

Collective Bargaining as Industrial Democracy: Hugh Clegg and the Political Foundations of British Industrial Relations Pluralism

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Abstract

Hugh Clegg and Allan Flanders are generally recognized as the founding fathers of postwar British academic Industrial Relations (IR). While Flanders is regarded as the chief ‘theorist’ of pluralism, Clegg’s own contribution is seen mainly in terms of his empirical research and public policy work: as the author of numerous detailed studies and the field’s major textbook, the first Director of the Industrial Relations Research Unit at the University of Warwick, a member of the Donovan Commission and many other enquiries. Indeed, Trade Unionism under Collective Bargaining (1976) is often regarded as Clegg’s one and only foray into IR theory. This paper explores Clegg’s largely forgotten early writing on industrial democracy to argue that he made a critical, independent theoretical contribution to the British IR paradigm.

1. Introduction

Sometime during the summer of 1949, Hugh Clegg first met Allan Flanders, who had arrived at Oxford to take up the post of Senior Lecturer in Industrial Relations (IR). For the next 20 years, their partnership shaped the development of a peculiarly British IR paradigm. Flanders and Clegg were the nucleus of the early postwar ‘Oxford School’,¹ the editors of the 1954 foundation text that defined the modern field and the intellectual architects of the 1968 Donovan Commission that shaped academic and public policy research and debate. Arguably, British academic IR has only just begun to transcend their theoretical legacy, as voluntary joint regulation or collective bargaining has palpably ceased to be the focus of the employment relationship and the policy emphasis has shifted to legal regulation and Human Resource

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Management (see Edwards 2003). As the field struggles to redefine itself for a very different society, it is worth re-inspecting the intellectual foundations of the old dispensation, to understand better the core ideas that shaped the fledgling IR discipline.

Among the British IR community, Hugh Clegg is remembered today largely as a prodigiously productive empirical researcher, textbook writer, academic research manager and public policy specialist, who left deeper theoretical formulation to Allan Flanders. Clegg's (1976) *Trade Unionism under Collective Bargaining* has been recognized as 'probably the high-water mark of Institutional theory in the Dunlop-Flanders tradition' (Kelly 1999: 19), but there is little sense that he contributed much in the way of ideas to the genesis of that tradition.² Elsewhere, Kelly (2004a) has described Flanders as a 'much more powerful intellectual figure'.³ According to Hyman (1989: 8) too, 'Allan Flanders . . . was the first British industrial relations scholar since the Webbs to devote sustained attention to theory'; a view endorsed by Rowley (1998: 861). Clegg is thus positioned as a pragmatic empiricist who manned the public enquires and built the academic institutions through which Flanders' ideas could flow. This is also how Clegg, in his modesty, often presented their partnership. 'He was more of a theorist, and he was a slow worker, and a bit of a perfectionist, whereas I'm a fast worker and more slapdash'.⁴ Even an admirer, Brown (1998: 848), depicts a similar division of labour:

Leaving the Communist Party, Clegg committed his remarkable intelligence to the factual analysis of organized labour, leaving the more theoretical aspects to Flanders in a close division of effort which, after Flanders' death in 1973, he was to have difficulty shaking off.

Finally, Bain and Clegg's (1974) review of British IR research, while calling for more and better theory and quoting Dunlop and Flanders, makes no mention of Clegg's theory of industrial democracy. Those early years of academic British IR apparently saw mainly 'a brisk business in guide books' (p. 98); a rather damning judgement on Clegg's own early work.

The very notion of a Flanders and Clegg 'partnership' plays an important part in obscuring Clegg's own early distinctive contribution. Unlike the Webbs (see Harrison 2000) who wrote almost everything together, Flanders and Clegg co-authored only the introduction to their 1954 textbook. Clegg's own huge academic output, moreover, began just as Flanders entered the scene and continued long after his death, while much of it was researched and written with only slight reference to his partner. When Flanders first met Clegg in the summer of 1949, the latter was a Fellow in IR at Nuffield College, with almost three decades of life, learning and experience behind him. Within a year, he had published two monographs, which established his broad approach to IR. There is little sense of this in Clegg's own 'Introduction' to Flanders' (1975: 7) first book of essays, when he proclaims that:

With the publication of The Fawley Productivity Agreements in 1964, Allan Flanders became almost overnight the outstanding theorist of industrial relations in Britain and, many would say, in the world.

Yet, the earliest of Flanders' academic essays was from 1961, a year after Clegg's body of work discussed here. So behind the popular academic image of the composite Flanders/Clegg partnership lie two very singular men with entirely different backgrounds who published separately. Because of this, we can quite easily isolate and evaluate, by topic and chronology, Clegg's own independent theoretical contribution to early British IR.

The biographical details of Clegg's early life also suggest a much more independent and interesting character than does his later image as a dry-as-dust empiricist, while explaining why he enjoyed playing this role. As Brown (1998: 849) observes, 'theory' was regarded by him with some suspicion, in reaction against his early Communism:

A view once expressed by Clegg was that 'an ounce of fact is worth a pound of theory' and there can be no doubting that his published life's work amounted to a great weight of books containing little discussion of theory and a vast amount of sparsely expressed fact. It was not, as we shall see, that he was unaware of the theoretical underpinnings of his work; it was rather that he was painfully aware that the study of organized labour has long been awash with, in varying degrees, plausible and optimistic theories, which have usually been sustained by little more than myth and ignorance'.

Mention of 'theoretical underpinnings' suggests a hinterland of ideas and beliefs supporting the empirical work. Brown expresses this succinctly: 'Perhaps as a result of his rebellion against both Christianity and Marxism, Clegg exhibited both an antipathy to dogma and a strong sense of morality' (p. 849). Once we shed a little more light on this intellectual formation, Clegg's early writing becomes more comprehensible as an integral part of an interesting personal and political journey to IR pluralism.

Clegg's father was a highly itinerant Methodist minister, who exposed him to both a powerful religious and moral influence and, very likely, an existential insecurity occasioned by constant resettling in very different communities from posh central Glasgow to industrial Lancashire.⁵ These influences were probably intensified by attending Kingswood Methodist boarding school outside Bath from the age of 12. Here, Clegg became a schoolboy Communist and remained an active committed party member for over a decade, through his time at Oxford and the intervening years in the army, leaving only in 1947. This was hardly a brief adolescent fad. And it was made all the more intense by the fact that Clegg's elder brother, Arthur, was at once a major influence on his early life and a high profile Communist. The intellectual core of Clegg's Communism was broken by his philosophy tutor at Magdalen, Harry Weldon, between 1945 and 1947, leading him to drift away from the party rather than directly reject it. There was a loss of faith, but no fierce 'God that failed me' anti-Communist backlash. As we shall see below, in his IR writing, Clegg's attitude to Communism gradually toughened, but remained liberal and thoughtful. Finally, the war allowed Clegg, the uprooted child, to re-invent himself in two down-to-earth commonsense roles: as an NCO among ordinary working class men with their suspicion of

the officer class; and as a conventionally domestic, family man of the time. Perhaps the other small but remarkable episode worth recalling is the months in 1939 when Clegg volunteered to work for *Mass Observation*. It is hard not to read this as an early introduction to empirical research on working class life that was sustained by participant observation in the army.⁶ This thumbnail sketch recalls a highly ideological young man and suggests new insights into Clegg's intellectual life at Nuffield in the late 1940s, the 1950s and the early 1960s. The task of purging his own Communist beliefs, over time, and challenging the labour myths that Brown mentions, was itself a monumental theoretical task of destruction and reconstruction, utilizing the sharp logic that Weldon had taught him at Magdalen. As I argue below, through an examination of Clegg's writing on nationalization and industrial democracy between 1951 and 1960,⁷ this early intellectual 'clearing of ground' was a crucial element in the emergence of a distinctive British IR pluralist paradigm.

Clegg's academic starting point was the work of the Webbs and G. D. H. Cole. The former's analysis of co-operation had rejected producer democracy in favour of consumer democracy moderated only by collective bargaining — to protect the interests of workers and prevent management from taking the cheap labour route (Coates and Topham 1970: 65–72; Potter 1895; Webb and Webb 1921). In their view, any attempts at direct worker involvement in management, either undermined management expertise and damaged business efficiency or failed as participation. *Industrial Democracy* (1897) established the link between trade unionism and representative democracy, though the Webbs continued to see the union role largely in terms of the *economic* contribution of collective bargaining. Moreover, as a method of regulation, the Webbs generally preferred legal enactment over collective bargaining, because it was both more comprehensive and less conflict-prone. Still, the flexibility and attention to local detail of collective bargaining made it an essential supplement. The Webbs conclude:

In the interests of the community as a whole, no one of the interminable series of decisions can be allowed to run counter to the consensus of expert opinion representing the consumers on the one hand, the producers on the other, and the nation that is paramount over both. (Webb and Webb 1897: 822–3)

In the margin of his annotated copy of *Industrial Democracy*, Clegg has written 'nonsense'.⁸ Cole's (1913, reprinted 1972) 'Guild Socialism' is an explicitly normative pluralist theory, which attempts to blend nationalization of the means of production with 'the co-management of industry by the State and trade unions' (p. 68). Within this blueprint for a new society, without private enterprise, Cole seeks to balance 'consumption and production' and reserve the 'final right' of the 'community' (p. 72). As we shall see, Clegg's writing on nationalization and industrial democracy absorbs, criticizes and refines this important body of work on the British labour movement.

2. The early Clegg: trade unions, nationalization and industrial democracy

From the late 1940s to the early 1960s, while still at Oxford, Clegg drew upon political theories — which he was teaching to undergraduates at Magdalen and Wadham — to define a pluralist outlook that centred on trade unions and collective bargaining.⁹ He accomplished this through a sustained critique of the Marxist wing of the British labour movement and the ideas of one early mentor at Nuffield, Cole, on the topical themes of nationalization and industrial democracy. Using both theoretical arguments about the nature of democracy and empirical evidence about the efficacy of different approaches, these books helped to establish the central analytical and policy focus of British IR research on joint regulation. They are a polemic directed at practical socialists, rather than ‘ivory tower’ academics and, as a result, they are light on references and unsophisticated in style. Yet, for all this, they effectively marginalize debates about potential new forms of worker participation, by projecting a mainline IR discipline focused on trade unions and collective bargaining.

Labour in Nationalised Industry (1950)

This Fabian pamphlet was Clegg’s first publication and established the nucleus of a position on industrial democracy and nationalization, which he elaborated over the next decade. Cole (as Chairman of the Fabian Society) both commissioned the pamphlet and wrote the preface, which heralded ‘the reformulation of Labour and Socialist programmes in the light of the experience of recent years’ (p. 3). The pamphlet was subtitled an ‘Interim Report of a Fabian Research Group’ that had met in consultation with the Amalgamated Engineering Union, but had not yet reached any shared view. The policy background to the discussion was the Morrisonian ‘Board’ structure of the Nationalized Industries and Clegg confines his specific comments to the public sector, after noting, in his future characteristic style, ‘the varying historical development of systems of labour organisation and collective bargaining’ (p. 5). He registers criticism of the Morrisonian model, but excludes himself from this debate. This marks his early independence of mind and unwillingness to walk passively in the footsteps of the Webbs and Cole, although the pamphlet was a compromise.

Cole set up this thing about industrial democracy. It was a Fabian group, and asked me if I would be the rapporteur of it, and I agreed. And then at some point I produced the draft of a pamphlet. And he was very upset about it, and he drafted another one. We had strongly different views, you see. It was a matter of compromising . . . The source of disagreement was that I was pressing this idea that proper industrial democracy was the development of trade unionism and collective bargaining in other directions, and he was a workers’ control chap.¹⁰

Clegg begins with a description of the relationship between trade unions and joint consultation. ‘Hitherto, trade unions have taken as their essential

task, the *protection* of their members' economic interests and rights' (p. 8). As 'bargaining' and 'democratic' bodies, they have had 'no responsibility' for the conduct of industry, other than maintaining their agreements with employers. In his view, wartime joint production committees had changed this, by making unions also responsible for securing efficient production and this had continued since, especially with joint consultation in the nationalized industries. 'But the implications of this involvement in responsibility have not been at all thoroughly considered by the trade union movement' (p. 8). So, the key question which already preoccupies Clegg and shapes his other writing on this theme, is that 'these fresh functions and obligations' should not undermine the unions' 'traditional function of protecting their members' interests', which, he insists 'must not be sacrificed' (p. 9). The pluralist principle is already clear (although not yet labelled as such): 'in any form of society, and under any form of management, workers will need trade unions to look after their interests' (pp. 9–10). This must remain the unions' 'first objective'. Yet, unions and their members have a wider interest in 'the improvement of the human conditions of employment over a wider field and the fuller recognition of human rights in industry' (p. 10). And, joint consultation promises an 'extension of the scope of collective trade union action into these new fields', linked, ultimately, 'to a widening of the scope of collective bargaining itself', into training, work organization, time study, discipline and promotion (p. 10). At this time, Clegg is clearly optimistic about the 'opportunities' joint consultation offers trade unions, provided they are willing to accept a measure of 'responsibility'.

The pamphlet next looks forward to how to 'increase that responsibility in such a way that it does not conflict with the protective functions of the unions' (p. 12). This is secured by distinguishing the ability to *influence* management decisions through consultation from the 'power of *decision*' or 'joint control' which would be a bridge too far for union independence. Although writing in the third person, Clegg clearly judges that taking 'a direct share in management' is unwise, whereas 'effective consultation, reinforced by a continual widening of the scope of collective agreements, is the trade unions' best form of approach to industrial democracy' (p. 13). This anticipates his mature alternative theory of industrial democracy, as does the analogy with political democracy and the nascent discussion of the 'various interests' that add substance to liberal democracy. Mooting, for a moment, the alternative, Colesian model of 'joint control in nationalised industry' (p. 13), Clegg suggests that 'it might undermine trade union power' by providing a rival 'focus for workers' loyalty'. This 'might be highly desirable in a full socialist society, provided that the trade unions could retain as much of their protective function as would still be needed in such a society' (p. 14). In the meantime, however, 'no such alternative structure ought to be developed, and the trade unions, far from relaxing, ought to strengthen their hold over the machinery of joint consultation, especially at the establishment level' (p. 14). Thus already, in 1950, we find Clegg in rapid transition from Colesian democratic socialism to pluralist social democracy.

The rest of the pamphlet turns to institutional description of the various industries and to policy proposals. Clegg endorses the institutional separation of consultation and bargaining at all levels in the nationalized industries. He is particularly concerned to decentralize power to lay union representatives at the establishment and department level, 'since it is here that representative government begins to become self-government' (p. 22). He recommends consultation as early as possible in the planning stage and that trade unions should 'provide more adequate research assistance' to their officials on these committees. Consultation topics covered include: production; welfare, 'perhaps the most obvious subject of all for consultation' (p. 31); training and education; promotion; recruitment and dismissal; and discipline. Throughout he balances union independence and responsibility. Thus, though absenteeism was a major issue for the new nationalized industries: 'In matters of discipline the first duty of a union is to defend its members' and 'discipline must remain managerial' (pp. 35–36). Strong criticism is reserved for the 'attitudes' of managers in the nationalized industries, 'who do not understand workers, who have no time for unions, who do not know how to consult, and who may equate discontent, demand for wage increases, and strikes with sabotage' (p. 37). The solution lies in properly trained, professional 'personnel or staff officers' (p. 35) and managers who 'learn to manage as democratic leaders'.

Overall, this early pamphlet anticipates the style and themes of Clegg's later work to a surprising degree. A pluralist IR theory is already emerging from the background framework of industrial democracy and human rights. The central idea of collective bargaining as a democratic process is coupled with a poorly disguised suspicion of forms of 'workers' control' that might undermine trade union efficacy. A residual and ill-defined 'socialism' remains, but the analytic weight has shifted to micro-reforms of the newly established social democratic settlement, rather than radical change.

Labour Relations in London Transport (1950)

Published in the same year, this book contains some of Clegg's earliest thoughts on IR from 1948/9. As Clegg's first book, in lieu of a research thesis, this is the fruit of postgraduate research since his arrival at Nuffield as the 1947 George Webb Medley Scholar. In it we see, both his early conceptualization of IR and his brand of institutional and historical research method. Cole and Henry Clay are thanked, but the book is dedicated to 'my past supervisor and present colleague, Mr D. N. Chester, for his aid, his wise advice, and his constant encouragement' (p. v). Cole's place in the pre-history of IR is well-known. Clegg belonged to the famous 'Cole group' as an undergraduate in the late 1930s and rejoined him at Nuffield, but still insisted, 'he wasn't a major influence'. He pointed instead to the role of Chester, who, as Warden of Nuffield, was also his supervisor and who suggested the subject of London Transport for a research thesis.

And I worked with that for about a year . . . and I suppose I had it ready sometime in the spring of 1949, and he showed it to Cole and said 'would this get the D.Phil.?'

and Cole said 'no; he was afraid he'd give it a B. Litt. With regret that he couldn't do more' and so Chester said 'well, let's forget about that', and went around to see Richard Blackwell.¹¹

And so began a long publishing association. In 1949, Chester was also instrumental (with Cole) in securing Clegg a fellowship at Nuffield:

I had by this time cut my links with the Communist Party. The reasons for it were both academic and political. Marxist economics and dialectical materialism had been undermined for me by the teaching of my philosophy and economics tutor; and the behaviour of the Soviet Union in the post-war world disillusioned me about Communism as an ideal form of government and social organisation. So when Chester told me he was proposing to nominate me for a fellowship at Nuffield College, and wanted to know, before he did so, whether I was a member of the Communist Party, I could answer with a clear conscience that I was not, and had ceased to pay dues to the party a couple of years ago.¹²

Labour Relations is described as 'an attempt to describe and evaluate the labour relations of a publicly-owned undertaking', at a time when 'labour relations are more and more coming to be regarded as an important subject'. Trade unions have reached 'a fairly general recognition of their right to consideration and consultation in all matters affecting industry'. As part of the new public mood, 'Personnel management, industrial psychology, "human relations in industry" are raised to the dignity of independent studies' (p. 1). Full employment is a factor, but so is 'a long-period of development in attitudes to industrial relations'. The growing scale of industry calls for: 'institutions and generalized procedures to supplement attenuated personal relationships' and 'specialized techniques for dealing with labour matters' (p. 2). Moreover, a major debate is taking place over whether or not public ownership will improve the conditions of workers and IR as most socialists had predicted. Here, Clegg recalls the hopes of the early Christian Socialists, Syndicalists and Guild Socialists for industrial democracy and the subsequent rejection of joint control in the newly nationalized industries. As yet, it is too early to assess 'the success or failure of industries nationalized since 1945' (p. 8), but London Transport provides an ideal historical laboratory, since it was nationalized in 1933, largely following Morrison's model.

Chapter 1 meticulously recounts, in great institutional detail, the history of public ownership and labour relations at London Transport, including the response of the trade unions and the Communist Rank-and-File Committee, which looms large in the book. Indeed, it illustrates Clegg's emerging argument that if trade unions become too involved in management, they will lose credibility with their members and face challenges from below. He also develops the sort of stakeholder or pluralist argument that he had drawn from the Webbs and from Cole. 'In any undertaking the financial interest of the shareholder is to some extent opposed to that of the salary — or wage-earner, and the interest of both must be to some extent opposed to that of the consumer' (p. 98). And he is already suspicious of some of the performance claims for nationalization, given the London Transport experience.

Chapter 4 is a detailed historical analysis of the 1937 Coronation Strike of Central Busmen.¹³ Although Clegg recognizes that strikes are hardly typical of everyday IR, he is interested in assessing ‘how far public ownership increases or reduces the likelihood of conflict between employer and employed’ (p. 103). He roots this analysis in other rank-and-file revolts, such as the ‘Miners Next Step’ movement in the coalfields, and in London Transport explores the blend of spontaneous revolt and Communist leadership, concluding that ‘both Mr. Bevin and Mr. Campbell had overestimated the importance of Communist influence among the busmen’ (p. 108). Nevertheless, ‘The Coronation Strike brought the busmen nothing that could not have been obtained without a stoppage’, and while London Transport, overall, had not seen more strikes due to public ownership, the Coronation strike ‘was perhaps in part due to public ownership’ (p. 137), since the employers could not easily pass the cost of settling onto the customer, as a private sector operator would have done.

The remainder of the book explores management policy, beginning with joint consultation — another central theme of Clegg’s early work. Here, he distinguishes consultation from negotiation. ‘The objects of joint consultation are to develop the interest of workers in their jobs, and to make better use of that interest by bringing the workers into closer contact with industrial policy-making’ (p. 143). Already, however, he is sceptical of the efficacy of consultation as against deeply rooted collective bargaining: ‘The more enthusiastic supporters of the principles of consultation, who find therein the complete answer to the problems of industrial democracy, might think this a disappointing result, but it cannot yet be said that their faith in consultative committees has been fully justified’ (p. 151). The sceptical, pragmatic, empirical tone is well in evidence as Clegg concludes thus on the entire experience of public ownership at London Transport: ‘It is at least clear that the most optimistic and the most pessimistic forecasts made before 1933 have not been fulfilled’ (p. 168). Public ownership does not lead to a land of milk and honey, but nor does it lead to Sodom and Gomorrah! The performance indicators — productivity, the quality of service and labour turnover — are inconclusive and restrictive practices have not eased. ‘There is little evidence that the attitude of the employees to their work or to London Transport has changed under public ownership’ (p. 179).

Finally, Clegg addresses the usual socialist alibis that London Transport has not had enough time yet, and that, in any case, this is not ‘true’ nationalization. After 16 years, ‘if there is anything in the socialist predictions of improved labour relations under nationalization, the most patient of us would have expected some results by now’ (p. 182). But, he asks, ‘can we attribute this to shortcomings in the form of public ownership?’ (p. 182). Certainly, there are limits to expenditure on employee welfare if nationalized industries are to serve the public, as taxpayers and customers. And had the unions been more directly involved in the management of the industry, this would have merely exacerbated tensions between the official union and the rank-file.

[London Transport] has not, so far, shown that the public corporation provides an adequate and permanent solution to the problems of relations between employer and employed, between union and management . . . it may be that the public corporation has no special advantage in this respect; that, although both sides have done their best (certain shortcomings excepted) to promote good relations, the results predicted of nationalization have not been obtained because they could not be; that such results should not have been expected . . . if it is true it follows that the road to the Utopia of the industrial democrats does not lead this way, if indeed there is such a road. (p. 188)

Thus, at this early point in his career, Clegg has pricked the bubble of socialist dreams and begun to map a more prosaic route to industrial democracy and IR — while perhaps trampling on the dreams of his younger self.

Industrial Democracy and Nationalization (1951)

The second book marks the completion of the Fabian project aired in the initial pamphlet. Apparently, that interim report had ‘represented the limits of the group’s agreement’ (including the decision not to address directly the pros and cons of the Morrisonian model) and there was ‘such controversy’ that Clegg carried on alone to write this essay (p. v). The only help he records was from the Fabian group, but, with no Cole looking over his shoulder, this piece is much more audacious and direct than the earlier work and written provocatively with ‘socialists’ as its audience. The opening chapter on ‘The meaning of Industrial Democracy’ guides us through the historical evolution of the theory and practice of a socialist idea, taking in Marx, Bakunin and William Morris, Syndicalism, Guild Socialism, Whitley Councils and Joint Production Committees. As for these later institutional manifestations, Clegg notes how they often met ‘trade union indifference or hostility’ (p. 9), and with good reason. ‘Workshop representation in this form bears a close resemblance to company unionism or to profit-sharing schemes, which are anti-trade union devices of industrial paternalism’ (p. 8). This also explains the triumph of the Morrisonian model of nationalization over earlier aspirations for workers’ control.

Clegg turns next to ‘Socialist views of Democracy’, arguing that democratic socialists now take ‘a more sophisticated view of democracy’, rejecting the Syndicalist idea that ‘industrial democracy must replace political democracy in a socialist society’. Drawing on the experience of Communism *and* Fascism and stressing the utopian character of much socialist thinking, he roots this new realist view of democracy in ‘the dangers of power’ (p. 14) and the importance of opposition in a large-scale state or society: ‘the price of liberty in the state is organized opposition’ (p. 17). In a classic pluralist or functionalist analysis, the internal democracy of parties or trade unions is less important than the fact that they provide effective opposition groups.

There is nothing new in this analysis of parliamentary democracy . . . The purpose of restating it here is to show that in thinking about industrial democracy we must

not take an over-simplified view of the nature of democracy, as industrial democrats have too often done in the past. (p. 19)

The political analogy and recognition of the limits of it, lead Clegg to his famous conclusion. 'The trade union is thus industry's opposition — an opposition which can never become a government' (p. 22). Yet, this still leaves the 'problem of trade union responsibility' as the union tries to balance its dual role as 'champion of the workers' and 'policeman' of joint agreements with the employers (pp. 26–27), and out of this tension comes unofficial strikes. Since Clegg is not only declaring a trade union right, but also outlining a stable social democratic constitutional order in industry with collective bargaining at its centre, the balance must be attempted: 'it is necessary for a union both to oppose and to agree' (p. 30). Direct union control of industry, or even joint control, would undermine real pluralist democracy, and these are 'ideas which live on only as the pale ghosts of the enthusiasms of the crude but heroic army of the early syndicalists' (p. 28). Against the threat of 'totalitarianism', which Clegg sees as rooted in utopian conceptions of 'active participation', he chooses 'to interpret democracy passively' and to stress the fundamental independence of the union from management (p. 34).

Having grounded his approach in political theory, Clegg applies his 'theory of industrial democracy' (p. 37) to some 'general problems' of nationalization. He notes the need to be accountable to consumers and the national interest, and explores existing institutions for this. En route, he highlights the changing expectations of nationalization since full employment, redistributive taxation and the welfare state have achieved many goals that were formerly expected of it. 'The hopes of socialists have long been centred on nationalization. Few to-day expect as much of nationalization as did socialists of two generations ago' (p. 44). The 'extravagant claims of socialists' deserve some of the blame for the sense of disappointed expectation surrounding public ownership (p. 61) and here he returns to his polemic against various utopian brands of socialism, while insisting that the mainstream view was more 'utilitarian'. Even so, 'workers certainly do not see their interests as radically changed by nationalization' (p. 65), just as he had found at London Transport. Indeed, 'a sense of partnership' was just as likely to be found among progressive private employers (p. 67). And once more, joint consultation is a disappointment, especially on issues of production and efficiency, notwithstanding 'a general level of moderate achievement'. Clegg repeats the case for a national wages policy, as part of the 'progress towards equality': 'Every extension of socialism makes it more essential that the government should set up some body to compare the demands made by, and increases granted to, every group of workers' (p. 117).

By now, Clegg has toughened his stance on Communism, which was regarded as misguided but fairly harmless in the London Transport study.

One of the most potent causes of inter-union conflict, and of conflict within unions . . . Communists put the interests of the U.S.S.R. before those of their own country and are therefore regarded almost as enemies of the state . . . the complaint against

the Communists is that they do not play the game, and they regard any means as justified if it leads towards their social revolution. (p. 97)

This said, Clegg recognizes, 'that some of the most competent and conscientious trade union leaders, at every level' (p. 97) are Communists and doubts whether they are a principal cause of unofficial strikes. While 'strikes in nationalized industries are not an advertisement for socialism . . . not even a Communist can manufacture a strike without a grievance' (p. 99).¹⁴ In short, the biggest problem with Communism in IR, apart from its dubious motives, allegiances and methods, is its damaging impact on the cohesion and efficacy of trade unionism and hence on industrial democracy. Communism weakens unions as an effective democratic opposition and makes it harder for them to take on legitimate responsibilities. Even so, Clegg explicitly rejects moves 'to suppress Communists . . . because it is a severe limitation of liberty, and because the difficulty of defining a Communist always involves the extension of repression beyond their numbers' (p. 139).

Speaking as a socialist to fellow socialists, Clegg's main practical recommendation is a decentralization of management to increase industrial democracy at the place of work. By this logic, 'industrial democracy consists, in part, of the opposition of the trade unions to the employer, and, in part, of the attempt of the employer to build his employees into a team working together towards a common purpose' (p. 121). For now, he is prepared to entertain the 'democracy of common purpose' at the level of the 'team' or establishment, even while he rejects it at the level of industry. And he is still optimistic that nationalized industries should be able 'to attain a standard of management above that of private industry' because of the 'greater attention given than before to human problems' (p. 126). The main obstacles to this are over-centralization and poor quality management. 'The right sort of establishment manager is only the beginning of industrial democracy', however (p. 127). 'Shop stewards and equivalent representatives' are equally essential. 'Any attempt to by-pass the unions and their representatives, even by seemingly democratic methods, to build up a paternalism which excludes them is no democracy at all' (pp. 128–9). This allots a dual role to the trade union representative in the establishment, both defending the interest of workers and participating in its running. In this way, Clegg makes some concession to the contemporary human relations view at the local level. The overall dilemma for trade unions is that while 'there can be no democracy without responsibility, the acceptance of too great a degree of responsibility will weaken and eventually destroy democracy' (p. 137).

In its quiet, understated way, *Industrial Democracy and Nationalization* is a major and innovative contribution to revisionist social democratic thinking on IR, drawing on both political theory and in-depth empirical study of the institutions and mechanics of industry. Clegg's theoretical conclusion was striking and influential.

Organized opposition is a prerequisite of democracy, at least on a large scale. Only so long as the trade unions act as an opposition to management will they serve the interests of industrial democracy. (p. 141)

A 'democracy of common purpose can only exist if it is contained within a larger democracy of opposition' (p. 142). The larger industrial democracy is a system of collective bargaining centred on trade unions, while what remains of the old 'noble ideal' of workers' control should be pursued by joint consultation in the workplace and those small units where talk of common purpose is meaningful. Trade unions need to preserve their independence, yet 'dual loyalties are essential if there is to be socialism' (p. 147). Finally, nationalization *per se* contributes nothing to industrial democracy, which can be developed just as effectively by collective bargaining and consultation in private industry. It is worth pausing to register here that we are still in 1951 and, as yet, there has been no reference to Flanders or his writing from this uncommonly generous academic.

A New Approach to Industrial Democracy (1960)

This book offers the most sophisticated, fully developed and influential version of Clegg's thesis, without fundamentally altering the perspective of the two 1950 publications. Clegg thanks Alan Fox, Bill McCarthy, John Plamenatz (the political philosopher) and Allan Flanders — the *first mention* of his name in this stream of writing. 'Above all, however, I owe my thanks to C.A.R. Crosland, M.P., who has given me more help with this book than I have received before in any book that I have written' (p. vi). Clegg and Crosland had both attended the September 1958 Congress for Cultural Freedom in Vienna on the subject of 'Workers' Participation in Management', which featured a wide range of 'philosophical and sociological' perspectives on the subject, including different comparative institutional experiences (p. v). Once more, Clegg had been asked to write an essay responding to the various presentations. These included delegations from Austria, Finland, France, (West) Germany, Holland, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and Yugoslavia. The UK delegation included, Crosland, Clegg's co-author T. E. Chester, Harry Briggs from Unilever and Eric Trist from the Tavistock Institute — whose paper looms large in Clegg's analysis (Daniel Bell's paper, by contrast, receives no specific reference). Clegg notes that 'there are several points on which my views have changed considerably' since the 1951 book (p. vi), and I will comment here only on those passages that either mark significant departure from or additions to previous positions.

Part 1 provides another tour through the labour history of industrial democracy in theory and practice, from 'workers' control' to consultation, this time with a wider comparative lens. The exposition is more systematic, especially on Guild Socialism's attempt to reconcile the different stakeholders in industry. Clegg opines that these 'tended to stray right outside socialist territory' and cements his revisionism by asking: 'why not also admit the rights of the private employer?' (p. 13). 'A New Theory of Democracy' emerges from the dystopian experience of Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler, as 'Political thinkers began to pay more attention to the analysis of the nature

of democracy as it existed in Western countries' where it had survived and thrived (p. 20). Among Western socialists, a new realism has triumphed as 'enthusiasm will give place to more sober emotions' (p. 106). The strength of these 'stable democracies' (the Anglo-Saxon countries plus Scandinavia) lies in their 'pressure groups' of which 'trade unions have become by far the most noticeable and probably the most powerful' (pp. 20–21). These provide 'countervailing power' against major, potentially totalitarian concentrations of power in society (p. 25). Such realities and precautions lead to 'three principles of industrial democracy', all evident in his earlier work.

It seems to me that there are three main elements in this theory. The first is that trade unions must be independent both of the state and of management. The second is that only the unions can represent the industrial interests of workers. The third is that the ownership of industry is irrelevant to good industrial relations. (p. 21)

But now, the political implications are more explicit. 'Conversion to this view has been one of the signs of maturity in western socialist parties' (p. 27) as labour movements converge on a new social democratic consensus. The author claims:

A practical and empirical creed, the creed of democracy achieved, of trade unionism which has arrived . . . The new theories are both pessimistic and traditional. They are rooted in distrust – distrust of power. They argue that the political and industrial institutions of stable democracies already approach the best that can be realized. They return to traditions of liberal thought which preceded the rise of socialism. (p. 29)

Part 2 considers postwar developments in light of the three principles, to test their comparative reach. Joint consultation, the main British innovation, is adjudged largely a 'failure' in its ambitions to improve productivity, IR and working conditions, although there is still 'something' to be said in its favour even if many of the best private firms manage without it (p. 38). The problems are that consultation committees are widely bypassed and the formal distinction between consultation and collective bargaining does not hold up in practice, while it is the latter that really matters for industrial democracy. Whereas in 1951, Clegg had placed some hope on 'local consultative committees' and 'in the face-to-face relationships of local managements and their employees, . . . its failure at this level has been most marked' (p. 40). Partly because 'management has not made it work', consultation is no more than an 'occasionally useful *adjunct*' to collective bargaining.¹⁵ In institutional terms, at least: 'it may follow that no great improvement can be made in the system of industrial relations already established in Britain' (p. 41). France, in contrast, merely displays 'an inability to achieve anything like a satisfactory system of collective bargaining' (p. 43), due to a combination of fragmented, political trade unions, intransigent employers and an overweening state. Once again, Clegg is critical of 'the duplicity of the Communists' who 'thrive on bad relationships with management' (pp. 45–46), but is not prepared to get hot under the collar about it or to lay the full blame for IR failure at their door.

German co-determination presents a different dilemma, since by Clegg's earlier theory it should have enfeebled trade unions, whereas: 'On balance, Works Councils may have done more to strengthen the unions than to undermine them' (p. 55). Clegg squares this circle, by arguing that in the special case of de-Nazification, co-determination has been a necessary route to restoring strong independent trade unions. In his view, 'collective bargaining is a process much more obviously akin to co-determination. Each is a process of arriving at joint decisions' (p. 96). It works for German workers, but countries with mature systems of collective bargaining, like Britain and the United States, have no need of this institutional crutch. Likewise, the Yugoslavian Works Councils and the Israeli Histadrut have nothing to offer countries with strong independent trade unions, but may be of benefit in less developed societies: 'In those countries devices of this sort might serve as a means of moving towards the political system of the west, the system of pressure group democracy' (p. 118). Hence, Clegg is not prepared to condemn 'the Yugoslav experiment . . . It is a venture into the unknown, a voyage of discovery' (p. 107). This comparative evidence suggests that two of the three principles must be applied flexibly. Trade unions can have relationships with political parties, the state and employers without forfeiting their basic independence. Strong unions are best able to represent the interests of workers, but they may co-exist with works committees, and where unions do not exist, something is better than nothing.

Part 3 largely reiterates his 1951 conclusion, albeit in a more sophisticated way. What should industrial democracy aim to achieve? Above all, it should protect the 'rights and interests' of workers against 'those with power' (pp. 83–84). Despite the claims of Elton Mayo and industrial sociology, Clegg questions the easy claim that 'Industrial democracy is good business' (p. 84). For him, there is 'no logical connection between democracy and efficiency' and probably not much evidence either, while the case for industrial democracy rests on political principles alone (see Martin 2003). He doubts that participation in management has much to do with 'the primary causes of industrial conflict' or with job satisfaction in general. As for joint consultation, there is no evidence that it contributes to high productivity or low strike rates, while trade unions protect the rights of workers. Hence, 'joint consultation can be written off as an effective instrument of industrial democracy', although it 'may serve the purposes of personnel management' as one communications option among others (pp. 91–93). As the system of collective bargaining has matured, it has become largely redundant. To conclude, 'there is no effective alternative to collective bargaining as a means of protecting the interests and rights of workers' (p. 113). Lest we wonder where this IR system comes from, Clegg confidently asserts: 'Trade Unions necessarily follow industrialization unless totalitarian methods are used to destroy them' (p. 117).

Brown (1998: 850–51), a former student and colleague of Clegg, argues that Anthony Crosland had a crucial influence on Clegg's 'new theory' of industrial democracy. As we have seen, Crosland had accompanied Clegg to the

Vienna conference and gave detailed comments on the draft of his 1960 book. These and his broader political vision may partly account for the ‘uncharacteristic panache’ of Clegg’s final book on industrial democracy. And judged purely as an academic text, it clearly supersedes all the others. However, to understand historically intellectual influence, it is crucial once more that we account for chronology. As I have shown, in substance, Clegg’s ‘new theory’ had already appeared in his 1950/51 books. The 1960 version presented the case better, developed a more nuanced view of the dynamics of trade union independence and responsibility, and a more terminal diagnosis of consultation; but the core arguments were a decade old. Even the realistic political analysis had appeared in the 1951 book. No doubt, Clegg was influenced by Crosland’s (1956), *The Future of Socialism*, given the similarity between their ‘non-Marxist, egalitarian and strongly pluralist political’ philosophies. And Brown testifies to the scale of Clegg’s ‘sense of personal loss’, on Crosland’s premature death. But it seems likely that the theoretical influence flowed both ways and that on this issue, Clegg’s own ideas were decisive.

The Gaitskell papers contain an annotated galley proof of Clegg and Chester 1953, *The Future of Nationalization*, indicating that Clegg’s IR ideas were already in circulation among Labour revisionists.¹⁶ Crosland’s (1962) own essay and report of the Vienna conference, ‘Industrial Democracy and Workers’ Control’, published in *Encounter*, February 1959, also supports this view. The politician references Clegg’s (1951) work, and much of the article reads as a précis of the academic’s arguments. Collective bargaining has already secured workers greater influence ‘without formal participation in management and largely outside the machinery of joint consultation’ (p. 218). Unions must maintain their ‘opposition role’ (p. 219). The ‘mere fact of public ownership has had little effect on industrial relations’, but: ‘Nor is formal consultation a panacea’ (p. 225); while ‘paternalism . . . may be used to undermine the position of the unions’. Most of these ideas come from Clegg, since it seems unlikely that Crosland knew much about the institutional details of British IR; others, like the characterization of German co-determination and Yugoslav workers’ councils as an immature surrogate for mature collective bargaining, could have come from either man, but sound more like Clegg too. Where Crosland appears not quite convinced is on ‘the participation of the primary work-group’. In his judgement, ‘the hard-headed leading men in government, industry, and the Trade Unions should suppress their “practical man’s” suspicion of sociology’ (p. 227); a suspicion Clegg shared at that time.

3. Conclusion: The early Clegg’s theoretical contribution

Clegg’s early writing on nationalization and industrial democracy revised the earlier perspectives of the Webbs and Cole. He rejected both Fabian statism and Guild Socialist workers’ control, to synthesize a new IR pluralism grounded in the postwar social democratic realities of Morrisonian nationalization and trade union power (Dahl 1947). As a direct human link between

the great pre-war socialist tradition of British non-Marxist theory about the labour movement and the modern University social sciences that accompanied the rise of postwar social democracy (Ackers 2005a), Clegg's principal 'outside' intellectual source is the realist, pluralist political thinking of Schumpeter and Dahl (see Benewick and Green 1992: 205–6; Pateman 1970: 41–44), taken from his PPE training and his work as an Oxford Politics tutor at Magdalen and Wadham.¹⁷ Thin referencing makes the precise source of Clegg's ideas hard to trace, but also reflects the relaxed scholarly style of the time and his intended public policy audience. The objective seems to have been to make readers aware of their own socialist presuppositions about nationalization and industrial democracy and then to systematically replace these with new and more robust, more realistic foundations. At the same time, Clegg's own normative attachment to ordinary workers and their unions is sublimated into a hard institutional theory of IR pluralism. This theoretical work cleared the ground for the Donovan empirical research and institutional reform project that followed of mapping and fine-tuning the British system of collective bargaining. The clearing process swept away Clegg's youthful Communist ideas and the idealistic hopes of Cole, turned social science attention to the apparently vigorous shoots of a pragmatic, native industrial democracy and guided future IR theory and research through some doors while closing others. Above all, there was a powerful intellectual justification for focusing on the British IR tradition of voluntary bargaining, rather than personnel management, nationalization, worker participation or legal regulation.

How does Clegg's contribution look today? Was this really IR theory or is it better understood as merely normative sympathy for the labour movement? And, what has been the influence of Clegg's early writing on mature IR theory since the 1970s.

Theory

Clegg described his 1960 book as 'a contribution to social theory' (p. 131). IR, as an interdisciplinary field, has struggled long with the inter-related core social science concepts of 'discipline' and 'theory'. As Ackers and Wilkinson (2003, 2005) have argued, IR is neither a closed academic discipline, nor an entirely open field, while the 'Oxford School' of Clegg and Flanders perhaps contributed something in between the two: a more cohesive paradigm, with 'greater intellectual coherence' (Hyman 1989: 7) than the pre-war problem solving IR tradition. Clegg played a central and independent part in the design of this new paradigm, in an era before modern social science conceptions of theory had hardened, in a style that would appear amateur in later decades (see Bain and Clegg 1974). With these caveats, what type of theory did he develop?

Clearly, Clegg's writing was not a theory in the modern positivist Popperian sense of constructing a narrow hypothesis that could be tested directly against evidence preferably using quantitative methods. According to the psychologist, Brotherton (2003: 123), 'whilst the Flanders/Clegg approach

to industrial relations provides an orderly description it does not assist theory development and still less, the testing of hypotheses'. In this respect, Clegg finds himself in IR good company with not only Flanders, but also Fox, Hyman and many others. Even Bain and Clegg (1974: 109) in their belated quest for a 'tested body of theory' acknowledge that: 'A subject does not become significant simply because it is easy to handle quantitatively'. At the opposite extreme, 'social theory' conjures up grand theory in the Marxist or post-Modernist sense, something that was anathema to Clegg after 1947. Yet, IR pluralism remains part and parcel of the grand theory of liberal democracy, notwithstanding Clegg's determination to ground it as deeply as possible in specific evidence from industrial life. Like Marxism, IR pluralism combined normative assumptions with explanatory propositions. But while Cole's Socialist pluralism (see Benewick and Green 1992: 38–39; Cole 1972) tended towards untested claims about human nature, with a brand new institutional blueprint to match, Clegg's pluralism was grounded on the latest *realist* political science understanding of how democracy worked in practice *and* his own detailed analysis of 'actually existing' economic institutions.

In my judgement, Clegg's early writing tended to blend two types of theorizing. One was a nascent version of socio-historical *institutional theory* (see Ackers 2005b), whereby arguments about the dynamics of employment — such as the tendency of workers to unofficial action if their union became too close to management — were tested against case study evidence in naturalistic settings. A second type could be characterized today as a form of *meta-theory*, whereby normative judgements in favour of liberal democracy and trade unions were combined with the Webb/Cole legacy and realist political theory and used to construct a research paradigm with strong ontological steers on what topics were worth researching and how. In this same fashion, some 'grand theory' or Kuhnian paradigm stands behind the narrow, testable hypotheses of even the most ostensibly positivist academic field or discipline.¹⁸

Influence

The most obvious influence of Clegg's writing on industrial democracy is found in the Participation literature where his work is widely referenced as embodying *the* IR perspective. For Pateman (1970: 71–72), Clegg was the man who 'claimed that industrial democracy already exists in most industrialised Western countries' (p. 71). Following Ostergaard, she argues that the analogy between democracy in politics and industry is invalid, since management is permanently in office and formally unaccountable to anyone except shareholders and the state. She also attacks Clegg's claim that it is impossible for workers to share directly in management, pointing out that they already do so at lower levels while collective bargaining itself is a form of participation. The second criticism is confused, since this is precisely Clegg's point. The first, however, illustrates a blind spot in Clegg's (and IR's) institutional

understanding of industrial democracy. He was well aware of Trist's human relations work, comments extensively on it and on occasion uses the term 'direct participation', but simply cannot accommodate this within his institutional framework. At the end of his 1960 book, Clegg caricatures direct participation, as a particularist return to craft values of 'self-government' of very limited application. Anything less is merely a management communications device.¹⁹ Clegg's industrial democracy is a representative democracy, a passive democracy as far as ordinary workers are concerned: about committees, procedures and agreements.

As Poole (1986: 132–3) argues, Clegg is developing the Webbs' original exposition of industrial democracy through trade unions and collective bargaining, while enriching it with the new realist theories of political democracy and adding the warning that 'workers' participation in management was not only irrelevant to the question of industrial democracy but could actually be harmful to workers' interests and to the extension of "democratic" social relationships in industry' — as anything that weakened trade unions would be. But Clegg also reversed the weight the Webbs gave to legal regulation over joint regulation and to citizens and customers over producers, a fateful manoeuvre for the future of British IR in theory and practice (see Ackers 2004; Heery 1993; Kaufman 2005). Poole (1986) suggests that as a 'strategy of increasing workers' organisational power', Clegg's emphasis on trade unions and collective bargaining has much to say for it. Two decades later, this seems far less convincing. With hindsight, union workplace power that alienated customers and citizens provoked a political backlash. Moreover, the lack of formal participation structures underpinned by law, led to an uneven patchwork of joint regulation that was quickly and easily swept away by economic and political change after 1979. To this extent, the Webb's (1897) final chapter seems very prescient today. Arguably too, the lack of direct participation or 'team-working' and emphasis on an arm's-length adversarial bargaining relationship may have damaged the cohesion and productivity of British industry compared to economies like Sweden or West Germany (see Jacoby 1997 for the United States).

A number of Clegg's industrial democracy arguments have hardened into parts of the defensive armour of contemporary IR: the blanket dismissal of consultation as a mere 'adjunct'; the constant spectre of managerial unitarism; and a rather manic fear of union 'by-passing' and 'incorporation'.²⁰ In this regard, scholars in the current debate about Partnership might fruitfully revisit Clegg's nuanced *institutional theory* of the dual role unions play in organizations and of the tensions between union leaders and their rank-and-file members (see Ackers and Payne 1998; Kelly 2004b; Stuart and Martinez 2004). For, as Clegg's (1960) discussion of German co-determination made clear, while the tensions between workplace union independence and participation in management are real, there is no single, clearly demarcated frontier of control. Instead, there is plenty of room for overlap and ambiguity, blurring the borders of conflict and co-operation, without sacrificing union independence.

The fragility of trade union independence can be exaggerated . . . The truth is that trade unions are condemned to be the battleground of warring tendencies . . . in accepting responsibility in order to share power they have to realize that there is no easy formula by which power and independence may be balanced. (pp. 99–101)

By implication, the 1951 phrase, ‘the trade union is an opposition which can never become a government’, is misleading and simplistic. Unfortunately, it stuck and the continuing polarization of collective bargaining and worker participation merely legitimated institutional conservatism when reform was necessary and possible. Ironically, this may have painted British trade unions into a corner from which they can no longer escape. Given the uniquely central role that Clegg and his colleagues played in the construction of post-war IR policy — on the Donovan Commission, at the National Board of Prices and Incomes and on so many enquiries — this is not an excessively idealist claim (see Martin 1998; McCarthy 1994).

As *meta-theory*, Clegg’s writing on industrial democracy helped to provide a rationale and a research programme that carried IR forward from being a loose, ad hoc semi-academic area of problem solving to becoming a fully fledged social science field. He learned the lessons of Totalitarianism and made the case for free trade unions and liberal social democracy. Therefore, he must have observed, with some irritation, the re-emergence of a utopian New Left Marxism in the 1970s, centred on ‘workers’ control’, which addressed few of the concerns he had raised.²¹ At the same time, his criticism of Communism never became a Cold War obsession, obscuring other deeper social dynamics that affected the employment relationship. Moreover, he identified very early on the limitations of nationalization as a panacea for better IR. These were strong and lasting contributions to pluralist IR theory. Crucially, the conception of collective bargaining and trade unionism as a social democratic moral project, extending democracy and rights, was there from the start (Martin 2003).

On the debit side, the ‘practical and empirical creed, the creed of democracy achieved, of trade unionism which has arrived’ (Clegg 1960: 29) now appears too devoted to merely defending what already existed c. 1950. This left British IR pluralism with no forward-looking project other than institutional fine-tuning, in contrast to continental visions of improving worker participation or the quality of working life. Furthermore, it was not helpful to entirely divorce industrial democracy from economic performance in our then declining economy. And while Clegg’s original argument is more subtle than he is often given credit for, the effect was to close some other research doors — to human relations, to team-working, to consultation and employee involvement and to non-union organizations — that should have been an integral part of the study of the employment relationship. Thus while these issues eventually did become central to the research conducted by many IR academics from the 1980s onwards, they still struggled to enter the IR canon (see Bain 1983; Edwards 1995, 2003); and it took the new agenda of HRM to grant them central place (Sisson 1989; Storey 1989). Clegg’s normative and institutional preference cast a long shadow. It was this politics tutor, in recoil from

Communism, who established, for better or for worse, the view that the only viable brand of industrial democracy in the United Kingdom was to be collective bargaining with trade unions.

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Notes

1. Bugler's (1968) contemporary portrait also includes McCarthy, Fox, Marsh, Robinson and Hughes. Outside Oxford, the legal theorist, Kahn-Freund was also an important figure in IR pluralism. There was a shared general focus on institutional rule-making in a voluntarist IR system centred on trade unions and collective bargaining and on public policy problem solving grounded in empirical research (see Ackers and Wilkinson 2003: 5–8). By concentrating here on the distinctive, early contribution of Clegg, I do not wish to diminish the role of others or to discount the extent to which various individuals reached similar conclusions by different intellectual routes.
2. One exception is Jackson (1991: 2) who argues even-handedly: 'the Oxford Group made important contributions to industrial relations theory. For example, Clegg produced work on industrial democracy of major importance and Flanders was one of the main exponents of the application of systems theory'. From the mid-1970s, the challenge of New Left Marxism and the Social Science Research Council seems to have propelled Clegg back to 'theory' — after 15 years dominated by empirical research and public policy work — while increasing the academic sophistication of his approach to it (see Bain and Clegg 1974). This essay assesses only his early work on nationalization and industrial democracy.
3. Kelly (1999) sees Flanders' politics as the key to a Cold War, anti-Communist picture of IR pluralism. Whatever the merits of this view of Flanders, Clegg's post-Communist beliefs do not support this reading.
4. 'Hugh Clegg; Confidential Discussion with Brian Harrison on 29 Sept 1987 at 7, Nash Square, Regency Drive, Kenilworth, Warwicks CV8 IJE [incorporating his subsequent corrections]': henceforth, Harrison interview (abbreviation removed), p. 5.
5. Herbert H. Clegg's stations were: 1902 Matlock; 1905 Brigg; and 1908 Gainsborough (both Lincolnshire); 1911 Birmingham, Belmont Row; 1913 N. Cornwall Mission; 1917 Truro; 1920 London, Ealing; 1924 London, Finsbury Park; 1927 Glasgow, St. John's; 1930 Cardiff, Roath Road, 1937 Tunbridge Wells, 1943 retirement. *Hills Arrangements*, The Methodist Church.
6. Main source: Clegg (undated) although I have checked against other sources. These are just some glimpses of Clegg's early intellectual development, which I plan to fill out in a biography for Ashgate.

7. Clegg's prodigious individual output in his Oxford phase included two books with T. E. Chester (of Manchester University) and three with Rex Adams, a Nuffield research assistant, but I discuss only his sole authored, theoretical books here. In my view, the interest in trade union history was central and formative to Clegg's version of institutional theory. As one referee pointed out, he also completed *General Union* (1954) during this period and work within the GMWU no doubt shaped his realist attitude to industrial democracy and Communism (Clegg 1954).
8. My thanks to Richard Hyman for loan of this book.
9. He was appointed at Magdalen in 1947, straight after gaining a first in his PPE finals, and later transferred to Wadham where, among others, he taught Willy Brown. See Clegg (undated).
10. Harrison interview, pp. 3–4.
11. Harrison interview, p. 3. There is a similar account in Clegg (undated).
12. Clegg (undated: 35). Apparently, Cole and Chester vied for sponsorship, 'but there was no question in mind as to which of them I owed my allegiance'. See 'Chester, Sir (Daniel) Norman (1907–1986)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, pp. 339–40. Chester's own intellectual field was public administration. He edited the journal of that name, for which Clegg later wrote, and founded the Oxford Management Centre. He may have been even more important as a role model for the academic entrepreneur and institution/discipline builder Clegg became at Warwick. Halsey (1978: 1–2) portrays Chester as a man of humble provincial origins who 'emerges as a striving individual out of the solidarity of the "working class movement"' seeking a place for 'the academy in the practical world . . . of industry and public affairs'. It is easy to see Clegg's affinity.
13. Flanders wrote a 1930 paper on this famous dispute, but there is no reference to this in Clegg's version (see Kelly 1999).
14. He maintained a live interest in British Communist history through his research students, Walter Kendall and Rod Martin, with their very different perspectives.
15. My italics: another memorable phrase and theory of participation in its own right.
16. The Gaitskell Papers, London (UCL) Manuscripts Room, London: ref Gaitskell/C71. At this stage, it was Chester and Clegg.
17. Dahl (1947) seems likely to have been a very direct influence: appearing in the right place at the right time. See extract in Coates and Topham (1972: 302–5).
18. The *Collins Dictionary of Sociology* (1995) defines as metatheory 'all or any second-order accounts of theories or second order theories of theories'. In positivist disciplines this second-order theorizing is often done by historians of the field while mainstream researchers stick to testing first-order theories of the Popperian type. The same source defines a 'scientific paradigm' '[as] a universally recognized scientific achievement that for a time provides model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners (Kuhn 1962)'. The *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (1998) defines 'three different conceptions of theory' which are similar to those used here.
19. See also the explicit dismissal of 'human relations in industry' in Flanders and Clegg (1954: v–vi). Clegg seems to move from seeing human relations as complementary to IR to regarding it as a unitarist threat.
20. The success of McCarthy's (1972) popular Penguin IR student primer may be partly responsible for this. This couples extracts from Cole and Clegg (1951) and the back cover of my copy declares: 'G. D. H. Cole's syndicalist case for trade-union involvement in the joint management of industry is opposed in Part Two

by Hugh Clegg's view that a trade union role should be that of an independent opposition that does not seek to govern'.

21. Coates and Topham (1972: 40–46) treat Clegg (and Crosland) as their principal adversary and Coates and Topham (1970: 349–71) extracts and responds to Clegg (1960). According to one contributor, Royden Harrison (*ibid.*: 358–9): 'As a result of a visit to a conference organized under the auspices of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and long talks with Mr Crosland, Clegg has come to the conclusions that this whole Socialist tradition is fundamentally unsound and wrong-headed. He had discovered that ownership is absolutely irrelevant to industrial democracy'. This ignores Clegg's earlier writing.

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