jobs, babysitting, senior citizen home care, etc. The employer, the household, enjoys a tax reduction of up to 50% of the expense, (deducted from the taxable income), up to a ceiling of 25,000 francs.

d. Qualification Agreements. (Contrats de Qualification).

The employer takes on unqualified youngsters, or youngsters of a different profession, and trains them on the shop floor. This is based on a 6-24 months contract and the worker receives between 30% and 75% of the minimum salary (SMIC). The employer is exempted from social charges for this worker.

e. Contracts for Job Orientation. (Contrats d/Orientation).

This deals with employers who take on young men under 23, in order to give them their first job within a plant. The contract is of up to six months, and the youngster must work at least 32 hours a month, on a salary of 30% to 65% of the minimum salary. The employer is exempted from social charges.

f. Young People (Jeunes - Exo).

A scheme designed to encourage the employment of young people without diplomas, under 26 years of age, and direct them to long-term employment. The youngster works and at the same time receives professional training. The wage is a regular one, but the employer is exempted from social charges, up to a wage level of 120% above the minimum salary, entirely for the first 12 months and 50% for an additional six months. The only condition is that the plant should not employ over 500 workers, and that it has not fired a single worker during the twelve former months.

g. Tax exemption for first and second wage-earners, (Exoneration pour l'Emploi du Premier Salarie et du Deuxieme Salarie).

Any business employing its first employee receives social charges exemption for two years. The formula has been extended in some cases to a second employee.

h. Reemployment Contracts, (Contrats de Retour a l'Emploi).

This formula is used where it is desired to re-adapt to work severe cases of unemployment: long-term unemployed, recipients of unemployment benefit, aged unemployed. The employer may employ one of these cases, on a full or part-time basis, for a period of 6 to 18 months, and receive a grant of 10,000 francs per employee, and social charges exemption of up to 18 months. If the unemployed person is over 50, and he has had no work for over one year, the exemption will last until the worker's retirement.

i. Part Time Work. (Temps Partiel).

The employer receives aid if he hires someone for a part-time job within the range of 19-30 weekly hours. The aid is 50% reduction on social charges for three years.

The increase in unemployment in France in the 80's brought about the creation of a large number of jobs (Lebaube, 2/12/1992). Most of them are of various sorts, generally non-productive. Among them can be counted household jobs or the jobs in the neighborhood (Services de Proximite); work ordered by one sub-contractor from another sub-contractor (Emplois Quaternaires); social and community work (Activites de Services a Vocation Sociale ou a Caractere Convivial); or family jobs (Emplois familiaux). The researcher Laville, quoted by

Alain Lebaube in *Le Monde*, suggests a new sort of business called: The Solidarity Enterprise (*L'Entreprise solidaire*). Laville recognizes two components in such an enterprise. First the user, the volunteer representing the community, and then all the wage-earners in the framework of a service who reinforce the local ties. Such an enterprise sells its services, but is also helped by the financial support of members and is based on a co-operative like structure.

In 1991, in Italy, there were 1100 such active co-operatives, as against 500 in 1985. Already then, they employed over 4200 volunteers members, as well as 2200 volunteers non-members, who worked an average of 82 hours monthly.

In Germany, in 1994, 22,000 groups of self-assistance were counted, in the fields of health and home-aid. In Britain community transport employs 2200 employees and extends its services to 100,000 travellers. In Scotland, there were 200 community enterprises employing 3300 workers and trainees. Another type of suggested employment, this time within the framework of encouraging the return to work of long-term unemployed, is a project called: *Contrat de Retour a l'Emploi - CRE*. It involves, nowadays, some 100,000 people. It is intended for workers who have been unemployed over three years, people physically handicapped and unemployed over 50 years of age (Betheder, 31/3/1993).

To conclude this chapter on the various suggested forms of employment, it is worthwhile to read the criticism on one of the most used formulas, the CES. First, we find that 64% of the workers in this project are women. We also find that three months after the contract has expired, 41% are unemployed again (Aizicovici, 31/3/1993).

D.1: Partition of labour.

In this chapter, it is not intended to discuss only the issue of partition of labour as a solution to unemployment, but to analyse the whole range of suggestions related to the issue, as detailed below. The classic explanation that growth will prevent unemployment unsatisfactory (Godet, 21/3/1993).

In France, the GNP rose by 75% since 1975, but in the same time, unemployment rose by 300%. Both Peyrelevalde (8/3/1993) and Larrouturou (29/9/1993) confirm this idea. No consolation can be found in the attitudes claiming that growth will generate the end of unemployment and, in face of the severity of the problem, all are in search of new solutions. Godet suggests that, first and foremost, the consensus with regard to unemployment, that only the trade

unions are the ones worrying about the unemployed, must be broken. In reality, the unemployed are left without concrete representation. The unemployed must get organized in order to ensure their presence at the various levels of decision making. He adds that the burden of social charges on the employers must be eased, especially those who are ready to foster the work sharing issue, and those who encourage the employment of youths and those without profession.

The vast majority of these suggestions do not really provide an overall solution and on a satisfactory scale to the problem of unemployment. Larrouturou thinks that decreasing weekly hours and days of work may help. He reminds us that this is not a new idea. The American President Roosevelt already diminished the work-week, and by doing so, created 1,750,000 new jobs. He adds that if we want results, the solution must be of a radical character.

He continues his analysis by studying the suggestion of a 35 hour work-week, namely seven hours a day, five days a week. His calculations show that the result may be the creation of up to one million new jobs. In addition, it will make possible a reduction in production costs, an increase in equipment usage, an improvement of quality, as well as a quieter social climate. It must be remembered however, that all these blessings will not affect the following sectors: drivers, foremen, commercial agents, management. They will go on working 50-60 hours a week. A split may occur between those who work 35 hours, and those who work double this amount every week.

Therefore, Larrouturou suggests another solution altogether. He suggests that everyone goes over to working 4 days out of five. The work-week will be from Monday to Friday. The wage-earner will work only 4 days a week, a work-week of 33 hours, and his wage will diminish by 5%. The plant or the office will be in operation 5 days a week. A business, increasing thus its personnel by at least 10%, will be exempted from unemployment payments which stand today at 8.8% of wages. According to the writer's estimate, this move will produce up to 2.2 million new jobs, and will also reduce by 170 milliard francs the 400 milliard francs that is the cost of unemployment today in France each year. Another idea put forward in recent years in France is "part-time work"- Temps Partiel. There is a difference between the worker's personal worktime and the plant's operating time. The former is shorter than the latter (Peyrelevade, 8/6/1993). The meaning is that it is possible to arrive at a larger number of production units or service units, with personnel working on the premises only during part of the plant's operation time. Given a number of conditions, the formula is supposed to increase the number of jobs by one percent a year and, in fact, after ten years, to put an

end to present unemployment in France - which stands at ten percent annually.

Another defender of the part-time idea (Bir, 14/3/1993), claims that a plant adopting this method will only benefit from it. By doing so, it will be able to obtain a higher level of specialization of the staff, which will be employed only according to real needs, thus naturally decreasing its cost. On the other hand, the actual opposition of workers to engaging new personnel will be tempered, at least partially, if it is clear that they are only part-time.

In France, the idea of work sharing (Partage du Travail) has been criticized quite a lot. Jean Gandois, in an interview (Noblecourt 9/3/1993), argues that sharing something that is not enough, may be little difficult and what is not enough is employment. The ideas dividing the work and of flexible worktime are quite attractive, but will not add jobs (Ivernel 10/3/1993). Reality shows us that there is no need and also no willingness for dividing highly paid jobs, whereas with low-paid ones, there is no point in dividing scarcity.

However, there are sectors in the French economy that are able to create new jobs and they have to be given proper attention. These are fields such as improving security in streets and in everyday life; the fight against drugs; social aid welfare in all its aspects; shelters and refuges; medical care; household help services; better detention conditions; improving the environment;improving the legal system; fighting against corruption, etc. The problem is that the state does not bestow means, or sufficient consideration, for these fields. In order to create new jobs in these fields, the policy must be changed.

D.2: Solutions from the side of the unemployed.

The search for new jobs has produced hitherto unthought solutions. Governments, as well, have legitimized sources of employment, such as work within the family. Once the household becomes recognized as a business, then jobs such as maintenance, gardening and investments in the household will be recognized as part of the family's expenditure. Such a move will prevent, on one side, "grey" employment that evades national taxation and on the other hand, will reduce the tax burden on households and encourage both savings and increased consumption (Lebaube. 17/3/1993). Nowadays in France "grey" work is to be found in household jobs, home aid, building, hotels and restaurants, car spare parts business, seasonal jobs in tourism and agriculture (Lebaube, 6/10/1993). One estimate puts 20% of all car repairs performed in France as "grey" (Menanteau, 6/10/1993). Even the French government, since 1991, encouraged these employees, hoping thus

to develop 150,000 new jobs (Delwasse, 31/3/1993). The family is the employer, and the tasks included in this framework are child care, aged and handicapped care, ironing, housekeeping and cooking. Everything that is intended to help family life is considered as family work. The government grants tax exemption to every family up to a ceiling expenditure of 25,000 francs and, in 1992, 180,000 workers registered as employed in this framework. Another form of working in the framework of the household is work at home, meaning that work is transferred to the place of living or, as it is called in France: Teletravail (Telework).

One calculation claims that this method of transferring the work-place to the home, makes possible an annual saving, under the headings of social conditions, absenteeism, transport costs and more, of up to 110,000 francs per employee (Lebaube, 24/2/1993). Plants benefit from this arrangement because they can reduce overheads through the reduction of the physical area of the plant. More flexibility and open-mindedness are also obtained by this. The plant owners realize that some of the services can be separated from the plant itself, such as secretarial, translation, etc., which can be performed from a distance.

Some problems indeed arise from the formula of working from a distance. There is no adequate work jurisdiction, and therefore many cases of exploitation occur. There is also the question of where, at home, does the borderline pass between professional and private life. But there is a more severe problem, of work services dispensed from a distance, outside the borders of France. Many services can be given today from a distance, even from the other side of the globe, and cheaper. For instance, Swissair Airlines have transferred their accounts department and their computerized reservation center to Bombay, India. Another phenomenon observed today in France is the unemployed organizing themselves to find work. These are associations that seek work collectively. In Paris, 15 such associations exist and another 10 throughout France. This occurs when a group of work-seekers organize themselves to combine their efforts to find work. In many cases success has been such that associations, which are operated by volunteers who initially, showed concern for all their members, collapsed under a flood of applications. On the other hand, there are cases where all the members have found work and the association has disbanded. Collective searching for work has several advantages (Menanteau 17/3/1993):

- Overcoming the isolation of the lone work-seeker.
- Adopting methodical search tactics.
- Searching for work becomes a full-time job.
- Making use of advanced marketing methods.
- Making use of group dynamics techniques.

- Using telephone, fax and other modern communication means.
- Moral support between the members of the group.

On this subject, one noteworthy experiment is being conducted in the French town of Vierzon. This is a town of approximately 5000 inhabitants, relying mainly on traditional industries which closed down, for the most part, in the second half of this century. In 1973, there were 3.5% unemployed in the town. In 1982, unemployment had risen to 9.1%. In 1986, the situation worsened still and unemployment reached 11.3% (Co jean, 18/3/1993). The town decided to fight unemployment. The first step was the setting up of an industrial hothouse/nursery. The aim was to help entrepreneurs in their first endeavour to start new enterprises. The town offers them a well-equipped industrial zone, several services such as accounts, legal and technical support, etc. The municipal committee in charge of the project includes existing industrial plant managers, trade union leaders and elected public representatives. Fifteen plants are in operation already, after having completed the hothouse stage.

The committee initiated several other bodies. The first one was the committee for growth and development of the town: ADP - Agence de Developpement et de Promotion de Vierzon. Among its activities are: communications, active participation in professional shows and exhibitions, enhancing the image of the town and the region, aid for the construction of industrial buildings and for tax exemptions. Another institution which was founded in the region is the "Observatoire Local | Emploi- Formation". Its task is to collect all possible data on the | needs of the various industrial plants concerning manpower, especially in view of the fact that young people mostly do not know the large variety of professions needed, and that the existing labour force is not professionally skilled and is in need of practical training. An additional and very important institution founded by the municipal committee of Vierzon is the "Jury Permanent de Candidatures". Each year, this body enables over 300 youngsters to prepare for examinations for entering various plants in the region.

One of the toughest problems, disturbing many Frenchmen, is unemployment of the 40-45 age group. This group has many difficulties in finding new work. Catherine Levi gives some advice to these jobless (Levi, 24/2/1993).

A jobless person must act like a warrior preparing for combat. He must armour himself psychologically. The job candidate must prepare a personal balance, even making use of specialists, in order to discern what his personal motives are, the traits of his character, his qualifications, previous experience, and all

this so as not to search blindly. Searching in all possible places is a waste of time. Therefore, he must prepare a program for his own sales promotion. The professional preparation of a C.V. is very important. No personnel manager will read long C.V. documents. He does not have the time. The candidate has to know how to market himself in the most convincing way and in the shortest possible time. Another field for the unemployed to consider is the employers themselves. There are a few examples of this in France.

Claude Bebear, President of the Insurance Company AXA, put the following scheme into practice in his business: he promised guaranteed employment for life, in return for certain commitments. The employees can work as they choose during the school terms of their children, with flexible hours. He increased the number of his employees by 5%, an occurrence completely opposed to the prevailing trend in France. This means that 400 additional employees were engaged within the framework of this program, on a total personnel force of 8000 (Menanteau, 28/4/1993).

Another example: having dismissed over 500 employees in the 80's, the Bull plant decided to take on a commitment to find employment. Dismissals caused unrest in the community and the trade unions. The plant was worried about its image in the region and took action to create hundreds of jobs within 18 months. A special department was set up: "Follow up of the Creation and Development of Activities" (ACDA - Accompagnement a la Creation et au Developpement d'Activites).

The method was to survey all of the region's small and medium enterprises (PME and PMI), in order to evaluate their potential growth. When a plant is identified as such, a contract is signed between the plant and the ACDA, according to which financial help will be given for specific purposes: studies, professional training, engaging personnel, funds for working capital, investments and marketing promotion. Support of 10000 francs was granted for each new created job.

The estimate is that until the beginning of 1993, the funds have helped some 40 plants in the region, and have created some 450 jobs (Piot 12/5/1993).

There are examples of additional similar actions in France. The company Rhone-Poulenc decided on a program for the promotion of employment (Leroy, 28/4/1993). On one side, they encouraged early retirement, on the other, took on over 1000 young people in three years, on top of regular engagement of 1200 personnel. Within the same period, they took on over 1200 volunteer salaried

workers, over 56 years of age in part-time jobs. One third of the regular engagement of the company came from long-term unemployment lists.

The Pechiney-Rhenalu decided on engaging long-term unemployed people, within the frame of voluntary early retirement of employees over 50. The scheme received trade union approval. (Devillechabrolle, 28/4/1993).

The Gardy company decided to introduce the practice of change in worktime. The initiative has received workers committees support. It is intended to make possible salvaging as many posts as possible, working in shifts, nights and weekends, as well as part-time (Plot, 30/6/1993).

The Solex company, a manufacturer of carburetors, is faced with the new situation, where less and less cars use their product. The workers committee asked the company's management not to close down the last plant manufacturing the carburetors, but to look for a new product. The management agreed, and the plant started manufacturing lighting elements. The production set-up needed only 270 out of the 400 previous personnel on the line, but all found work in the new plant. The change took 18 months, during which the management and the workers co-operated well, the leading idea being: zero dismissals (Delwasse, 30/6/1993).

D.3: The Trade Unions and Unemployment.

Many of the unemployed have the feeling that they have been abandoned by the Unions just when they needed them most (Aizicovici, 26/5/1993). This phenomenon is mentioned in many of the publications on the subject. Aizicovici describes the case where, in one of the plants, those who had been engaged in the framework of the CES were accused by the workers' leaders of wanting to usurp the open posts from union members. Aizicovici also recalls that when the issue of UNEDIC was discussed between the government and the unions, and when the decision to limit the period of liability of the various allocations was taken, it was done against the interests of the unemployed.

The unions are aware of, and admit, that in present conditions, they have difficulties balancing between the opposing interests of wage-earners unemployed. On the other hand, when claims rise in favor of separate unions to represent the unemployed, the unions react with abrupt denial. The unions understand better and better that they do have to fight unemployment and contribute to its defeat, but most of all, they must open themselves to the

community, and not include only wage-earners. We have to remember that the labour force today is indeed composed of workers, but also of unemployed, temporary workers, part-time workers, recipients of unemployment allowances, those who work under solidarity contracts (CES), and temporary labour force. This is a new structure of people who are employed and others who are seeking work. It is this sort of environment that unions have to compete with and to which they need to provide acceptable professional responses. Another move of French trade unions, on behalf of the P.O., was the demand for early retirement. This federation of unions demands that salaried workers having completed 37.5 years of work be entitled to early retirement, even if they have not reached the age of retirement. They claim that in France, approximately one million salaried people belong in this category. Such a move would of course create a large number of new posts (Hue, 21/5/1993).

In a French plant, one of the bodies dealing with workers issues is the "Comite d'Entreprise". This committee, unlike in Israel, has nothing to do with workers professional problems at plant level, but rather with welfare and culture issues in the plant. Critics of these committees refer to the fact that they are in control of very large amounts of money (Lebaube, 30/6/1993). Instead of spending sums like these on financing convalescence trips and leisure tours of the workers, the money could be spent, at least partly, on creating new jobs. Catherine Leroy (Leroy, 30/6/1993) relates the case of the Colgate plant. The plant's automation process brought the management to the conclusion that it had to dismiss some 100 workers. The workers committee, together with the union, entered into negotiations with the management in order to start a program of flexible worktime. As a result, night and week-end shifts were implemented and tens of new jobs created. Those working on week-ends get for two and half days of work a full salary of a whole week.

This chapter, which dealt with the unemployment in France in the last decade, brings us to a number of conclusions. The trade unions are not capable of dealing with the problem of rising unemployment. It may be said that they were capable of dealing with fighting unemployment as it was, but not with the new situations evolving in France and in other western countries. The increasing numbers of unemployed, and especially long-term unemployed, have brought about a new social situation in French society. The disappearance of communal solidarity, and even family solidarity, is under way, and in parallel, a new class of excluded is appearing. It is difficult to forecast what is likely to result from such a situation.

The state is incapable of supplying work for all its citizens, and the number of unemployed is growing all the time. This causes excellent mutual help and social institutions, developed so admirably by the welfare state, to be bordering on the edge of collapse. The state is unable to supply jobs, and does not have the money for supplying welfare to the unemployed. A difficult situation produces a variety of solutions. These are usually proposed, not by the state, but by various bodies in the community, the union, and the plant itself, as well as of the unemployed themselves.

In France, a new situation has evolved (Lebaube, 7-8/3/1993). The belief that prevailed in the 80's, that individual success contributes to general success does not exist any more. Today, in the 90's, success and the very best interest of the individual plant is not necessarily identical with the best interest of society as a whole. Now, it is clear to everyone that the existence of the plant depends on its profitability, and this, at times, can be achieved only against the principle of work for all, and against the good of all. The economy becoming global causes the state to lose its equilibrium. The state tries to protect national interests that have no importance at all to plant managers. The state tries to protect the homogeneity of its social system, whereas plant managers sabotage and destroy these efforts. The outcome is that we are witnessing the disintegration of entire corporations, such as the farmers, the fishermen, the metal-workers, accompanied by expressions of violence.

E. Unemployment in developing countries.

The continuing crisis in developing countries in general, and particularly in African countries, has led to the publication of numerous studies, trying to understand what is happening in developing economies in general, and specifically the issue of the labour market. In this chapter, we shall deal with the problem of unemployment in developing countries, and mainly with what is happening on the African continent, south of the Sahara. A World Bank report from 1984 (Vandemoortele, 1991) claims that the governments in Africa, since independence, have been very busy distributing, not wealth and welfare, but poverty to all. The labour market in sub-Saharan Africa is in the course of becoming an informal market.

In Africa, there is a great deal of criticism on the policy of structural adjustment. One Gambian minister, was quoted in *Le Monde* in 1991 as saying that perhaps from an economic standpoint, the policy was a success, but from a social point of view, it has brought total destruction. None of the western policy

makers of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund understood that cuts in a swollen governmental office system, may be adapted to theory and practice in a western society, but not to the structure of the traditional society in Africa. One such African official supports from his salary, not only his own family, but an extended network of relatives and their families, and all are dependent on his meagre income. This policy has provoked many desertions from the official economy, adds a Senegalese in another interview, elaborating that it has brought many to live in a parallel system. The first to suffer from this situation is the state's treasury which is incapable of collecting the taxes. He goes on describing that many Senegalese now go shopping on the sidewalk bazaars because they cannot afford to purchase in regular shops. The loser is, of course, the state's treasury.

Unemployment is one of the most acute problems in Africa, says Vandemoortele. Between 1980 and 1989, the GDP dropped in sub-Saharan Africa by approximately one fifth (20%). In the same period, the number of African countries in the group of LDCs (Least Developed Countries) rose from 16 to 28. Who was hurt? In the years 1980-1987, the number of children entering elementary schools went down from an index of 80 to an index of 75. One should remember that, in parallel, in South American countries suffering from the same socio-economic problems, the index rose from 105 to 108 in the same period. Africa suffered with her human resources investment. All this will undoubtedly have a bearing on the human profile of the labour market.

The characteristic common to LDCs is their failure in creating employment at a rate equal to the growth of their population. (Gaude, 1992). In sub-Saharan Africa, the yearly rate of population growth is 3.2%, while the yearly rate of creation of employment does not exceed 2.2%. The rate of growth of the GDP is low, as a result of a low level of investments, and so the index of return on investment decreases. In sub-Saharan Africa, this rate is 2.5%, while in South-East Asia it is 25%, or ten times higher.

The problem of unemployment in Africa is a structural one. The labour market has grown faster than the rate of economic growth. The level of visible and invisible unemployment has grown six times as much in the years 1980-1988, and four times as much than the rate of growth in the 70's. One of the results of this situation is the growth of an informal sector in the economies of these countries. What is an informal sector? The General Manager of the International Labour Organization, the ILO, in a report delivered to the 78th convention of

the organization, defines the informal sector as follows (ILO, 1993):

"The term 'informal sector' will... refer to very small-scale units producing and distributing goods and services, and consisting largely of independent, self-employed producers in urban areas of developing countries, some of whom also employ family labour and/or a few hired workers or apprentices; which operate with very little capital, or none at all; which utilise a low level of technology and skills; which therefore operate at a very low level of productivity; and which generally provide very low and irregular incomes and highly unstable employment to those who work in it. They are informal in the sense that they are for the most part unregistered and unrecorded in official statistics; they tend to have little or no access to organized markets, to credit institutions, to formal education and training institutions, or to many public services and amenities; they are not recognized, supported or regulated by the government; they are often compelled by circumstances to operate outside the framework of the law, and even where they are registered and respect certain aspects of the law, they are almost invariably beyond the pale of social protection, labour legislation and protective measures at the workplace".

There is a great amount of diversity in the informal sector.

"It manifests itself in different ways in different countries, in different cities within the same country, and even in different parts of the same city... It consists both of enterprises that employ labour and of activities performed by only one person... In spite of their heterogeneity, however, what all informal sector activities have in common is their vulnerability".

The definition may be somewhat lengthy, but it is important to remember in order to understand what it is about. The informal sector has become the largest employer in urban Africa. It employs 61% of the urban labour force, and ILO specialists estimate that in the 90's, this sector will include 93% of the urban employment that will develop. They add that in South America, the situation is no better, and 20% of the GNP in Brazil comes from the "grey" economy. Estimates about Asia, and there are of course differences between the countries, set the employment rate by the informal sector at 40%-66%. One figure, also an estimate, sets the number of people, employed in the informal sector throughout the Third World, at 300 million.

One of the results of such a situation is the employment of women in growing numbers, harsh working conditions and exploitation. The same applies to

children. For instance, in Kenya, in the years 1977-1986, the informal sector increased the number of employed women from 39% to 56%.

It is worthwhile here broadening the framework to include the issue of where does the informal sector exist? It is to be found also in rural areas of developing countries. The ILO report already mentioned defines rural areas as geographic zones situated outside populated centers with over 2500 persons and in which inhabitants are employed principally in agriculture, for subsistence or in marketing. Another term coming into the discussion is Self Employment. It should be remembered that the independent production unit is not synonymous with the small or the informal plant, although there is a large degree of similarity. The self-employed sector is relevant to developed as well as developing economies, and is important to urban as well as rural areas.

This self-employed sector, in many ways identical to the informal sector, is of essential importance to the issue of employment. In developing countries, it includes up to 50% of the total non-agricultural employment, and, in developed countries, up to 15% of the employment.

Self employment developed mainly in heavily hit areas of unemployment, and where it is impossible to attain salaried alternative jobs.

One of the main problems facing Africa, and other developing nations, is the question: What is to be done? We shall mention thereafter a number of suggestions, but beforehand, let us analyse the findings of research covering quite a lengthy period, from 1969 to 1985. The principal findings of this research (Ghose, 1990) include the following:

- The migration rate from agriculture, in developing countries, is similar to the one that prevailed in the industrialization of the developed countries of today.
- The rate of growth of unemployment in non-modern agriculture exceeds the rate that was prevailing in the 70's, but the supply of jobs is stationary, and in many countries, it is even regressing.
- In the 70's, under-employment dropped everywhere, except in sub-Saharan Africa.

The author goes on to explain that, in development theory, the relation between economic growth and employment is expressed in terms of intersectorial shifts of the work-force, and of employment forms. The economy of non-developed countries is characterized by being mainly agricultural, having a majority of self-employed workers, and by a surplus of work-force. The assumption is that change comes with economic growth. Growth comes with the

development of industries and services. Their modern character shows itself by the use of capital, and the employment of salaried workers. There was an opinion that economic growth will be accompanied by the creation of permanently based jobs in the non-agricultural sector, and by a decrease of surplus of agricultural manpower. Industrialization was meant to be the key to powering economic growth; consequently, the creation of salaried jobs was meant to be the key to resolving the problem of unemployment. This did not happen. Today, it is clear that the informal urban sector is the chief survivor of the economic crisis, the chief employer of manpower surpluses and acts as the chief bastion of self-employment.

What appears now is that manpower does not always move from self-employment to salaried jobs. Another fact is that when economic growth was low, and even on the decline, migration from the agricultural areas to the urban areas went on at the same rate, in Africa as in Latin America. Salaried work in the modern sector became scarcer, but the rate of migration persisted as it was. Therefore, the author of the research mentioned earlier finds it difficult to accept the assumption, that making money in the modern non-agricultural sector, as assumed by the structural adjustment policy makers, will indeed be the chief incentive for these desired changes. Another way to solve the economic problem of the less developed countries is the creation of investments in labour-intensive industries (Gaude, 1992). For instance, infrastructure projects based on manual labour, and not on capital intensive investments, will produce a growth of salaried employment. These programs must be based, first and foremost, on local resources. Taking into account the dependence of these countries on capital import, it is very important that they attain an optimum price-return ratio.

Priority must be given to labour expenditure, and only after that, to equipment expenditure. Infrastructure projects provide basic services to rural communities. In most LDCs, and especially in the sub-Saharan ones the inadequacy of basic infrastructure, such as transport, water supply, soil conservation, environment protection, education and health, is a major obstacle to macro-economic development. In Gaude's opinion, these are the reasons for the so-disappointing reaction of the national economies to the policy of structure adjustment that has been imposed on them.

An additional example given by Gaude is the construction industry. In most LDCs, there is a tendency to use well-equipped methods and processes. The result is dependence on the import of a rare commodity: foreign currency. Another consequence is supporting employment in the exporting country. Capital-

intensive investments need capital - intensive maintenance. On the other hand, investing in infrastructure will help the use of local resources, and will present an alternative, in building as well as maintenance, from the point of view of the price/return ratio. This is why, Gaude concludes, the way to improve the condition of non-professional workers, a majority in rural areas, is through investments in labour-intensive projects. This trend has the potential for reducing the rural unemployment level, at a relatively low price.

One example raised by Vandemoortele is from Zambia, where the policy of structural adjustments failed because it did not correctly evaluate the importance of the labour market in that country. The objectives that were set, of creating employment sources on a large scale, and especially programs for the professional training of high-school graduates, did not take into account the labour market problem, and failed. Actually, it is becoming obvious, that the labour market, in the sense accepted in the western world, and local private entrepreneurs, are almost non-existent; if they do exist, they are extremely weak, to a point where they are not able to play the important role that all the structural adjustment programs assign them. Moreover, the tendency to remove all worker protections, in other words the trade unions, from the labour market, is not convergent with the objectives of economic growth.

The results of the policy of economic adjustments in developing countries are numerous and negative. There is an erosion and a reduction in wages, and especially in the public sector. There is stagnation in total employment in the modern wage sector. Unemployment is increasing. The labour force in the informal and agricultural sectors is growing, and attaining a dangerous level of saturation.

In these countries, the real wage has dropped very sharply. In Tanzania, for instance, in the 1975-1986 period, wages fell from a level of 100 to 11. In Swaziland, in the same period, the drop was from 100 to 44. In Zaire, from 100 to 1.5. Another index showing the gravity of the fall, in this same period, is the relation between the level of wages in agriculture versus other sectors, where the gap widened abruptly.

Vandemoortele pursues the effective wage issue. Salary fell so much | that in many cases, people were in need of additional income and worked at the same time on several jobs, causing a severe blow to the work efficiency index. In his opinion, three main categories of jobs can be perceived, namely: salaried employment in the modern sector, approx. 20%-25%, employment in the

informal sector, approx. 60% of the labour force, and the last category, 15%-20%, is the unemployed. A point must be mentioned: a majority of those employed in the modern wage sector, are connected at the same time to jobs in the informal sector as also in urban plot cultivation. In last years, we are perpetually witnessing a situation, whereby the modern sector, which was employed mainly in public services, shrinks in absolute figures, and its real wages are dropping.

On the other hand, we are witnessing, also perpetually and at an advanced stage, the progress of unemployment in urban areas, the drop in the supply of urban jobs, and the rise in numbers of job seekers. The number of urban unemployed in African countries rises by 10% every year. The situation voiced in the past, that urban unemployed in Africa are not to be seen as an important factor, does not exist any more in the 90's. The urban unemployed are younger and of a higher educational level. Youth, defined in international terms as the 15-24 age group, constitutes 70% of the unemployed African population, in spite of the fact that in absolute numbers, they account for only one third of the total labour force. The level of unemployment among youth is, in Africa, three times higher than among adults. Their average unemployment duration is of over one year, and the number of women is double the number of men. The vast majority of those who are ejected from the modern sector are absorbed by the informal and agricultural sectors. These sectors' ability to absorb all those ejected is limited, and it is therefore clear that a solution must be found that will lead to the development of employment.

F. Summary.

In this article, we have tried to study the problems of employment and unemployment, as they can be perceived in the last decade of this century. The important lesson to learn from these pages is that unemployment is one of the most acute problems facing man today. The problem exists in the so-called developed or industrial countries, as well as in the developing or even the least developed ones. A large number of solutions are suggested, in developed as in developing countries. To our regret, the majority of these proposals does not provide a satisfactory solution. In many countries throughout the world, the number of work-seekers, or of those who are under-employed is growing, and the socio-economic situation is gradually crumbling. Apparently, the problem does not have one single solution, neither in developed nor in developing countries. Those leading the economic and social policy in the various countries of the world, and in international institutions, must not forget this, and they must seek the most appropriate solution to every situation and country in particular.

The policy of economic adaptations, that was applied in most countries of the developing world, did not, to put it mildly, prove itself. Formulas of expansion, as a solution to unemployment, have been put forward many times, but they have not proved themselves satisfactory either. All these do not provide answers to a person seeking work, in despair, hungry, rejected and searching for even the faintest spark of hope.

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