QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE SYSTEMS IN MUNICIPALITIES:
A LASTING INNOVATION?
Vol. 1
by
John Joseph Accordino
B.A., History
University of Rochester
(1976)

Submitted to the Department of
Urban Studies and Planning
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Urban and Regional Planning
at the
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
March 1987

© John Joseph Accordino 1987

The author hereby grants to MIT permission
to reproduce and to distribute copies of this
thesis document in whole or in part.

Signature of Author
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
March 10, 1987

Certified by
Gary Marx
Professor, Urban Studies and Planning
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by
Langley Keyes, Chairman
Ph.D. Committee
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE SYSTEMS IN MUNICIPALITIES: A LASTING INNOVATION?

by

John Joseph Accordino

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning on March 10, 1987 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Urban and Regional Planning

ABSTRACT

Since the mid-1970's, Quality of Working Life programs (QWL) have been initiated in several municipalities and other public sector organizations across the United States. Although the number of such efforts is increasing, it is not clear that they will become permanent features of workplace governance systems.

This thesis addresses the question of whether QWL is likely to become a permanent feature of municipal organizations. It examines this issue by assessing the extent to which QWL is supported by fundamental features of municipal organizational contexts -- the tasks and political structures of municipal contexts.

Primary data consists of a case study of one city's effort to introduce a QWL program over a two and one-half year period. Secondary data from other municipalities is used for comparative purposes.

The findings of the study are that municipal contexts generally do not support the institutionalization of QWL as permanent features of workplace governance systems, but that, under the right circumstances, they do support the introduction and periodic rebirth of such initiatives.

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Gary Marx

Title: Professor of Urban Studies and Planning
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the members of my dissertation committee for their many contributions to this project. Martin Rein provided helpful guidance throughout the process, and Gary Marx cooperated in supervising the thesis. Tom Kochan taught me much about QWL over the past three years and patiently prodded me to study the context for QWL, until I began to understand what that means. John Van Maanen showed me how to plan and conduct parts of the field research and provided detailed criticism and encouragement on every draft of the thesis.

I am very grateful to the workers, managers, administrators, union officials and staff who participated in the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation Program. Through their willingness to share their work experiences, hopes and frustrations, they taught me much about life in complex organizations and about the difficulty of genuinely resolving human conflict. I am especially grateful to Celia Wcislo, Debra Sandler and Bill Kessler.

Thanks are due also to Fred Gordon, a friend and colleague, Ann Higgins, Charles Heckscher and the other members of Demos Research, for research assistance on this project, and, more importantly, for many, many hours of stimulating discussions about workplace democracy over the past six years.

My family provided moral support throughout this project, as did many friends, especially Ellen Sondheimer, Jon Director, Peter Schindler, Judy Hall, Annalee Saxenian, Martin Manley, Robert Weiner, Katherine McGrath, and the members of the Dissertation Writers' Group at MIT.

Most of all, I am grateful to my wife, Anne-Marie McCartan, who helped me plan the research, edit the thesis and numerous other tasks, and was a constant source of love, support and encouragement throughout this project.

FOR MY PARENTS
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Background: QWL In The U.S. Private Sector.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Methodology.</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Initiation Of The Boston Labor-Management Cooperation Program.</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Program Implementation And Operations In The Assessing Department.</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Program Implementation and Operations In The Police Operations Unit.</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>Program Leadership.</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Prospects For Institutionalization.</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>QWL In Other Municipalities.</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Conclusion.</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Methodological Addendum.</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Boston Employee Work Stoppages.</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Problems Of The State-City Civil Service Employment System.</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

David Olsen, one of the foremost consultant-practitioners on quality of working life systems (QWL) and labor-management cooperation, made the following statements at a conference devoted to QWL in municipalities in February 1985:

"If QWL is such a good thing, why, after 12 or 13 years of experience with it in the U.S. isn't there more of it? Why is it so difficult to convince people to begin new efforts? Why are QWL systems, once established, so fragile and difficult to sustain? ... Over the past ten years, more than 30 jurisdictions have initiated public sector QWL systems or efforts of some sort. But right now there are fewer than ten actively involved with QWL." (Mazany, 1985; pp. 37-38)

The perplexity of practitioners like Olsen has an honest ring to it. 'Cooperation' and 'quality of working life' are concepts that sound so desirable in the abstract, that it is, perhaps, difficult to understand why they are so fragile and difficult to sustain in city governments.

This thesis is an attempt to respond to Olsen's questions. It is the product of a case study of the efforts of one city, Boston, to design and implement a QWL program over a two and one-half year period (April 1984 to November 1986).

Like Olsen, the organizer and director of Boston's QWL program brought to the effort a belief in the goodness of workplace democracy and a strong faith that a QWL program could be successfully implemented and become a central feature of revitalized service delivery system in the City.
Despite initial skepticism by most parties in the City, there was at least tacit acceptance by a majority of key union and management decision makers that the idea of grassroots worker participation was a good one and that QWL was worth a shot, especially since the first 18 months of the program would be funded by a Federal grant.

After two years of operation, however, it was far from certain that QWL, or any other form of ongoing, meaningful worker participation would become a permanent feature in the City, although the program had made achievements.

Worker-manager problem-solving teams had been organized in two departments (and in a third, midway through the study period). In these two departments, several initiatives had been achieved. In one, floors were swept, restrooms cleaned and some dangerous wiring was removed. One worker group had devised a flextime plan covering several workers. In both departments, workers also clamored for wage increases through job classification upgrades and for more training. By the end of the study period, it seemed likely that some of these initiatives would be implemented.

Yet the problem-solving process itself did not work well at all. Communications within and between departments were poor, commitments were vague and deadlines often meaningless. This exacerbated existing resentments on the part of workers and managers and created new ones. It also undermined the development of a sense of program efficacy. In fact, many
participants could see no relationship whatsoever between their efforts and program results, or believed that the results were superficial placating devices.

These problems were exacerbated by, but also fueled, debilitating conflicts between the program director and staff. These conflicts eventually led to a staff crisis, the result of which was a program moratorium lasting for three months. By the end of the moratorium, one department had pulled out of the program. Several months later, activity in the two remaining departments was at a much lower level than previously and no new departments had been brought into the program.

Yet the program was not dead. By November 1986 (two years after the start of program operations), the program had experienced a rejuvenation. Worker-manager problem-solving groups were established in two additional, small departments and plans to implement the program in a third department had been made. The administration had assumed the financial costs of the program, and the Mayor’s support had been conveyed by top assistants. Both the administration and union expressed hope and optimism about the future of the program.

Certainly the Boston QWL program fits the descriptions "fragile and difficult to sustain" used by Olsen. The purpose of this study is to explain why this is the case and to offer some assessment of the probable long-term status of QWL in this city. My approach to this task is based upon the premise
that QWL performance ultimately depends upon whether and to what extent it is supported by the organizational context into which it is introduced. The most relevant features are an organization's tasks, task environment and political structure.

Hence my examination of the performance of QWL in Boston and assessment of its probable future stability rests upon a detailed description of these contextual features and of the routine labor-management relations that these features support. This description will show that the context supports routine workplace relations that are not at all cooperative. A detailed description of the QWL initiation and implementation processes will illustrate how these non-cooperative relations continually rise to the surface and undermine QWL program processes, rendering the entire effort unstable.

Chapter 1 of the thesis provides an overview of the historical development of QWL, the social and economic forces which account for its current widespread popularity in the private sector and its mixed performance to date.

Chapter 2 describes the methodology and data collected for the case study. Chapter 3 describes the initial stimulus of the Boston program and decisions of administration and union leaders to join or not to join the program. These responses are analyzed in light of the features of the organizational context which shape the parties' interests and agendas for QWL.
Chapters 4 and 5 describe and analyze the structure, implementation and operations of the program in two departments and attitudes of participants after one year of program operations. Chapter 6 analyzes the nature of program leadership. Chapter 7 offers an assessment of the prospects for institutionalization of the program. The gist of this assessment is that QWL will probably not become a permanent feature of most departments in the City, because the City's tasks, task environments and political structure do not support such systems. Nevertheless, cycles of QWL program initiation, instability, decline and rejuvenation are likely to recur for the foreseeable future.

Chapter 8 reviews the case study and survey literature of QWL programs in other municipalities, finding that, on the surface at least, there appear to be many features common to municipal QWL programs, including cycles of QWL birth, instability and decline.
CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND: QWL IN THE U.S. PRIVATE SECTOR

QWL is a term that has been applied to dozens of different kinds of organizational change efforts in thousands of organizations over the past 10 - 15 years. Various practical purposes, ideologies and social forces underly these efforts as well.

The purpose of this chapter is to sort through this jungle a bit, by distinguishing among various programmatic forms, describing the reasons why they are started and the extent to which they become permanent features of organizational settings. Most of the activity and analyses of these efforts to date has taken place in the private sector. Hence the scope of this chapter will be confined to the private sector. (Public sector efforts will be reviewed in Chapter 8, below).

As this discussion will show, the performance record of QWL to date is rather mixed. Although program operational problems, such as poor training of participants or lack of effective leadership, have often been blamed for QWL failures, logic and evidence point to more fundamental features of the organizational context, such as tasks and political structure, as the factors which shape routine organizational behavior and QWL performance.
What is QWL?

QWL and related programs are 'structural organization interventions which attempt to generate greater worker interest, involvement and effort toward achieving important organizational goals.' (Schuster p. 3) They generally entail increased initiative on the part of workers, either to improve production directly or to improve working conditions and thereby create a better environment for production. The acronym QWL, for "quality of working life," emerged in the early 1970s as a generic term for organizational change efforts focused on workers.

One significant aspect of these efforts is that they constitute a minor reversal in the application of Taylorist principles of work organization, which have generally determined organizational forms and management practices throughout the twentieth century. Taylorism is based on the detail division of labor and separation of conception and direction of the production process by managers, from the execution of production routines by workers. (Taylor, 1947)

Unionization in the 1930s introduced a measure of power-sharing and bi-lateral bargaining over certain features of the manager-worker relationship, such as employment status, wages and work rules, but it did not entail labor-management collaboration in the work process or in organizational decision making. In theory at least, QWL may be regarded as a move in the direction of more collaborative worker-manager relations. (Hecksher, 1981)
In addition to the term QWL, 'Labor-Management Cooperation' (LMC) is a generic term that refers to efforts with structured union involvement. Some LMC efforts may look like the joint labor-management committees that have been used for decades to discuss and resolve various non-contractual union-management issues, but many current efforts become broader in scope and structure, directly involving workers on the shopfloor and/or in mid-level, department wide committees of worker representatives and managers.

**Forms of QWL**

This section describes some of the more common QWL structures currently in use.

(A) Shopfloor Groups

Shopfloor groups are committees of 6-12 workers from the same production unit, often including first line supervisors. Most groups meet one hour per week to discuss and sometimes implement improvements in production or working conditions within the unit.

American organization theorists have long believed that shopfloor groups are an excellent vehicle to harness the energy, solidarity and self-discipline of primary peer groups in the service of larger organizational goals. Yet, until recently, these notions have often been overshadowed by Taylorist principles, which hold that autonomous shopfloor groups inevitably work counter to broader organizational goals.
and should therefore be destroyed or suppressed, not harnessed. (Burawoy, 1979; Crozier, 1964; Hill, 1981; Heckscher, 1981, ch. 1; Taylor, 1947) (1)

Quality circles and problem-solving groups are the most widely used types of shopfloor groups and are distinguished from others by their relatively open agendas. Although some group discussion topics are usually pre-defined as 'off-limits,' especially if there is an existing collective bargaining agreement whose provisions might conflict with the small group resolutions, quality circles and problem-solving groups generally touch on many aspects of shopfloor life.

A second type of shopfloor group arrangement is the productivity-based group incentive scheme, which pays organization members a percentage of the labor-cost savings from suggestions made in shopfloor groups and approved by Labor-Management 'screening committees.' The most popular of these is the Scanlon Plan. (McGregor, 1966; Schuster, 1984)

A third type of shopfloor worker group is the semi-autonomous team. Its powers and responsibilities are generally far more extensive than those of problem-solving groups; often including production planning, trouble-shooting, task assignments and wage setting. Semi-autonomous teams constitute a break with bureaucratic organizational forms, insofar as team members typically rotate among production and ancillary tasks and earn relatively equal pay. (Heckscher, 1981, ch. 1; Hill, 1981; and Walton, 1980)
Thus far, the use of semi-autonomous teams has been limited to new or retrofitted plants using highly automated, continuous process technology, such as oil, chemicals, food processing, electronics and recently, steel production and automobile assembly. Production work forces in these plants are generally smaller than their non-automated counterparts and are more highly skilled. Overall, labor costs in these plants are a lower percentage of production costs than in other plants. (Storper and Walker, 1984)

(B) Organization-Wide Structures

Quality of Working Life structures in unionized companies generally include a company-wide or plant-wide committee of executive level labor and management representatives who oversee the QWL effort. In some companies, the entire effort is organized and conducted by this committee, but in many such cases, worker participation committees are eventually developed as the relationship matures and more trust is developed. (Schuster, 1984; and Kochan, 1983)

The parallel hierarchy has become a very popular organization-wide QWL structure, especially in unionized settings. Depending upon the size of the organization, it usually consists of three tiers: The bottom tier consists of quality circles or problem-solving groups that generate initiatives and pass them upward to a department-wide committee for approval. The department-wide committee is
comprised of 6 - 12 department managers and union representatives. It reviews the initiatives of the quality circle, approves or rejects them and directs their enactment. A company-wide or organization-wide steering committee, consisting of executive-level labor and management representatives, guides and oversees the implementation of the program in various departments. (Herrick, 1983, introduction; Kochan, 1983) Figure 1.1 depicts a typical parallel hierarchy structure.

Why Is QWL Happening?

Over the past 10-15 years, QWL programs, especially the problem-solving group/quality circle variant, have covered the entire corporate landscape. Lawler and Mohrman (1985) reported that over 90% of all Fortune 500 companies have initiated some form of QWL effort. Kochan (1983) reported that as of 1982, 1,000 companies had started quality circles, 100 others had introduced autonomous work groups and 500 others had Scanlon plans. Schuster (1984) cited even higher figures. Why are so many companies initiating QWL programs?

The answer to this question is somewhat complex, for two reasons: First, QWL efforts have been advocated and justified by managers and organization analysts as responses to problems of very different natures. Second, QWL theories and practices are permeated with political ideologies and agendas, some of which are mutually incompatible.
FIGURE 1.1
QWL PARALLEL HIERARCHY
COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Organizationwide Labor-Management Oversight Committee

Departmentwide Committee

Shopfloor Committee

Shopfloor Committee

Shopfloor Committee

Shopfloor Committee
Before 1971, neither managers nor analysts in the United States showed much interest in QWL. The GM Lordstown strike of 1971 and the U.S. HEW Department Report Work in America (1973), which cited worker alienation as a serious problem in production work, helped to generate a great deal of interest in worker health, job satisfaction and well-being and the implications of these factors for smooth and stable production. (Greenberg, 1975; Kochan, 1983)

Specific analyses of the problems and prescriptions for reform differed according to political ideology and intellectual specialization. On the left, sociologists Sennett and Cobb (1972) documented the 'hidden injuries' of meritocratic production systems, in which those at the bottom of the ladder were condemned to feeling inferior for not climbing higher, while suffering estrangement from peer groups when they did move up. Marxist political economists, such as Braverman (1974), argued that an ever-increasing detail division of labor and stunting of personal development were inevitable results of capitalism, which only the overthrow of capitalist production relations could change. Democratic socialist labor economists, such as Gorz (1967) argued for shopfloor participation as a way of gradually developing a radical consciousness among workers that would result in an overthrow of capitalist production relations. (See also Pateman, 1971.)
Mainstream management psychologists, such as Argyris (1965, 1978), did not criticize capitalist production relations or market forces, but decried what they saw as the stunting of personal development and growth in bureaucratic organizations. They claimed that through appropriate management practices, particularly more open communication and conflict resolution procedures, organization members could learn to integrate individual and organizational needs more adequately. (See also Kohn, 1969; and McGregor, 1959.)

Just how closely these analyses and prescriptions reflected reality is not certain, but according to national surveys conducted in the mid-seventies, workers wanted more say in decisions directly affecting their lives on the shopfloor. (Kantor, 1977; Heckscher, 1981; see also Kusterer, 1977)

Most of the QWL efforts that were initiated in the early to mid-1970's were management-sponsored and did not include unions as partners in the process. Most also focused largely on individual, job enlargement programs which added together routinized tasks to make jobs more enjoyable and fulfilling for workers; rather than shopfloor groups. (Hackman, 1980; Herbst, 1974) As Heckscher (1981) and Kochan (1983) point out, neither job enlargement nor QWL generally, took root during this first wave of activity despite a couple of notable experiments with semi-autonomous teams. (Zager and Rosow, 1982)
By the end of the 1970's, U.S. auto, steel and electronic appliance and components manufacturers were losing market share to lower-priced, high quality producers, most of which were Japanese. As popular concern turned toward job loss, foreign competition and low American productivity, organization theorists began to promote QWL and especially worker participation as solutions to these problems. Simmons and Mares (1983) argued that worker participation and labor-management cooperation in general, lead to higher productivity. Peters and Waterman (1982), in their best-seller, In Search of Excellence, included worker participation in shopfloor decisionmaking in their recipe for successful organizations.

Others, such as Sabel (1981) and Piore (1983) argued that high-wage, developed countries like the U.S. have only two viable responses to low-wage competition from developing countries: One is to continue to produce for mass markets but to automate as much of the production process as possible and to reduce the number of job classifications, thus lowering the percentage of labor costs in the final product and making the remaining labor force as flexible as possible. This is done in many industries as part of semi-autonomous team arrangements, such as food, chemicals, oil, steel, computer assembly and recently, auto assembly.

The second alternative is to produce high quality specialty goods for what Sabel and Piore see as an increasing
number of small market niches where price competition is not highly relevant. This strategy requires a primary focus on flexibility, rather than standardization, since it entails shorter production runs of non-standard goods and hence requires frequent adjustments and close collaboration among highly skilled design, marketing and production workers. This second alternative is most favorable to advocates for worker participation, since it requires a high degree of worker-manager collaboration.

Overshadowing such academic arguments is a recent fascination in the popular press and management literature with Japanese management practices, which derives from the competitiveness of Japanese products in U.S. markets. The current GM-Toyota Joint Venture in Fremont, California, is in part, at least, an effort by GM to learn Japanese management techniques.

The American image of Japanese companies is that workers are highly committed to the fulfillment of organizational goals and willingly work overtime and at a frenetic pace to produce, but also to monitor and correct problems in the process. This is ascribed to the Japanese culture of group cohesiveness and to the use of quality circles on the shopfloor. The American translation is that more 'teamwork' and worker participation through quality circles can yield higher commitment, higher productivity and high quality production. (See Parker, 1985)
Thus, QWL efforts since the late 1970's have been popularized and justified on the grounds of organizational competitiveness, productivity and effectiveness and have been focused primarily on group, rather than individual activity. The earlier concerns with workers' mental health, job satisfaction, company loyalty and even with political consciousness have not been discarded, however. They have been incorporated as disparate and to some extent, contradictory agendas for QWL.

Schuster (1984) finds in his study of 38 union-management programs, that the primary focal points of quality circles, gainsharing programs and labor-management cooperation committees tend to differ somewhat, although all programs pursue the goals of cost reductions, quality improvements, improvements in psychological well-being, increasing employee involvement and sharing organizational improvements (pp. 82-84). (See also Heckscher, 1981).

Both Schuster and Kochan (1983) cite cases in which QWL began as a worker- or union-inspired effort to save jobs threatened by low-wage competition, although most efforts are initiated by managers as part of cost-cutting and/or technological restructuring initiatives. Lawler and Mohrman (1985), however, claim that many executives introduce quality circles because they are a fad; 'they symbolize modern participative management' (p.66) and Dickson (1983), reports
that political ideology often influences management decisions to initiate QWL efforts. In short, no single factor accounts for the spread of QWL initiatives throughout American companies.

**How Well Is QWL Doing?**

Assessing the overall performance of U.S. QWL efforts is even more difficult than determining why they have spread throughout American companies. Clearly a lot of programs have been initiated, but that does not make them successful. As Lawler and Mohrman (1985) point out in their analysis of quality circles, it is always possible to find things to successfully improve in the workplace, at least in the short-run.

The primary purpose of this discussion, however, is to assess the medium- to long-term performance of QWL, i.e., the extent to which it becomes institutionalized as a permanent feature of workplace governance systems. Although more longitudinal research needs to be done, some studies of the success or staying power of private sector QWL efforts over the medium-term are now available. The results, it seems, are mixed.

**(A) Quality Circles and Problem-Solving Groups**

According to Lawler and Mohrman (1985), the vast majority of quality circles and problem-solving groups go through "peak and peter out" cycles, in which an early burst of enthusiasm
and activity is followed by a falling off of activity and eventual group disintegration, or disenchantment. The major symptoms of the cycle include the following:

(1) Managers often initiate the programs because they symbolize modern management techniques, or seem to be a low-cost, low-risk way to achieve morale or productivity improvements. (See also Smeltzer and Kedia, 1985 and Demos Research, 1983 & 1984.)

(2) Despite initial reluctance on the part of workers, it is usually possible to get enough volunteers for quality circles, since people generally want to contribute to the organization and they want to participate in making decisions that affect their work areas. (See also Kusterer, 1977 and Heckscher, 1981, ch. 2.)

(3) Most quality circles are able to identify problems and to come up with a few initiatives or suggestions to be approved by management. Where unions are participants in the process, a parallel hierarchy structure is usually used, so that quality circle initiatives go to a mid-level labor-management committee for approval.

(4) The approval stage is the first serious hurdle to be crossed by a quality circle:

"Usually the people who have to accept and act on the ideas the circle generates are middle-level managers, most of whom have no role in the quality circle and little experience either soliciting or responding to ideas from
subordinates. They may be uncomfortable listening to ideas that they feel they should have thought of themselves or that will change their own work activities. Also, they may be too busy ... these middle managers often resist the new ideas; they either formally reject them or take a long time to respond. (p. 68)

Yet, because middle managers may be under a great deal of pressure and sometimes direct orders to accept initial suggestions, they may reluctantly do so. This, however, leads them to resent the program. (See also Schlesinger, 1984.)

(5) The implementation stage is also a serious hurdle: 'In most organizations, approval does not mean implementation. Indeed, time after time we found situations where managers accepted many of the initial ideas with great fanfare but didn't implement them. The result was a serious loss of credibility of both the program and management... Implementing ideas often involves cooperation of many people and... requires money and manpower... in many cases the people who are in charge of putting the circle’s ideas into action are not involved in the group’s initial activities and therefore have little investment in them...if the ideas are never converted into action, QC programs usually lose their momentum and die...a significant percentage of QC programs end at this point.' (p. 68)
In the few cases where quality circle initiatives are implemented and produce significant cost savings or other clear benefits, new challenges arise. Sometimes tensions arise between program participants (insiders) and non-participants (outsiders). Sometimes, group members' aspirations are raised by their experience of efficaciousness and they begin to resent the non-cooperative way they are treated by management outside the quality circle. This provoked conflicts and/or desires for a job change. Some members begin asking for financial rewards for their efforts. (See also Gorz, 1967; Witte, 1980; Walton, 1980; and Demos Research, 1984.)

Kochan (1983) and Heckscher (1981) also cite several cases where problem-solving groups become demoralized at this point, after management takes unexpected, unilateral actions, such as a merger or shifting production out of the plant to low-wage plants elsewhere.

Finally, the possibility of expanding the program often provokes the first serious thought about its utility to the organization and to management objectives: "Unfortunately, when executives try to document the savings from early QC ideas, they often turn out to be smaller than originally estimated. ... the typical program either begins to decline or becomes a different kind of program at this point." (Lawler and Mohrman, p. 69)
(B) Semi-Autonomous Teams

Semi-autonomous team efforts seem to go through cycles that are similar to those of quality circles and problem-solving groups. These cycles appear to be less extreme, however, since the teams are used mostly in new, highly automated settings to operate costly capital equipment. Much of the greater worker responsibility and initiative is thus built into the job and delimited by the technology. (Walton, 1980; Heckscher, 1981 ch. 1) As Hill (1981) also points out, computers and automated systems generally provide management with more accurate and timely information about the status of operations, so managers can give workers more 'freedom' at the point of production, while retaining control over the overall pace and flow of production. (See also Blauner, 1964; Braverman, 1974; and Szymanski, 1976.)

Yet, according to Walton (1980), Kochan (1983), Witte (1980) and Heckscher (1981), the egalitarian task and wage structures and the somewhat contradictory responsibility to top management for self-management of accountability, are features that are very difficult to institutionalize. Internal team conflicts sometimes arise, especially where skill and training levels are mixed; they can easily undermine the solidarity needed to make the team function effectively. Moreover, as new technology is de-bugged, there is less need for the teams to meet and less opportunity to socialize new members into the system or resolve low-level conflicts.
Most important, the teams must meet top management's goals for productivity and profitability. Since these are mass production systems and the equipment is costly, high rates of productivity are required, if management is to meet its obligations to shareholders. The imposition of top management production and profitability goals on a 'self-management' system results in conflicts, demoralization and, in most cases, the re-introduction of line supervisor-type roles.

Yet, some features of the semi-autonomous team system, such as task rotations, performance of ancillary tasks by production workers and the use of fewer pay classifications than in traditional, bureaucratic firms, seem to take root as permanent features.

(C) Gainsharing Plans

Schuster (1984) analyzed the impacts of gainsharing programs on organizational productivity over time. Productivity gainsharing programs are similar to quality circles and problem-solving groups, in that supervisory roles and the division of tasks are left intact. It is only in the act of generating successful initiatives (under the Scanlon plan, but not other gainsharing plans) that the program constitutes any change in organizational communication or decision making patterns.

Schuster studied the impacts on productivity of the Scanlon, Rucker and Improshare gainsharing programs; not their
longevity. He indicates however, that of the three plans studied, Scanlon seemed to have more staying power than the others, possibly because it includes worker participation in generating initiatives and organization-wide sharing of gains, both of which help to pull the organization together as a team.

On the whole, QWL seems to be more than just a fad, but it also appears to be very difficult to institutionalize in private sector settings. Those QWL structures which build greater worker initiative and teamwork into the administration of automated production processes (as in semi-autonomous teams) or leave the existing bureaucratic structure intact and provide for direct and organization-wide compensation for worker initiatives that are approved by top management (as in the Scanlon plans), seem to take root the best.

The most popular efforts, quality circles and problem-solving groups, seem to be unstable and transitory; and even semi-autonomous teams exhibit a tendency to fall or slide back toward more traditional, bureaucratic control systems. Of course, as these aspects of the efforts slide back, so too do worker initiative and commitment. (Walton, 1980; Witte, 1980; Heckscher, 1981; Kochan, 1983; but cf. Burawoy, 1979) What accounts for this mixed performance and instability of QWL systems?
Program Operational Requirements for Successful QWL

As experiences with QWL accumulate, it is becoming increasingly clear, especially to practitioners who believe that the basic ideas and applications of QWL are sound, that there are important requirements for administering the programs if they are to be successful:

1. Clear and mutually acceptable goals - All relevant parties must desire to participate. Their goals and expectations of the program must be clearly stated and accepted, if not shared, by other parties, and reflected in the program design and documents. This includes executive and middle management, workers and union representatives. (Kochan, 1976 & 1983; Schuster, 1984; Parker, 1985) As was mentioned above, however, QWL becomes the carrier for many different and sometimes conflicting goals. A fascination with Japanese productivity, and 'participatory management,' as described by Lawler and Morhman (1985), beliefs in the goodness of workplace democracy and worker control, or desires to improve the psychological well-being of organization members, as well as more pragmatic goals, may all be brought to bear on a single QWL effort.

2. Decision makers must conduct a prior analysis of organizational communication and decision making patterns, to make sure that the organization can respond to the issues generated by program committees. (Olsen, 1983; Smeltzer and Kedia, 1985)
(3) Strong Commitment to and **sustained active support** for the effort by all management and union levels, especially by **executives**, is required to overcome inertia and continually establish a priority for the program. (Smeltzer and Kedia, 1985; Kochan, 1983; Walton, 1975)

(4) A solid foundation of **training** and **socialization to QWL_concepts**, both of **direct participants and those whose support is required**, at least at the beginning, is necessary to address fears and to provide skills to conduct the process. (Schuster, 1984; Nadler, Hanlon, Lawler, 1980; Ronchi, 1983)

(5) Related to training, **expert facilitation** of program meetings, **skillful planning and guidance** of program processes and **effective outside consultation**, is also generally acknowledged as important to a program's success or failure. Some practitioner-theorists, such as Argyris (1983) and Ronchi (1983), place great emphasis on third-party facilitation, claiming that goals, commitment and the relationship of QWL to the collective bargaining process (below) change frequently. What is crucial, in their view, is that the individual participants learn how to communicate more effectively, to surface and resolve conflicts, so that issues such as commitment can be addressed. On this view, an organizational intervention such as QWL is successful when the parties have learned from the process, since such individuals are the basis of a healthy organization. (See also Bennis and Slater, 1969; Fisher and Ury, 1981)
(6) Relationship of QWL to collective bargaining - The standard assumption on this issue has been that QWL efforts must stay clear of collective bargaining issues, since QWL generally affects only a few parts of a bargaining unit at one time and because the type of collaborative, or integrative negotiations required for QWL are incompatible with and may be undermined by, or become subsumed in the adversarial nature of collective bargaining issues. Maintaining this goal in practice is often impossible, so that continual redefinition of boundaries is required during the process. (Kochan, 1983; Parker, 1985; Schuster, 1984; Smeltzer and Kedia, 1985; cf. Ronchi and Morgan, 1983)

Clearly these operational requirements are important and no doubt many of the early failures of quality circles and problem-solving groups, cited by Lawler and Mohrman and others, can be traced to a failure to observe them. Yet the fact that many QWL efforts start out well enough but then fade, or slide back toward more traditional forms of authority, cannot be satisfactorily explained by program operational requirements alone. If the problems were only operational, then surely there would be sufficient willpower in the organization to solve them and pursue the purposes for which the effort was first attempted. More to the point, an exclusive focus on operational requirements tells one nothing about why such requirements might not be met; why certain executives might not provide sustained active support for the program and why participant goals might be disparate.
Conduciveness of the Organizational Context for QWL

The discussion up to this point has focused on the operational requirements for the success or stability of various types of QWL efforts over time. Yet a closer look at some of the QWL literature and even a cursory glance at organization theory, show that factors larger than QWL operational dynamics condition and determine the fate of QWL initiatives, as they do all day-to-day organizational decision making and behavior. One can divide these larger factors into many or fewer categories, but most organizational theory and research tend to focus on two: Tasks (and Task Environments) and Politics. These factors vary by industry, if not from one organization to another. Taken together, they constitute the context within which all organizational decision making and behavior takes place. An understanding of behavior in organizations therefore requires an understanding of the context that shapes and determines it.

(A) Organizational Tasks are the purposes the organization serves. They are determined by social needs and wants, as mediated by product markets and public policy, or what one might call task environments. (See for example, Smith, 1982; Marx, 1977; Piore, 1980; Sabel, 1981; Weber, 1981; and Wilson, 1978.)

The relevance of organization tasks and task environments to QWL structures is noted in both the theoretical and case
study literatures. Sabel (1981) and Piore (1983), as described above, advocate QWL in the belief that it is an effective response to increased product market competition in mass production industries. The research of Heckscher (1981), Kochan (1983) and Schuster (1984) indicates that QWL is, at least in part, a response to these product market conditions.

Yet product markets differ by industry, as do production technologies. Hence it should not be surprising to find that QWL forms also differ by industry. Heckscher (1981) notes that individual job enhancement efforts are found mostly in service industries. Semi-autonomous teams, on the other hand, are found mostly in automated and continuous production processes, such as oil refining, chemicals, food processing, and more recently, steel production. (Heckscher, 1981; Kochan, 1983; Sabel, 1981; Walton, 1980) Craft-type production processes, such as those in the aircraft and construction industries also use semi-autonomous team type arrangements. (Storper and Walker, 1984; Sabel, 1981; Piore, 1983) Problem-solving groups and quality circles, while more widespread than other QWL forms, are often found in mechanized assembly and related types of production processes, such as automobile assembly and home appliance production. (Storper and Walker, 1984; Heckscher, 1981; Kochan, 1983)

(B) Political Structure, or Politics, refers to the interests of the parties with a stake in the production process itself (as opposed to the final product of the
process) and their power to successfully pursue those interests by making or influencing decisions. Such power is determined by a variety of forces, including state and national policies, labor market supply and demand and the nature and extent of interest group organization. The importance of political structure to routine organizational behavior and decisionmaking is often noted in organization theory. (See for example, Braverman, 1974; Burawoy, 1979; Fox, 1974; Gorz, 1967; Gouldner, 1954; Hill, 1981; Kochan, 1980; Kusterer, 1977; Marx, 1977; Oppenheimer; 1985; Sabel, 1981; and Storper and Walker, 1984.)

The importance of political structure is also noted in some of the QWL literature. The organization- or plant-wide labor-management committee, for example, is used mostly in unionized organizations where management recognizes or is forced to recognize the union's interest in such matters. Quality circles in unionized organizations usually include shop stewards and other mechanisms to ensure union input. (Kochan, 1983 and Schuster, 1984) As Storper and Walker (1984) show, collaborative labor-management relations are more prevalent in industries requiring highly skilled workers, because these workers have more bargaining power. Similarly, Storper and Walker indicate that unionized workers in some industries, such as automobile assembly, are able to command higher wages than their market value and are able to exercise greater influence in organizational decisions than they would be able to without the union.
Some of the QWL case study literature reflects the importance of both tasks and politics to QWL design and processes. Kochan's (1983) case studies of an automotive supply manufacturer, a meatpacking plant and a newspaper publisher, show how task environments characterized by intensive price competition (in the first two cases) and a balance of power strongly favorable to management (in all three cases, but especially in the third case) undermine QWL efforts over time.

Piore (1983) describes how the fluctuating demand which characterizes the task environment of the construction industry and the high level of skill required of construction workers, create the basis for a community in which the contractors in one season are workers in the next and the two often work side by side on a job. Construction trade unions enable the potential for this type of community to be realized, by keeping worker wages high and organizing the hiring process.

Analogously, Hill (1981) describes how a desire by Japanese managers to avoid an increase in worker power through unionization, led them to adopt lifetime employment policies and other 'bureaucratic paternalist' measures, as Hill calls them, to ensure worker loyalty. Hill notes that these policies were made possible by stable product markets, or task environments.
Witte (1980) shows how a lack of collective worker power vis-a-vis management, as well as a lack of cohesion or commonly accepted standards among workers, undermined an experiment involving both shopfloor and organization-wide QWL.

Except for these vignettes, however, the QWL literature does not shed a great deal of light on the compatibility of QWL structures with specific organizational contexts. Yet, if organizational behavior is shaped and determined by task environments and politics -- and there is no reason to doubt this -- then it stands to reason that QWL, like any organizational structure, must ultimately be supported by an organization's task environment and political structure if it is to become integrated into organizational behavior patterns.

It might be unnecessary to make such a point, were it not for the superficiality and ideological overtones of so many QWL efforts and analyses, as described above. Yet it is these superficial overtones of QWL that make it necessary to examine the quality of fit between QWL structures and existing organizational contexts, to determine where, why and to what extent QWL becomes a more or less permanent organizational feature and where it does not.

Implications for the Study of Municipal QWL

The absence from the literature of detailed studies of the fit between QWL and organizational contexts may result in tendencies by students and practitioners of QWL to see program
operational requirements as of primary importance to QWL success, to perpetuate myths about the universal applicability of QWL structures to all types of organizations, and perhaps to fail to appreciate the types of contextual changes that might be necessary in organizational settings before collaborative labor-management relations can be realized.

Such tendencies seem to be particularly apparent in the literature on public sector QWL. Of the few studies of public sector QWL efforts that have been published to date, most were written by practitioners, almost all emphasize program operational requirements, rather than contextual features of organizations and many are also permeated with ideological justifications and boosterism. (See, for example, Trist, 1980; Herrick, 1983; Mazany, 1985; Ingle, 1983) In short, there is an unmet need for non-partisan, detailed analysis of attempts to fit QWL into public sector organizational contexts.

The purpose of this study is to address this need. The initiation and implementation of a QWL program in the City of Boston is described in detail. As it happens, the implementation process is anything but smooth and one could easily claim that a failure to observe program operational requirements is at fault. An analysis of the City's tasks, task environment and political structure, however, leads to a different conclusion; namely, that the organizational context is not supportive of QWL and that QWL efforts can therefore be expected to be unstable there.
The study does not attempt to prove conclusively that the features of the organizational context, rather than program operational requirements, are the primary causes of QWL instability in Boston or elsewhere. Rather, the goal is simply to establish the plausibility that such is the case. To do so, I will describe, in detail, the process by which QWL was initiated in the City, in order to show that it did not arise from commonly perceived needs within the City and that the agendas of labor and management for QWL were disparate and conflicting.

Next, I will show, via detailed description, that these disparate and conflicting agendas are supported by the City's task environments and political structure, neither of which appear to be changing (in contrast to the changes that may be taking place in some private sector contexts, as described above).

Next, I will describe the task environment and political structure of the City as a whole and of two departments in which the QWL program was implemented, as well as the routine behavior and labor-management relations that these larger factors normally support. I will show that these task environments and political structures support routine relations that are not highly cooperative.

Finally, I will describe the program operations processes in considerable detail, in order to show that the conflicting agendas of labor and management that are supported by the task
environment and political structure, rose to the surface in the QWL committees and undermined the cooperative process.
NOTES - CHAPTER 1

(1) In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Scanlon plans and problem-solving groups were developed for large, unionized American firms to facilitate product and process changes and overcome the minor inefficiencies of large, bureaucratic organizations. Both also had antecedents in incentive schemes of previous decades and previous experiments with worker participation. (Heckscher, 1981; Kochan and Dyer, 1976)
CHAPTER 2 - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the approach and research tools that I used to study the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation Program. Before proceeding with that discussion, a word about the manner in which I gained access to the research site is in order. I initially became involved with the Boston program in April 1984, as a co-author of a successful funding proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor, through which the program was created. Thereafter, my role was strictly that of an outside research evaluator. Portions of my work were funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, directly and through the program, but most of the work was done without pay. I provided analyses of routine workplace relations and of the Labor-Management Cooperation Program to the City and to the Department of Labor in accordance with their specific information needs, which differed from the needs of the thesis.

As a researcher, I enjoyed mostly unfettered access to program committee meetings, to worksites, to City employees and to all documents that I requested. With some exceptions, I was free to conduct the research as I deemed appropriate. An explanation of these exceptions and other details about the development of my research questions, the conditions under which I gained entre to the site and the manner in which I developed my research role, are provided in Appendix A.
Data for the study was collected over a two and one-half year period, from February 1984 to November 1986, although most of the data was collected from November 1984 to January 1986. Table 2.1 provides a chronology of the research process.

Approach

This study describes an attempt to fit a QWL program structure into the City of Boston organizational context and assesses the quality of that fit. The basic premise is that QWL efforts will only be stable and successful over time if they are supported by the fundamental features of the organizational context. Hence my description entails a detailed account of the dynamics of the program -- its initiation, implementation and operation in two City departments -- and an analysis of the organizational context -- the tasks, task environment and politics of the departments in which the program was implemented and of the City administration in general.

Since no single type or source of data could provide such different types of information, I used several methods and data sources. I used document and newspaper analysis, paper and pencil surveys, in-depth semi-structured interviews, informal interviews and observation of work routines and program committee meetings.
TABLE 2.1
CHRONOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

February, 1984: I interview AFSCME and SEIU officials about labor relations in the City of Boston as data for a possible newspaper article.

March, April, 1984: A local activist named Roberts (pseudonym) approaches City administrators, SEIU and AFSCME officials, and suggests they apply to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service of the U.S. Department of Labor to fund a three-tier worker participation program. The administration and SEIU agree, but AFSCME declines to participate. Roberts asks a colleague and me to draft the FMCS proposal. We draft the proposal, which is funded by the FMCS.

October, November, 1984: I interview administrators and SEIU officials on their perceptions of and goals for the program.

November, 1984: I begin attending program planning and training sessions.

January-August, 1985: Worksite groups and departmentwide committees meet on a regular basis. I observe these meetings and meetings of the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee. I also conduct informal interviews and observe daily work routines.

May-August, 1985: I analyze documents and records and interview various informants to develop a picture of the task environment and political structure of the City administration.

August-December, 1985: The program is suspended due to a staff conflict that expands into a major dispute between the SEIU and administration. I continue to conduct weekly informal interviews with participants in each department and with program staff and union officials.
(TABLE 2.1 cont'd)

**September--October, 1985:** I spend 25 additional hours in observation of work routines in the Assessing Department and Police/911.

**December, 1985--January, 1986:** I conduct a second round of interviews and surveys in Assessing, Police Operations/911, Staff and Oversight Committee.

**January--March, 1986:** I submit reports on the research to the LMC Program and continue to conduct informal interviews.

**April--November, 1986:** I remain in contact with the Labor - Management Cooperation Program through a colleague who is conducting research on the program under a U.S. Department of Labor grant. I also maintain contact through a program staff member and an informant who is associated with certain administrators.
The use of multiple methods to describe a phenomenon, called "triangulation," is regarded as acceptable practice by qualitative methodologists. It is based on the assumption that "the weaknesses in each single method will be compensated by the counter-balancing strengths of another." (Jick, 1979, p. 604) The researcher using triangulation looks for convergent results among the various methods used. Where divergence arises, the researcher must attempt to reconcile it, often enriching and deepening the overall analysis in the process.

Jick (1979) notes an absence of established rules for lending more or less weight to a particular data type when triangulating: "His or her claim to validity rests on a judgement...a capacity to organize materials within a plausible framework." (p. 608, quoting Weiss, 1968). The following discussion describes each of the methods I used and the data I collected, noting some of the strengths and weaknesses of each. It also provides examples of how I handled divergences among data types and used one type of data to supplement or guide the use of another.

**Types of Data Collected and Analyzed**

A) **Documents and Records** were used primarily to build a description of the City's task environment and political structure since unionization in the 1960's and the tasks and politics of two departments in which the QWL program was
implemented during its first year. Some of the more useful documents include Nancy Lombardo's detailed account of the development of relations between the City administration and the miscellaneous employee unions, the Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, from the early 1960's through 1976: *The Political Behavior of Boston Municipal Employee Unions*, 1979, which is available at the Massachusetts State Library. Through the Boston Public Library and Boston Municipal Research Bureau, I obtained copies of the City Charter, relevant State statutes and City ordinances, statistics on employment levels and financial management reports published during the 1976 fiscal crisis and during the transition to a new administration in January, 1984.

The City's Office of Labor Relations made its grievance and strike files available and the City's Personnel Division and Management Information Systems department provided wage/salary and turnover statistics for City employees.

The President of the SEIU provided me with two file folders crammed full of documents describing internal union politics from 1975 through 1981. These data, along with verbal reports from union members and managers about the development of the administration-SEIU relationship, provided crucial background data for my analysis of the SEIU's decision to join the Labor-Management Cooperation Program.
The most comprehensive and, in some ways, the most informative written data, came from *The Boston Globe* daily newspaper and, to a lesser extent, *The Boston Herald* (American). Thanks to the intelligence and good graces of a *Globe* librarian, I was able to quickly and efficiently trace certain themes from the late 1960's through 1984. These themes included the administration's relations with AFSCME and SEIU, including collective bargaining, work stoppages and the internal politics of the SEIU; the State/City civil service system; patronage; fiscal crises; Mayor-City Council and Mayor-State Legislature politics; the Assessing Department and Police Operations unit, where the Labor-Management Cooperation Program was implemented. Throughout 1985 and 1986, I maintained my own clipping service on these issues.

I also collected documents generated by the Labor-Management Cooperation program, to supplement my other sources of data on program operations and to note the discrepancies between my observations and information that was communicated by those involved in the program. (See Van Maanen, 1979, for a discussion of the use of such discrepancies.) These documents included structure and process design, training materials, memoranda and minutes from program committee meetings.

(B) *Paper_and_Pencil_Surveys* of workers, supervisors and middle managers were administered at the time of program
implementation in November 1984 and one year later. I designed the surveys, using a combination of validated QWL research questions, questions which I developed from responses to interviews I administered in the City, and questions requested by the Program Director (See Table 2.3 and Appendix A).

The surveys served two purposes that could not be served by the other research methods I used. They provided a check on the representativeness of in-depth interview data (see below) on organizational tasks and politics. They also provided comparable data across departments, on attitudes about the program and the numbers of workers and supervisors who were willing to participate. On some issues, such as the extent to which workers and supervisors are perceived to follow each others' expectations, the survey data showed patterns that helped to focus my analysis of interview and observation data.

Table 2.2 shows the total population and numbers of persons interviewed and surveyed on the program's Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee, on the program staff, and in the two departments where the program was initially implemented (Assessing and Police Operations). As the table shows, the survey covered large percentages of workers, supervisors and middle managers in Assessing and Police Operations. I did not administer surveys to senior managers, administrators and union officials, since the survey's primary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>11/84</th>
<th>12/85</th>
<th>11/84</th>
<th>12/85</th>
<th>11/84</th>
<th>12/85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citywide L-M Oversight Committee</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Department</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Operations Unit</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMC Program Staff</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Informant+ Interviews Conducted
- March, 1984: 2 interviews
- Spring/Summer, 1985: 10 interviews

* Total Populations consist of:
  Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee: Twelve representatives of the Flynn administration and SEIU Local #285.
  Assessing Department: Includes members of SEIU Local #285, of whom there were 108 in November 1984 and 98 in December 1985; and non-union managers and line supervisors, of whom there were 50 in November 1984 and 35 in December 1985. AFSCME members, of whom there were 31 in 1984 and 34 in 1985, were not included in the LMC Program or in the study.
  Police Operations/911: Includes civilian operators, whose numbers were 63 and 93 in 1984 and 1985, respectively; thirteen police duty supervisors, and the four senior managers who served on the Police Department Committee of the LMC Program. Police cadets, whose numbers fluctuated between nine and 20 during the study period, were excluded from the study, as were police dispatchers, of whom there were 50 in 1985. Neither of these latter two groups was involved in any way with the LMC Program.
+ Other Informants are described in Chapter 2, Section c(i).
purpose was to provide a basis to judge the extent to which data from the interview sample were representative of the entire population. Since I interviewed all senior managers, relevant administrators and union officials, rather than just a sample, it made little sense to ask them to submit to a survey that would have done little more than duplicate the interview process in a crude fashion.

I administered the surveys after obtaining permission from the union and each department's management and after memos had been sent by the program director, union president and department management to all workers and supervisors, explaining the nature and purposes of the survey. For each department and, in the case of the 911 unit, for each shift, I administered the surveys on a day on which most people were expected to be at work. Accompanied by a union steward or other worker, I distributed one survey to each person and returned two hours later to collect the surveys. (1)

Copies of the survey instruments are provided Appendix A. Table 2.3 provides a synopsis of the items covered in the surveys, including sources for survey questions which I did not construct myself.
### TABLE 2.3
**SURVEY AND INTERVIEW THEMES FOR WORKER AND SUPERVISOR SURVEY AND INTERVIEW**

**I. Attitudes and Interests**

* Satisfaction with pay, promotions, employment security *(AT&T/CWA Survey, 1981)*

* Sources of greatest and least satisfaction in tasks and work climate.

* Worklife aspects that respondents most wanted to see changed *(Demos Research, 1984)*.

* Decisions on which respondents wanted more input than they currently believed they had. (Adapted from European Industrial Democracy survey, 1977).

**II. Roles, Decisionmaking and Conflict-Resolution Procedures** *(Demos Research, 1984)*

* Description of expectations/norms for everyday work related behavior: (a) among workers, (b) between workers and supervisors, (c) between middle managers and supervisors.

* Description of extent to which respondents perceive others as actually following these expectations (extent of normative consensus or cohesion).

* Descriptions of methods and vehicles commonly used for resolving conflict and perceived efficacy of the methods. These questions constructed from interview responses.

**III. Perceived Fairness of Systemwide Decisions**

* Hirings and Promotions

* Lay-offs and firings *(Questions based on Fox, 1974; Sabel, 1981)*

**IV. Views of the Labor-Management Cooperation Program**

* Perception of purposes and nature of administration and Union support for the program

* Desire to participate and rationales for or against participation *(adapted from Witte, 1980)*

* Views of program strengths and weaknesses after one year
Section II of Table 2.3 deserves some additional explanation. Before constructing the survey, I conducted in-depth interviews (see part C below). Using responses to open-ended interview questions about primary workplace norms and conflict resolution procedures, I developed multiple choice survey questions to check the representativeness of the interview results. For example, using interview responses to the question: "What do workers in your work area expect of each other?" I constructed the following range of possible survey answers and asked respondents to check the two most important ones:

___ Very little - they don't care what people do.
___ Do your job as it's defined in the written job description
___ Figure things out on your own and don't bother people
___ Do the best and most professional job you can for the City
___ Cover them so they won't get in trouble with the supervisor
___ Cooperate with everyone to help get the work done
___ Be friendly and sociable
___ Other (specify)

I used no scaling principles to construct this or similar survey questions; I simply listed all responses from the interview question as survey response choices. On this
particular question and ones like it, however, interview and survey responses diverged and led me to place more confidence in the interview results. In the interviews, the most prevalent response to the question about supervisor expectations of workers was 'just do your job as it's defined.' On the survey, the most prevalent response was 'do the best and most professional job you can.' My interpretation of the divergence was that the interview response was probably the more truthful, in so far as actual expectations are concerned (which I confirmed many times through observation and informal interviews). I interpreted the survey response as one of many attempts by workers to convince the administration that they were not respected, treated or paid commensurate with the contributions they made to the City.

Although I found this result interesting and useful, I cut this question and ones like it out of the second survey round (but kept it in the interviews), in favor of a less time-consuming survey and one that focused more on program process issues.

(C) Semi-Structured Interviews were the single most valuable source of data for the study. I conducted interviews with several groups of program participants and informants, as depicted in Table 2.2. These groups are the following:

(i) Interviews with 'Other Informants:' Officials in
the Office of Labor Relations and Personnel Division under the previous administration, previous officials in the SEIU, former and current City Councillors, academics, a journalist and other informed observers of municipal labor-management relations in the City, as well as officials in the State Department of Personnel (Civil Service) who handle relations with the City. In all, eleven persons were interviewed for at least 60 minutes during 1985.

The purpose of these interviews was to provide an understanding of the City's political structure, by exploring the nature and politics of the institutions through which the parties pursue their interests. All interviewees were also asked about the significance of QWL for the administration-union relationship as they understood it.

In most cases, I was able to check and confirm statements made by one person with those of others in this group, or with other sources. Since most of these interviews were conducted after I had done some document research, I had concrete instances with which to provoke stories and explanations from interviewees.

(ii) Interviews with current City administration officials, including the Director of Administrative Services (essentially the 'vice-mayor'), Director and Assistant Director of the Office of Labor Relations, Supervisor of Personnel, Budget Director, Chief Policy Advisor to the Mayor and his Assistant; AFSCME Regional Director and City of
Boston business representative; SEIU President, business representatives and chief stewards for City Hall and the Police Department. With the exception of the AFSCME officials, all of these persons were members of the Labor-Management Oversight Committee. Interviews of 45-90 minutes were conducted during the first six months of program stimulus, decision and design and again approximately one year later. Most of these interviews were taped, by permission.

These interviews used semi-structured formats and focused on the following themes:

* Reasons why the administration and SEIU did join the program and why AFSCME did not.
* Goals of the administration and SEIU for the program.
* Perceptions of the actual and desired status of worker-manager relations at the executive levels and within departments, including the level of mutual trust and power between the parties. Relationship of collective bargaining to the program.
* Reasons why the Assessing Department, Police Operations Unit and later, the Retirement Board were chosen for the program and perceptions by respondents as to the status of worker-manager relations in those departments.
* Reasons for the respondents' personal involvement in the program, the nature and level of personal commitment to the program, and the respondents' expectations for time and energy to be spent on the program.
* After one year, descriptions of program processes, strengths and weaknesses, explanations of actions taken and for the extent of accomplishments by the program to date.

(iii) Interviews with five senior managers in the departments in which the program was implemented, as well as eight middle managers and a sample of line supervisors and workers. For the first interview round, worker and supervisor samples were chosen randomly from each functional unit and from each shift in each department. Sixty to ninety-minute interviews were conducted at the time of program implementation and again after one year of program operation. All of the first-round interviews were taped, by permission. Only about one-half of the second round interviews were taped, as I chose to do less taping to save time.

For the second interview round, all middle and senior managers were re-interviewed and a portion of the supervisors and workers from the first-round were re-interviewed. In addition, new worker and supervisor interviewees were added to the sample to replace turnover and ensure a sample mix by participants, non-participants, drop-outs, leaders and non-leaders.

Worker and supervisor interviews included the same themes as the surveys discussed above, but also included several questions about the respondents' perceptions of the purposes and functioning of the program and about the politics and effectiveness of the union at regulating the employment
relationship in ways that members considered to be fair. The second interview round focused more on program processes, especially the progress of initiatives, as well as reciprocal effects of the program and routine workplace relations.

All middle and senior managers who participated in the program were interviewed. The first round of middle manager and senior manager interviews consisted of questions from both the worker interviews and administrator interviews (ii, above), focusing on perceptions of worker-supervisor-manager relations within the department and managers' purposes and goals for the program. I also asked managers about the nature of feedback from the department's task environment, the intra-departmental political structure, and their strategic plans for the department.

Through personal observation of the program over the course of the first year, it became apparent to me that some middle and senior managers, especially in the Assessing department, were uncomfortable with the program. It also became clear that inter-departmental politics created significant bottlenecks in program processes. For the second interview round, I tried to focus on these issues to gain a better understanding of manager needs and of relations between departments.

(iv) Interviews with program staff: director, outside consultant, two program facilitators and clerical workers. The program director and full-time facilitator were
interviewed at the time of program implementation and again after one year. The external consultant was formally interviewed once, after one year. Two other staff members were interviewed once each.

These interviews focused on three themes:
* Respondents' perceptions of the City's task environment, political structure and routine workplace relations;
* Respondents' philosophies and strategies for the program;
* Specific actions already taken and planned for the future, such as training, guidance of individual participants and internal staff dynamics.

(v) Informal interviews were conducted frequently throughout the entire study period with program staff, workers, supervisors, managers, administrators, union officials, and with personal acquaintances in managerial and professional positions in other City departments. These interviews took place in the City Hall and Police Department snack bars, at parties, over lunch and sometimes on the phone. They lasted from five minutes to two hours and focused on the City's political structure, tasks and routine workplace relations. Over the 18-month period from November 1984 to March 1986, I spent about 200 hours conducting these interviews.

(D) **Personal Observation** of daily work routines, staff and participant training sessions, program planning sessions, staff meetings and program committee meetings. From January
1985 through November 1985, I entered the site two or three days each week, attending every program meeting scheduled for that day and using the remainder of my time to observe work routines and conduct informal interviews. This worked out to approximately 70 hours of work routine observation in the two departments which are the major focus of this study, 80 hours of observation of training sessions, planning sessions and staff meetings, and 200 hours of observation of program committee meetings. (See Appendix A for details)

The primary purpose of personal observation was to understand how the program operated. Yet observation also proved to be an invaluable source of information about the organizational context. It was the glue which held the other methods in my research project together; it provided me with a knowledge of everyday events that helped me to construct interview questions and it helped me build rapport with program participants. It also helped me to understand and explain divergent perspectives about the program that surfaced in interviews and surveys.

In conclusion, every type and source of data contributed something substantial to this study. With the exception of the instances noted above, the different methods yielded convergent, rather than divergent, results, so the analysis was straightforward. But as Bogdan (1972) and Whyte (1981) also found, the challenge was to organize so much data into one framework and one story.
(1) Although this process generally went smoothly, I encountered some problems during the first survey round in the Assessing Department. Because of the structural, physical and demographic complexity of the department, I had difficulty deciding how to identify and group respondents for the first survey round. To leave my options open, I asked survey respondents to place their surveys in envelopes with their names on them, but not to write their names on the surveys. Workers expressed great reluctance to put their names on their survey envelopes, however; their comments were an indication of the bitter relations between workers and managers and even between workers and the union. By the time of the second round, I knew almost everyone personally and understood the structure of the department better. I asked respondents to circle the name of their unit on the survey, which most did.
CHAPTER 3
INITIATION OF THE BOSTON
LABOR-MANAGEMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM

Introduction

This chapter describes the initiation of Boston's Labor-Management Cooperation program. First, the process by which QWL was introduced to labor and management officials and their responses to the idea will be described. The interests and agendas of these officials for QWL will then be analyzed. Finally, the features of the organizational context within which these agendas are formed -- the City's task environment and political structure -- will be described.

Before proceeding, a brief sketch of the City's management structure and of the institutions which govern the employment relationship will help to frame the events to be described.

The City of Boston has a Strong Mayor-Weak City Council form of government. Mayors are elected for four-year terms; Councillors for two years. The Mayor has authority and responsibility for the conduct of all administrative affairs, including the preparation of a budget and the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements. (This excludes the school system, over which the Mayor and Council have only limited budgetary review authority).

Boston is a legal subdivision of the State of Massachusetts. Its activities are regulated by State statutes
and are overseen by various State agencies. The City relies directly upon the State for financial assistance, as well as for the authority to raise all revenues.

In 1985, the City of Boston and Boston school system employed a combined total of 20,614 persons. Of these, about 18,000 could be classified as career civil servants or professionals and the rest as mayoral appointees.

Municipal employees were granted collective bargaining rights in 1965. By 1970, most non-managerial workers were represented by a union. Today, about 16,500 employees are union members. Table 3.1 depicts the size of Boston municipal employee union membership as of December 1983.

As Table 3.1 shows, five unions represent over 80% of the unionized workforce. Of these five, three are craft unions, representing teachers, firefighters and police patrolmen. The remaining two large unions, the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU) local #285 and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 93, represent clerical, technical and blue-collar civil servants in the City; the so-called 'miscellaneous employees' (Katz, 1979). Together they comprise almost 40% of the City's unionized workforce. Although AFSCME represents primarily blue-collar workers and SEIU represents technical and clerical workers, their jurisdictions actually cut across these lines and across many departments throughout the City. These two unions are the focus of the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Union</th>
<th>Size as of 12/83</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFSCME Council 93</td>
<td>3,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEIU Local #285</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Unit (incl hospital non-nursing)</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses (RN, LPN, PHN)</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internat’l Assoc. of Fire Fighters, Local 718</td>
<td>1,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Police Patrolmen’s Association</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Officers Association</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Detectives Benevolent Society</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Superior Officers’ Federation</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Professional Staff Association</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Inspectors Association</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int’l Brotherhood of Fire Fighters and Oilers</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Typographical Union #13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Arts Local #600</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Arts Local #67</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int’l Bro’hood of Electrical Workers, Local #103</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Teachers Union</td>
<td>4,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other School Bargaining Units*</td>
<td>1,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL UNION MEMBERS</td>
<td>16,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL CITY EMPLOYEES</td>
<td>21,113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Other school unions include 400 cafeteria workers represented by AFSCME Council 93 and 35 planning and engineering workers represented by SEIU Local 285.

Sources: *Boston In Transition*, City of Boston, 1984, pp. XI - 2-3; Boston Municipal Research Bureau, *Payroll Count*
The City employment relationship is formally governed by two, partially redundant institutions, the 103-year old State civil service system and the collective bargaining system. At the City level, civil service employment, promotion and salary raise regulations are administered by the 42-person Personnel Division. Collective bargaining is handled by the Office of Labor Relations, which was established in 1971. The size of this office has ranged from two to 13 persons and was seven or eight throughout most of 1986.

Both the Office of Labor Relations and Personnel Division are under the authority of the Administrative Services Department, an umbrella agency established in the 1950's to coordinate and oversee internal service departments, including Personnel, Labor Relations, Management Information Systems (Data Processing) and Budget.

In addition to Personnel and Labor Relations, a third institution, the Mayor's political organization, governs the employment relationship of non-administrators through hirings and sometimes raises and promotions. (It is the means by which most all administrators are first hired and, in part, promoted, transferred, etc.) This institution operates through the Personnel Division and sometimes through individual departments directly; at times, offices have been set up specifically for the purpose of political hiring.

At the time the study period began (Spring 1984), the City had just elected a new Mayor, populist Raymond Flynn. His
predecessor, Kevin White, had served four consecutive terms since 1968. Although a popular mayor for much of that period, White declined to run in 1983, after recession, fiscal crises, and lay-offs combined with the alleged increasing use of patronage to shore up his political organization and base of support, led to brief walk-outs by AFSCME and SEIU, increased criticism from the City Council and media and State reluctance to support the City's financial aid requests.

The Stimulus for QWL in Boston

In their model of a union-management cooperation process, Kochan and Dyer (1976) hypothesize that, since collective bargaining is the preferred means of communication, the parties 'will only be stimulated to initiate a search to embark on joint change efforts when under great pressure to do so, i.e., when a felt hurt is experienced,' from external or internal sources, which the existing formal bargaining process is perceived as ineffective in addressing. As examples of external pressures they mention competition, as well as government regulations regarding health and safety or other policies. Internal pressures include worker pressures for health and safety or work humanization. (pp 64-66)

QWL began in Boston despite the absence of such strong pressures. Certainly there were pressures on the administration to improve services and keep costs down, but for reasons to be explained in this chapter, these pressures
were not of such a nature as to induce Boston administrators and unions to initiate a search to embark on a joint change effort. Indeed, QWL was not something that either party actively sought at all.

Rather, QWL was sold to them in package form; they bought it as an inexpensive and low-risk way of achieving partially disparate goals of low-to-medium priority. The 'salesman' was a local college instructor and political activist, who will be referred to here as Roberts.

Roberts' self-chosen mission was to bring quality circles to the City of Boston and hopefully get a job in the process. He had learned of quality circles while visiting an electronics plant a few years earlier. He believed that they were a step in the direction of socialism, mostly because he saw them as helping to develop a radical consciousness among workers, similar to Gorz and others described in Chapter 1. Ultimately, he believed that 'workers should participate in every decision in the workplace' and tried to solicit union interest in QWL primarily on that basis. (1)

Roberts also believed that quality circles and citizen-worker service monitoring committees could be the core of an effort to improve City services, believing that the primary problem with the City's reputedly poor service quality lay in lack of motivation and assertiveness by workers, and lack of worker-manager cooperation. He solicited management support for QWL primarily on this basis.
Roberts had no prior experience with QWL programs; indeed, his knowledge of QWL was limited to a tour of a plant using quality circles and a couple of graduate courses on the subject. Through this coursework, he had come to believe that the interpersonal communication techniques developed by Argyris (1965, 1981) and others for management effectiveness training were appropriate mechanisms to bring about worker-manager cooperation. Although he had no experience with the use of these or other interactive techniques, he viewed them as important to the success of QWL discussion groups and ultimately, to the development of socialism. (2)

During the early days of the 1983 mayoral race, Roberts presented himself to the Flynn campaign as a management and labor relations expert and submitted a few position papers on quality circles and labor-management relations. He also lobbied the candidate's advisors to make quality circles and worker participation a major campaign plank, but without success.

From the election in November 1983 through the Spring of 1984, Roberts remained on the periphery of the new administration, continuing to press mayoral aides and the Director of Administrative Services for a job. He pressed the new Director of Personnel to transform that office from one that only processed paperwork for new hires, raises and salary upgrades, into a modern human resources development department, by hiring Roberts to initiate QWL and related
human resources programs.

He also initiated discussions with the Director of the Office of Labor Relations and with that person's assistant, who expressed enthusiasm for the idea of labor-management cooperation. Through these efforts, Roberts was able to convince key administrators that he had expertise in QWL and human resources issues, although this was not, apparently, sufficient to land him a job.

In the meantime, Roberts suggested to leaders of the two miscellaneous unions, AFSCME and SEIU, that they support and help to lobby for a worker participation program in the City, although neither greeted his ideas warmly. He did not approach any other unions, such as the policemen or firemen, he told me later, because he felt uncomfortable with these 'militaristic workers.' (3)

Early in 1984, Roberts learned of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service's (FMCS, a division of the U.S. Department of Labor) program to fund up to $100,000 of the costs of labor-management cooperation efforts over an 18-month period. At the end of March, he induced the Director of Personnel and other administrators to consider the possibility of FMCS funding of a labor-management cooperation program, partly by telling the Personnel Director that the Assistant Director of Labor Relations was planning to initiate union-management problem-solving groups in the Library Department, without first consulting with Personnel. (4)
Since turf battles between these two offices are easily ignited, Roberts' statements apparently upset the Personnel Director enough to induce him to focus on the issue.

Early in April, about six weeks before the application deadline for FMCS funding, Roberts organized a meeting which included the Director of Administrative Services, the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor, the Personnel Director, the Director and Assistant Director of the Office of Labor Relations, and high level representatives of AFSCME and SEIU, to discuss the FMCS grant program and a possible labor-management cooperation program structure.

Roberts presented his design for a QWL program that was based on the San Francisco Work Improvement Program. Its structure is similar to the bottom-up parallel hierarchy often used in labor-management cooperation programs, as discussed in Chapter 1. Roberts' plan consisted of a Citywide Labor-Management Policy Committee, Departmental Committees of Labor and Management representatives, Work Unit Committees of workers and citizens, and Worker Quality Circles on the shopfloor. Initiatives were to come primarily from the Quality Circles and Work Unit Committees and focus on ways to improve service delivery.

The response to Roberts' program proposal at this meeting was mixed. AFSCME representatives expressed displeasure with the proposed focus on grassroots initiative; by the end of April, they had decided not to participate in the program.
Both the Personnel Director and Office of Labor Relations officials were initially lukewarm on the program and became more skeptical when AFSCME decided not to participate.

On the other hand, the SEIU leadership decided that with some structural modifications, they would be willing to go into the program on a trial basis. The Director of Administrative Services reportedly expressed the view that, because of its small size and scope, the program could do no harm and might be a substitute for wage increases. (5) Eventually, the Personnel Director came to espouse a similar view. The Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor expressed strong support for the program, on ideological and pragmatic grounds similar to Roberts'.

With the assent of one large union and the two key administration decision makers who were second only to the Mayor in authority, and the lack of strong resistance from Personnel or Labor Relations, the City's grant application to the FMCS went forward. The budget for the grant was structured so as to include most of Roberts' full-time salary for 18 months, as well as for other staff salaries. The City's own contributions were to come almost solely from in kind sources, such as worker release time for meetings. This troubled the outside consultant, who stated retrospectively:

"When the program first started, I was concerned that the commitment seemed to be thin from two sides: First, AFSCME pulling out meant that the agreement to go forth wasn't
very solid. Secondly, the program began financed largely through the soft money of a Federal grant. What was the City putting in? What's the solidness of the commitment? ... the whole thing was undercapitalized." (6)

If the FMCS had any reservations about the solidness of the commitment, it did not let them stand in the way of approval of the City's grant proposal. By August 1984, the proposal had been approved; Roberts had been hired as the Personnel Division's Deputy Director for Human Resources and had begun to set up the machinery to implement the program.

Chapter 4 will pick up the story at this point. The following section will discuss the reasons why key decision makers responded to Roberts' QWL overture as they did.

The Decision to Participate in QWL

Kochan and Dyer (1976) predict that a joint commitment by labor and management to embark on a specific change effort will be more likely to develop when:

(a) 'both the union and the employer perceive the change as being instrumental to the attainment of goals valued by their respective organizations;'

(b) 'the parties are willing to negotiate and make compromises over the goals or the targets of the change program;'

(c) 'coalitions or individual power holders within each organization do not attempt to block the organization from
participating in the joint effort." (pp. 68-69)

In Boston, condition (a) was fulfilled to a sufficient extent for SEIU and the administration that they were willing to embark on the QWL effort, despite the fact that their agendas for QWL were disparate and, in many ways, conflicting. Moreover, Roberts was willing to compromise with SEIU by scratching the worker-citizen committees from the program design.

For the leaders of AFSCME, neither condition (a) nor (b) was fulfilled, as they had no desire to participate in a labor-management cooperation program that would focus on grassroots initiatives. Since Roberts would not compromise on the issue and since the administration took no actions to effect a compromise, AFSCME refused to participate.

(A) AFSCME’s Response to QWL

Before discussing AFSCME’s response to QWL, a word about the union’s governance structure is in order. AFSCME Council 93 is a statewide organization representing about 50,000 public service workers. The Council is organized into regions; each region elects a number of representatives to the 150-member Executive Board, proportional to the number of members in the region. The Board in turn elects Council officers. There are 14 AFSCME locals in the City of Boston, representing almost 4,000 blue collar and technical workers, in departments such as Health and Hospitals and Public Works.
The Executive Director of Council 93 has presided over the union since he first organized an AFSCME local at the Boston City Hospital in the 1950's. All key decisions involving Boston affairs, including contract negotiations, are reportedly made by him, through and in consultation with the Metro Regional Coordinator and City Representative. (Union local officers have some input into minor contract details and day-to-day issues). It is these leaders whose views are important for understanding AFSCME's decision not to participate in the QWL program. (7)

AFSCME's decision not to participate in the QWL program was preceded by a certain amount of ambivalence on the part of these leaders. On the one hand, they wanted to establish a cooperative relationship with the new administration. Ever since they had successfully pressured the White administration to establish the Office of Labor Relations in 1971, AFSCME leaders had sought to maintain regular access to and consistency in relations with the administration through that office. (8)

This worked well until the late 1970's, when the Office of Labor Relations lost power to the Mayor's political organization and to the Personnel Division; the latter's director is widely regarded as having been a political force in his own right, by virtue of his ability to manipulate civil service regulations in making appointments, granting raises, etc. From 1978-1983, labor relations deteriorated in the
City, as reflected in the large increases in grievances and work stoppages during this period, depicted in Table 3.2 and Appendix B. Note that many of the work stoppages had to do with alleged use of political criteria in hirings, promotions and lay-offs. (9)

AFSCME leaders were happy to see Mayor White leave, expressing the view that he had become 'a dictator.' The union declared its support for candidate Flynn before the Mayoral primary. In March 1984, AFSCME leaders stated that they would be 'glad to cooperate with Flynn, as soon as he figures out what he wants to do.' They mentioned improved street repair equipment and better payroll procedures as issues of primary concern and expressed a desire to negotiate a contract (due to be signed in June 1984, but not actually signed until one year later). Most of all, they expressed a desire for communication of intentions from the administration, i.e., from someone in a position of authority.

On the other hand, neither the specific form of cooperation offered through QWL, nor the manner in which it was offered, was appealing to the AFSCME leaders. At the time of Roberts' overture, they had hardly been introduced to the key players in the new administration and, from what I was able to gather, had received no formal communications as to the administration's intentions for handling contract negotiations or any other issue of concern to them. Roberts was not even a City employee when he proposed the FMCS grant
TABLE 3.2
NUMBER OF GRIEVANCES FILED ANNUALLY
BY SEIU AND AFSCME, 1967 - 1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'67</th>
<th>'68</th>
<th>'69</th>
<th>'70</th>
<th>'71</th>
<th>'72</th>
<th>'73</th>
<th>'74</th>
<th>'75</th>
<th>'76</th>
<th>'77</th>
<th>'78</th>
<th>'79</th>
<th>'80</th>
<th>'81</th>
<th>'82</th>
<th>'83</th>
<th>'84</th>
<th>'85*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEIU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Hospitals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Civilians</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAC &amp; Parks Life</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Hall/County</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFSCME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Hospitals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libr Non-Profess'l</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Includes data through July, 1985 only.

YAC & Parks Life = Youth Activities Commission & Lifeguards in Parks Department.
Libr Non-Profess'l = Library Non-Professionals

application in April 1984, much less one in a position of authority.

Although this April meeting was the very first discussion between administration and union officials about QWL, Roberts insisted that the unions immediately decide whether or not they would participate, since the grant proposal deadline was less than six weeks away. Hence discussion was immediately narrowed to details and groundrules for the program, which excluded the broader discussions that AFSCME leaders desired.

The bottom-up QWL process design also conflicted with AFSCME's established internal operating procedures. AFSCME's leaders are chosen democratically, but they then make all policy decisions and manage the union's relationship with the administration on behalf of the electorate. As traditional unionists, the AFSCME leaders believe that managers should manage and workers should grieve unfair practices -- through their elected representatives. Likewise, it is the domain of elected leaders to work with the administration and managers to bring about workplace improvements. (10) The Metro Coordinator for Council 93 made it quite clear that Roberts' QWL overture was incompatible with such a system, at the April 1984 meeting: 'You're turning my union upside down! I make the decisions here. I know what's needed down there...This will be nothing but a bitch session.'

One might reasonably ask why AFSCME leaders clung so tenaciously to their top-down operating procedures, even if it
meant foregoing a chance to achieve some workplace improvements. One AFSCME official suggested that the leaders simply did not want to give up their personal power to the rank and file; a view that was shared by Roberts, some SEIU officials and an administrator. (11) This explanation is plausible, but fails to satisfy completely.

According to an AFSCME official, one longtime observer of labor relations in the City and Lombardo (1979), AFSCME's top-down, centralized structure and access through the Office of Labor Relations, has been the means whereby the union has traditionally tried to maintain distance between its members and the Mayor's political organization. AFSCME leaders believe that to the extent that their members think their interests can be served (or at least not harmed) by taking their cues from political operatives or political winds, they will not support the union and safeguards or procedures won by the union will be dead letters. (12)

The QWL program threatened to undermine this carefully managed separation. Moreover, the program was not to be housed in the Office of Labor Relations, through which AFSCME leaders wanted to establish a good relationship with the new administration, but in the Personnel Department, which AFSCME considered to be an organ of the Mayor's political organization and had been fighting for several years. The Director of the Office of Labor Relations stated later: 'I know that with the State [which also initiated a QWL program
in 1984], their program is structured somewhat differently and as a consequence, they have avoided some of the problems we have had with AFSCME for instance, and their refusal to participate. I also know that if we rename this program and put it in this office, AFSCME will participate." (13)

Interviews with AFSCME leaders in March 1984, indicate that they did not share Roberts' views that workers were part of the problem with service delivery; to the extent that workers might be part of the problem, good management should be able to take care of it. Nor did they share Roberts' philosophy of worker participation in problem-solving groups as a way to build a radical consciousness among workers. Like most labor leaders in the state, they were not interested in radical consciousness, but in management compliance with a good contract and in good lines of communication with the administration. (14)

To recall Kochan's and Dyer's (1976) conditions for a decision to embark on a cooperative venture, this program did not appear to AFSCME leaders to be a viable way to achieve their valued goals and they did not value the apparent goals of the program.

(B) SEIU's Response to QWL

SEIU Local #285 is also a statewide organization, representing approximately 10,000 clerical, technical and nursing workers, mostly in government, universities and
private health care institutions. Like AFSCME Council 93, Local 285 began as a City of Boston union. Its 3,000 Boston members are still the largest contingent of the union and its 1,500 Hospital workers are the center of union leadership and activism.

The Local's formal governance structure consists of 13 jurisdictions in two divisions, Health Care and Public Employees. Each of the 13 jurisdictions elects representatives to its division; these representatives oversee Executive officers. Executives are elected directly by membership plebiscite and serve for three-year terms. There are five SEIU bargaining units in the City of Boston, each of which (in theory) elects representatives to the Local's negotiating committee and votes separately on its contract.

Past and current officials acknowledge that the governance structure is somewhat pro forma, however, since de facto power is concentrated mostly in the hands of the staff and officers, who have the time and resources to organize.

The decision to join the QWL program was made primarily by the union President, in consultation with the Executive Director and several staff members. (The International was informed of the program, but it did not play a role in the local's decision). Like AFSCME Council 93, the SEIU leadership did not initially embrace Roberts' QWL proposal. The President said: 'We've had a half-dozen labor-management committees in the contract for years that [the administration
Some leaders viewed QWL as generally a union-busting tool. Most were skeptical that the new administration was really serious about improving labor-management relations or working conditions.

Eventually, however, these leaders found three reasons for participating in the program: First, to strengthen the union and their own leadership, by organizing the membership in City Hall departments, to get them to 'be more aggressive, stand up for themselves,' and to establish lines of communication there 'before Flynn establishes his machine.' Second, to 'get to know' the new administrators better, especially as preparation for contract talks. Third, to achieve concrete improvements in working conditions.

These three pragmatic reasons were generally cast in terms of a broader, democratic socialist ideology which included a belief in shopfloor democracy and in the conscientious delivery of public services. SEIU leaders stated that improvements in working conditions might help to make City workers more conscientious. In this respect, there was at least superficial compatibility between Roberts' espoused political views and the worldview of SEIU leaders.

The SEIU leaders had been working toward their goal of establishing a stronger and more aggressive union for over ten years. From the time of its origins in the 1950's until 1977, however, the Local was reportedly ruled in an informal fashion.
by two men, the President and Treasurer, who were friends of
the Mayor and whose representation of members entailed mostly
brokering of raises and promotions for individuals. Informed
observers claim that the Local operated almost as an arm of
the Mayor's political organization and that no attention was
devoted to developing the union at the shopfloor level. (17)

According to SEIU documents and current leaders, several
militant staffworkers* and City Hospital workers (including
the woman who was to become President in 1981) organized a
'Movement for Union Democracy' in 1974. This group attempted
to steer the union toward more aggressive shopfloor organizing
and a more assertive stance with the administration. In 1976,
the group wrote to The Boston Globe and suggested that the
paper investigate the relationship of Local 285's leaders to
the Mayor. The Globe's investigation concluded that the
leaders had held 'no show jobs' in the City through Mayoral
largesse for several years and had been able to acquire City
owned real estate cheaply. This led to a public scandal,
investigations by the Boston Finance Commission and an end to
the no show jobs practice. (18)

The Union Democracy Group also complained to the SEIU
International that the Local's election and accounting
practices were fraudulent. The International investigated the

*These staffworkers were paid by AFSCME Council 93 and SEIU
Local 285 to organize State workers.
charges, placed Local 285 under receivership and relieved its two leaders of their duties in 1977.

By 1978, the union had been restructured. Formal elections were held and a union staffworker was elected President. By 1981, when this President was up for re-election, many staffworkers, as well as the City Hospital militants, had grown alienated from his leadership and claimed that he had no interest in developing the union at the shopfloor level. (19)

The Hospital militants constructed an opposition slate, which included a former staffworker of the President and one of the organizers of the 'Union Democracy' movement six years earlier. This slate won a narrow victory and ran unopposed for re-election in 1984.

Yet relations on the shopfloor apparently remained as they had been prior to the 1981 election. At the City Hospital, the political base of the militants and the home of an aggressive AFSCME local, workers frequently and unhesitatingly asserted their rights vis-a-viz management and engaged in various forms of union activity. (20) City Hall workers, on the other hand, who traditionally were dominated by the Mayor's political organization and received little attention through shopfloor organizing, remained inactive in the union, even failing to elect representatives to the union's contract negotiating committee in 1984 and 1985. (21)

Moreover, relations between the leadership, on the one
hand, and the City Hall and Police Department civilian workers on the other, were not good. The leaders complained that it was almost impossible to induce City Hall workers to volunteer to be shop stewards or even to follow through on grievances once they had made a complaint, because of their fears of management retaliation. (A few Assessing workers admitted to me that they declined to pursue grievances because of such fears). "They want the union [staff] to do all the fighting for them," one official said a few times. "When you tell them you're just a resource and they have to fight, they don't want to hear it." (22)

From November 1984 through most of 1985, however, I was often told by workers that the City Hall Business Representative did little aggressive organizing or steward development and that the union was generally unresponsive in both City Hall and in the Police Department: 'They talk a lot about democracy,' said one Assessing worker, 'but they never ask you what you think about things ... I volunteered to become a steward, but I had to keep calling them to get information on the union. They never came to me.' 'They never give you copies of the contract or union handbooks or anything,' said another. 'I call and call and call,' said one Police Operations worker; 'but they don't even return my calls.' (23)

Racial and political differences exacerbated these problems. In the Mayoral election of 1983, the SEIU
leadership endorsed Flynn's black, left-of-center opponent. This endorsement was reportedly welcomed by the large numbers of blacks and liberals who work at the Hospital, but was publicly opposed by more conservative whites who work in City Hall and at Police Headquarters. This racial/political split was also apparent at the 1985 SEIU Christmas Party, at which an estimated 90% of the non-staff participants were black Hospital workers. Likewise, SEIU rallies held at City Hall during the Spring 1985 contract negotiations were attended almost exclusively by Hospital workers.

QWL offered the SEIU leadership a low-cost, no-risk way to begin to overcome this split and organize the City Hall and civilian Police Department workers. Through the union's QWL program committee facilitator, the union would be able to supplement the efforts of its Business Representatives. Although SEIU leaders viewed QWL generally as a cooptative, union-busting tool, there was nothing to bust in City Hall or in the Police Department. Indeed, the leadership resisted suggestions by the Office of Labor Relations to implement the program in the Hospital, where the union was well-organized. (24)

The second reason cited for the SEIU leadership's entry into the QWL program was, as the President put it: "We needed to take every opportunity possible to get to know [the new administration] better for the contract negotiations." (25) QWL offered the possibility of more contact and an additional
channel of access to information and decision making.

This did not mean that the leadership viewed QWL as
entailing a more relaxed relationship with the
administration. On the contrary, the President consistently
and publicly contradicted Roberts, every time he publicly
stated goals of the QWL program of changing 'them and us to
we.' 'No, it's still 'them and us,''' she would assert. 'But on
some things we can cooperate.' (26) Although they told me
they were 'going easy with' the administration in contract
talks during the Fall of 1984 (despite the fact that the
contract was supposed to be signed by June 1984), SEIU leaders
did not hesitate to conduct a spirited public campaign and
plan a work stoppage when by April 1985, they still did not
have a wage offer they found satisfactory.

The third reason why the SEIU leaders decided to join the
QWL program was to improve working conditions. Unlike the
AFSCME leaders, who believed that their ability to maintain
and improve working conditions over the long-term depended
primarily upon consistent contract administration by the
Office of Labor Relations, SEIU was both more entrepreneurial
and less respectful of the formal system of union access.
They would use whatever means they could to pursue their goals
of higher wages, non-political personnel management
procedures, and management solicitation of union input into
workplace decisions. Indeed, the President stated publicly
that 'there's no reason why the things we get in one
department can't be given to other departments [who aren't in the program] also." (27)

QWL is often cast as a way to improve productivity, but SEIU leaders were extremely leery of any such purpose, believing it might undermine the union and lead to a worsening of working conditions. (See Parker, 1985 on this point). They demanded that the City's FMCS proposal contain no references to productivity and vehemently opposed occasional casual statements by some managers and administrators that productivity improvements should be a conscious goal of QWL.

Unlike AFSCME, then, SEIU leaders were able to identify valued goals which they thought the QWL program might achieve. Moreover, despite widespread skepticism within the SEIU staff and officer ranks, no coalitions arose to oppose the program. The President's frequently voiced 'cynical optimism,' as she called it, was apparently enough to convince others that the union was not being undermined.

(C) The Administration's Response to QWL

This section will focus mainly on the reasons given by the administration's two most powerful decision makers, next to the Mayor, for agreeing to embark on the QWL program: The Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor and the Director of Administrative Services.

Throughout the study period, the activities of the Chief Policy Advisor were focused primarily on housing and economic
development, neighborhood participation projects and troubleshooting whenever and wherever the Mayor needed him.

The Policy Advisor's espoused views of QWL, his rationales for participating in the program and his actions during the study period, were somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, he espoused stronger support for the concept than any other administrator or union leader, except for Roberts himself. According to Roberts, the Policy Advisor was the only person on Flynn's staff who expressed interest in QWL during the mayoral campaign. After Roberts made his proposal to request FMCS funding in the Spring of 1984, the Policy Advisor played what Roberts termed a "godfather role" for the idea, arguing in the program's behalf to other administrators and later, helping Roberts choose departments where the program should be implemented. (28)

Like Roberts, the Policy Advisor saw QWL as part of a new philosophy of government, focused on excellent service delivery and neighborhood participation, the achievement of which would entail a total transformation of service delivery processes in the City. This was not only desirable, but, according to the Policy Advisor, necessary to the City's financial well-being:

'It's much broader than [a worker-manager morale problem]. It's in the culture. Management can do better, but it's got to be an orchestrated turnaround in the public's perception of what public employees are worth. Good
managers; it's a snowball that needs to pick up the steam and size. The managers need to be able to motivate the workers, the workers need to feel more of a stake in their job that will create better services and we will skillfully project that. And then that gets verified by those receiving the services. And then we have the kind of turnaround that will make public employment more valued by the public at large and by the people doing the work.'

But "[if] the public believes that public workers are just on the payroll and don't get anything done, then we will continue the current trends of de-funding' through taxpayer revolts and State reluctance to support the City." (29)

Other components of the strategy, with which the Policy Advisor was more closely involved, would include the establishment of Neighborhood Councils and other structures through which citizens could share:

'in decision making on zoning, on broad police regulation issues, licenses, property sales and dispositions, development decisions, as well as basic service delivery processes. Also there is a participation and service delivery component that we have already tested once with some success in a short term way coupled with the Spring [1984 citywide] clean-up. It involved mid-level managers sitting down with the heads of various community organizations... Looking at what they wanted to clean up
in their neighborhood ... and then being able to discuss that with the mid-level managers from the service departments... in a decision making process which decided what to do based on what the departments could offer....' (30) Yet, according to Roberts, the Policy Advisor refused to promoted QWL as a campaign plank during the mayoral race, since Roberts could not demonstrate the program's cost savings in advance. (31) Even by the Fall of 1984, the Policy Advisor did not believe that the QWL program was worthy of the Mayor's personal political capital or public support:

'[When] it's at the point that I know it's working, I'll feel good about projecting it in our general campaign that says that Flynn works hard and so do the people that work for him and for you.' (32)

Asked one year later why he had never mentioned the program to the Mayor or tried to enlist the Mayor's active support for the program, the Policy Advisor gave a similar response:

I'm not going to get the Mayor involved in something that is not a viable project or could waste his time.' (33)

The Policy Advisor also expressed ambiguous views about the significance of QWL for union-administration relations. On the one hand, he said that the program constituted a 'new area for dialogue' with the union and that the administration would generally try to 'strike up a cooperative and planning
relationship with organized labor' when embarking on various service- or neighborhood-related initiatives. (34)

He also acknowledged 'a sense of shared ideology' between himself and the many other left-liberal democrats who were part of Flynn's campaign organization on the one hand, and the leaders of the SEIU, on the other. (35)

On the other hand, he acknowledged no active role for the administration or union in running the program. Rather, the program was to be administered in a decentralized fashion, as a voluntary tool for department heads:

This program [has] to earn its spurs with department heads. Where they want it and think it's a good thing, that's where it will work best.' (36)

Indeed, he stated that program activity should focus on the point of service delivery and worker-manager relations, not union-management or union-administration relations. Like Roberts, he stated that the key to successful QWL was aggressive, shopfloor organizing by QWL program committee facilitators, who would bring worker-manager conflicts to the surface and then take the views of the two parties into a successful process of negotiation and compromise. (37)

Although the support of the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor was important, the Administrative Services Director was the key decision maker whose support for QWL was necessary to allow the program to be initiated and later, to be continued. The Director oversees crucial internal service functions of
the City -- Personnel, Labor Relations, Budget, Management Information Systems, Purchasing and Health Benefits. The holder of this position is generally a chief confidant of the Mayor. The Administrative Services Director during the study period was Flynn's election campaign director.

Until the end of 1985, I was not able to interview the Administrative Services Director and saw him only at two management meetings called for the purpose of resolving a program staff crisis. He did not attend the monthly Oversight Committee meetings and was reportedly not accessible to program staff. According to many administrators, managers, union officials and other observers, he was generally inaccessible, but he refused to delegate decision making authority, allowing issues and problems to bottleneck until he was pushed into acting.

According to several sources, Roberts conducted an intensive lobbying campaign of the Administrative Services Director, but he stated that he was unable to get the latter to focus for long on the QWL idea; even after the April 1984 meeting to discuss the FMCS funding proposal, he reportedly held out to Roberts the possibility of a job not related to QWL or Personnel.

Around the time of the April meeting, however, the Director reportedly said to Roberts of QWL: "We have no money to offer [the workers], so QWL seems like a good idea... What do we have to lose?" He agreed to allow the FMCS application
to go forward, but made no commitments of time or money beyond that. (38). When I interviewed him in the Fall of 1985, he did not espouse a philosophy of worker participation as a key to transforming the culture of City Hall, or anything of the sort. He stated simply: 'We're in this program to improve worker morale.' (39)

The Administrative Services Director's operational view of the program was that program facilitators would 'beat up the managers' when necessary, he said, to get them to respond to worker initiatives, but, like the Policy Advisor, he also believed that the ultimate decision as to whether or not a department would participate in the program should be left to those same managers who were being beaten up. (40)

He also stated that the scope of the program should be limited to dealing with worker-manager issues within departments. Other, larger problems, such as irrationalities in the personnel system overall, payroll procedures, or building and computer maintenance issues, would 'have to be taken care of on a catch as catch can basis for now.' (41)

In response to written suggestions I made in March 1986, that the program be changed to use worker participation as a way of implementing, from the top down, systems reforms devised through union-management cooperation, he reportedly replied that he had no interest in using QWL in that way. (42)

The Administrative Services Director did not interpret the QWL program as a major effort in union-management cooperation,
or as part of a transformation of the service delivery process. Rather, he demonstrated and stated a view of labor-management relations that was in many respects consistent with the previous administration's practice of simply keeping the unions from 'making a stink:' "More union input is not the issue," he said. "You want to make sure the unions don't oppose you." (43) (See Lombardo, 1979)

Accordingly, when a plan for major operational restructuring and staff reductions at the City Hospital was developed in 1985, Hospital officials reportedly followed his directives not to provide the union with information on details or the opportunity to comment, until the finished plan had been presented to the public. This incensed the SEIU leadership and led to a public protest of the Hospital's action. Likewise, Labor Relations officials complained that the Administrative Services Director refused to allow them to make a reasonable compromise with the SEIU on contract wage demands, although negotiations were stalemated throughout the Fall of 1984 and Winter of 1985. A few minutes before the union had scheduled a strike vote, he reportedly phoned the SEIU Executive Director and made a five percent wage increase offer. (44)

By the end of 1985, however, the SEIU leadership had come to regard the Director and the Flynn administration generally as 'more progressive and reasonable than the White administration ever was," although eliciting such
reasonableness often seemed to SEIU leaders to require a public stink. (45)

The responses of officials in the Office of Labor Relations to Roberts' QWL proposal were ambivalent (although they did not have the authority to do anything about it). They were not opposed to the concept per se, but troubled that the program would go ahead over AFSCME's opposition. Through several years of experience with both unions, they had come to respect AFSCME's diligence at maintaining communication with their office and criticized the SEIU, who 'want to be concerned with the very highest policy kinds of decisions. And they have never really tried to establish communication on the little levels. ... AFSCME works very hard at the day to day communication... they do a better job than [SEIU] Local 285 does.' (46)

Moreover, these officials did not perceive the program as addressing fundamental causes of poor worker morale, specifically patronage hiring practices, the failure of managers to comply with collective bargaining agreements in their treatment of workers, and lack of responsiveness by internal service departments to the needs of City employees generally.

On the other hand, the Labor Relations Director believed that the program would be beneficial to worker-manager relations: 'The mere fact that there is a group where the
employees get to speak to the managers without fear of reprisal and point out some things that are wrong' was positive. (47) Moreover, he stated that without the FMCS funding, this type of structured dialogue could not take place, since his office was underfunded and understaffed as it was.

Like the SEIU leadership, Labor Relations officials also perceived the program as having a secondary benefit of improving union-management communication, since, as the Director put it: 'It will force [the SEIU President] and me to talk more.' They saw the program as but one sign of a generally improving union-management climate since Flynn had become Mayor, marked mostly by union forbearance and willingness to talk before filing grievance charges. (48)

The Personnel Director, who had been Flynn's chief assistant for many years, was uneasy about the potential political fall-out of starting a program to which AFSCME was opposed. On the other hand, he expressed agreement with Roberts that his department should 'start to focus on human resources things' and saw QWL as but one such activity that he intended for Roberts to take on. (49)

Like other administrators, the Personnel Director viewed Roberts as an expert on QWL and other human resources issues. He himself had no background in personnel matters and had taken the personnel job in order to weed out the previous Mayor's political operatives from the new administration.
Like Roberts, the Chief Policy Advisor and the Administrative Services Director, the Personnel Director viewed the program's basic purpose as establishing better worker-manager cooperation, not union-management cooperation.

These rationales for and against QWL by union and administration leaders indicate a lack of a clear and widely shared agenda or purpose for QWL. They also indicate disparate and partially conflicting interests and motivations in the union-administration relationship and at most tenuous agreement on common problems and priorities.

Most important, they indicate a lack of strong interest in QWL. The Mayor's top administrators reportedly never informed him of the program's existence during the entire study period, much less during the initiation stage. They viewed QWL as a voluntary tool for department heads to improve worker morale, but department heads were not involved in initiating the program. Although they acknowledged the legitimacy of union participation in the program, administrators did not view the program as an effort in union-administration cooperation at all, but as a worker-manager cooperation program. The administrators committed no money to the program at the outset and they immediately assigned administration of the program to a self-proclaimed expert, whose expertise they had no way of assessing.

Both unions responded to the QWL overture by assessing
whether their power to counter the Mayor's political organization and/or to induce other changes in management practices would be strengthened or weakened through QWL. Neither assigned intrinsic value to the idea of cooperating with the administration in general.

The following discussion will help to explain these responses and agendas, by showing how they arise naturally within and are supported by the City's task environment and political structure.

The Citywide Context for QWL: Task Environment and Political Structure

(A) Tasks and Task Environment

In Chapter 1, it was argued that organizational behavior is shaped, in part, by an organization's tasks and task environment. That discussion focused on private sector organizations and their task environments.

The task environment of a City administration differs from that of a private sector organization in three respects that are important for this analysis. First, no product market mechanism automatically registers consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services provided by the administration. If the administration does not take it upon itself to monitor service delivery quality through surveys or other means, citizens must either wait until election time or move out of
the community to make their dissatisfactions known. In the interim, the administration may not feel compelled to provide top quality services.

Second, aside from memory and trips to other communities, citizens have little basis upon which to judge the relative quality of the services they receive. Hence many intervening factors, especially the image of the administration portrayed in the media, help to determine whether consumers switch mayors at the end of a term.

Finally and most important, unlike a private firm, which provides one product for one market (or ten products for ten markets, etc.), a mayor and his administration provide many services for one or a few constituencies. Hence, to satisfy his constituencies and win re-election, a mayor must determine which services are most important to the electorate and which are less important. Put differently, a mayor must determine which tasks to perform well for the task environment and which ones need less attention.

In Boston, the electorate's primary demand is typically not for the efficient provision of high-quality basic services. Despite complaints and exposes in the press, mayoral candidates do not make service improvements major campaign planks. As a former City Councillor and mayoral candidate told me: 'You can't get 20 people in a living room to get excited about services.' (50) Rather, voters demand jobs, housing, neighborhood development and recently, fiscal stability.
Moreover, the nature of the electorate itself leads mayors to adopt strategies that may undermine the efficient provision of quality services. The City of Boston, unlike New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and other big cities, is politically fragmented. No established groups organize and represent broad-based interests. (51) (See Howitt, 1977 and Lombardo, 1979). Hence, to be elected, a mayoral candidate must establish his own personal coalition of supporters. Given the ethnic and socio-economic diversity of the city and tenacity of parochial neighborhood loyalties, this requires the establishment of neighborhood networks and, optimally, as much personal contact between candidate and citizen as possible. (52) (See Lombardo, 1979)

Since sustained personal contact between candidates and neighborhoods is impossible, establishing viable neighborhood networks requires a strong campaign organization. As Lombardo (1979) and local journalists and commentators have often noted, campaign workers generally require concrete reimbursements for their work, the source of which is patronage appointments. For this reason, once a person has been elected, he gains resources to front a more or less permanent campaign organization which is difficult to counter.

Once in office, a Mayor must continue to build his electoral coalition, since it is based on a personal following and can crumble if not nurtured. Mayors use several mechanisms to continually re-new their links with
neighborhoods. One is neighborhood housing, revitalization and economic development projects, which were a focus of the early Collins, White and Flynn administrations, as indicated above in the description of the Chief Policy Advisor’s role in the Flynn administration.

Patronage employment serves as another effective neighborhood linking mechanism. Mayors practice two different types of patronage. One type is what one might call 'legal patronage.' This refers to the roughly 3,000 persons who are formally classified as mayoral appointees, and thus not covered by the same appointment rules as permanent civil servants. A second type of patronage is that which contravenes the spirit or letter of civil service provisions. It takes a variety of forms, including the establishment of positions within line service departments which are classified as outside of the civil service system, but whose duties are similar to those of civil service jobs; use of technical competence criteria as a loophole to hire outside of the formal promotional appointment process; and the mis-use of provisional appointments. (53)

A third linking mechanism is what Howitt (1977) calls 'government innovations.' These are citizen participation and community control structures, such as the Little City Halls program under Kevin White, which handled information requests and other transactions with citizens in city neighborhoods during the 1970’s, the Federally-funded Model Cities program,
and the Community Schools program. (Nordlinger, 1972). As described previously, one of the primary roles of the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor in the Flynn administration was to develop such government innovations. Neighborhood Spring clean-ups and the development of Neighborhood Councils (in a couple of neighborhoods) counted among some of his more substantive innovations, as of January 1986. (See Altshuler, 1970; Zimmerman, 1972; Mollenkopf, 1983, for analyses of the politics of such innovations).

These strategies do not require high-quality service provision or close labor-management collaboration. Indeed, they may undermine both service delivery quality and labor-management relations. As many workers, union officials and even some managers and administrators indicated to me, patronage appointments are demoralizing to career civil servants, especially when the political appointee is perceived as technically incompetent, and even more especially so when the political appointee is both technically incompetent and is in a supervisory or managerial position. Since, in most departments, only the line supervisor and manager positions pay well enough to constitute a reward for political work, these are the positions most likely to be filled with patronage appointees. As I observed during the two-year study period, the practice of patronage contributes to workplace conflicts and sour attitudes, which in turn undermine work quality and promote turnover among skilled and/or ambitious
employees who do not wish to do political work to advance.

Moreover, the operational emphasis on neighborhood links tends to preclude attention to internal service departments and internal management procedures generally, even compared to other strong mayor cities, like Philadelphia. (See Howitt, 1977) Such neglect was apparently a serious problem in the White administration, particularly during his last two terms (1976 - 1984), when he responded to fiscal stress by cutting funding for internal service departments, such as Personnel, Labor Relations and Real Property (as a percentage of total spending) and curtailed capital planning. Equipment maintenance and supplies budgets for individual departments were also cut. (Boston in Transition, 1984; 'Boston Facts and Figures,' 1985). Accompanied by layoffs and apparent increases in patronage appointments, these budget cuts undermined employee morale and perceived service quality.

The responses to Roberts' QWL overture by AFSCME, Labor Relations officials and to some extent, SEIU officials, reflected a primary concern with internal management and service issues, such as payroll procedures, equipment maintenance, building maintenance and many personnel management practices. Yet, as late as December 1985, the Administrative Services Director stated that these issues could only be taken care of on a 'catch as catch can basis.' (54) Throughout the entire study period, managers, union officials, workers and even some administrators, often
complained about the 'crisis management' style of the administration and lack of sustained attention to internal systems issues.

In short, the City's task environment does not appear to support the introduction or the long-term viability of QWL in basic service departments, because it does not support a sustained focus by the administration on providing high-quality basic services that might require frequent collaboration among workers and managers.

(B) Political Structure

The discussion in Chapter 1 showed that political structure is also an important determinant of an organization's routine behavior, as well as its conduciveness to QWL structures; where worker and manager power is more equal, cooperative relations are more likely. The political structure of a city is far more open and complex than that of a private organization. The Mayor shares power and influence with several entities. Some have formal decisionmaking authority; others simply have the power to shape the opinions of decision makers and voters. These entities include the City Council, the State Legislature and State regulatory agencies, the Federal government and its regulatory agencies,*

*The role of the Federal government will not be considered here, since such an analysis would shed little additional light on the issue of City political structure.
various local watchdog groups, the media and unions. Each must be examined with respect to its possible relevance for labor-management relations and QWL. As the discussion will show, only a couple of these entities have the power to influence personnel practices or the manner in which services are delivered and the implications of that power for the introduction and stability of QWL are not positive.

Although City Council monitors the performance of City agencies and approves the budget, it has no authority over administrative practices or the conduct of labor-management relations. It can and does occasionally hold hearings to discuss agency performance, but it can take no lawful action, other than to reduce funding for an agency (it does not have line item veto powers). Both SEIU and AFSCME officials stated that the Council had no power to help them in any way. As one official put it: 'The Council never saved a job.' (55)

Council's point of leverage with the administration is its power to veto housing, development and State home rule legislation initiated by the Mayor, as well as funds from outside sources (eg., the State, Federal government). Yet Councillors usually do not use this leverage to change service delivery processes. They use it to obtain preferential treatment for their constituents from City agencies and, most of all, to obtain patronage appointments in the City for their supporters. (See Lombardo, 1979). In short, a skillfull Mayor can neutralize the Council's power. (56)
The State exercises considerably more power in City affairs than the Council does. The Legislature must approve all sources of City revenue (taxes, fees, etc.) and provides about one-third of the City's yearly revenues in direct aid. Yet this has little direct bearing on the organization of service delivery or labor-management relations, although the administration's attempts to maintain smooth relations with the State, by expediting legislator requests for constituent services and providing patronage appointments for supporters of State officials, do have disruptive effects on workplace relations. (57) (See also Lombardo, 1979)

Of more consequence, at least in theory, is the State's formal regulatory role in the City employment relationship and in the work of some City departments. Both the 103-year old Civil Service system and the municipal collective bargaining system were created by and are regulated by the State. Yet the State's role in the latter arena is largely limited to adjudication of contract disputes or violations that are not resolvable at the local level.

The State-City Civil Service System, which administers the processes through which employees are hired, promoted, demoted, transferred, terminated and given raises, is regarded by administrators, managers, workers, union officials and outside observers as incapable of discharging this responsibility with any semblance of adequacy. (58) Moreover, union officials charge and some managers acknowledge, that the
cumbersome rules and regulations both induces managers to circumvent them and makes it almost impossible for workers and unions to document such management actions. (59) (See also Appendix C) A system such as this does not promote consistency and perceived fairness in labor-management relations, much less the collaborative relations supposedly characteristic of QWL.

In addition to the City Council and State, several watchdog organizations monitor the conduct of the administration. The Boston Finance Commission is a State-mandated watchdog that conducts periodic investigations of the City’s financial management practices. Most of these investigations do not directly affect personnel or employment relations, however. (60) The Boston Municipal Research Bureau is a business-sponsored watchdog that is widely regarded as influential in decisions of the State Legislature and financial institutions on questions of financial support for the City. Although most of its work focuses on financial management policies and practices, it also monitors department employment levels and employee absenteeism statistics, criticizing increases and applauding decreases.

The power of these two watchdogs pales in comparison with that of *The Boston Globe* and *The Boston Herald* daily papers. Indeed, it is only through the media that the watchdogs and even the City Council have the power to influence Mayoral behavior. The media also do their own investigative reporting
of administrative practices and the newspapers conduct occasional surveys of citizen satisfaction with service delivery quality.

In a politically fragmented city such as Boston, in which a Mayor's personal following and personal image in the eyes of the electorate can make the difference between re-election and defeat, the power of the press cannot be taken lightly. Both Flynn and his predecessor devoted considerable time to actions designed to maintain a positive image citywide. (61) According to a reliable informant, one of the top administrators described previously 'spends half of his time on the press; trying to get them to change a story or not print a story.' Likewise, the Personnel Director stated at one point: 'The Boston Globe sets the agenda. Or actually, the administration sets the agenda and follows it, but the Globe sidetracks it or changes it. When they write something, you jump.' (62)

The implications of the power of the media for labor-management relations and QWL are ambiguous. On the one hand, the diligence of the press at monitoring service quality appears to induce the administration to devote some attention to basic services, when and to the extent that the press makes specific services an issue. For example, a breakdown in the police response system during the study period that was (incorrectly) blamed on the 911 operators, resulted in sustained criticism in the press and the appointment of a
blue-ribbon committee to solve the problem. Since the QWL program was in operation in the 911 unit at the time, the blue-ribbon committee adopted the QWL group's recommendations for reform in the unit. Hence one could say that the press helped to support labor-management cooperation. (63)

Moreover, the press's frequent criticisms of patronage can be regarded as a positive influence on labor-management relations, since patronage has baleful effects on worker morale, as discussed above. (On the other hand, several Assessing Department workers told me that they found it demoralizing to be labelled a lazy political hack by the press, just because they were initially hired through political connections, since they believed they were also qualified for their jobs and worked hard).

Finally and most directly, an editor of The Boston Globe who favored QWL in Boston printed supportive op-ed articles in January 1984, October 1984 and May 1986. Roberts claimed that the first article made him and QWL more acceptable to top administrators, but no else confirmed this. (64)

On the other hand, the overall effect of the media and the Mayor's obsession with the maintenance of a positive image, may be to distract the attention of the administration away from service delivery and internal management issues. As noted above, the lack of attention to internal systems problems was a common source of aggravation among workers and managers during the study period. As one frustrated manager
put it: "Why doesn't [Flynn] just go out and hire the best city manager he can find in the country? Then [Flynn] can go and ride the fire engines and do all that image stuff." (65)

Moreover, the fact that the administration tends to "jump" when critical press accounts appear (as acknowledged by the Personnel Director above), means that problems may not receive the sustained attention they need to be resolved, but only handwaving or symbolic responses. For example, it took the administration over eight months to even begin implementing the recommendations of the blue-ribbon committee on 911, mentioned above. At one point, the Mayor decided to solve a much-publicized problem of abandoned cars in a neighborhood by publicly ordering the towing unit to remove the cars within 12 hours or look for employment elsewhere. The cars were removed immediately, but accumulated again within a couple of months.

Finally, unions are a source of potential power with which the Mayor must contend. Worker power was identified in Chapter 1 as a key factor that shapes labor-management relations, QWL and routine behavior in organizations. As that discussion also indicated, the power of workers varies with their place in the division of labor, conditions in the labor market and the nature and extent of worker (or manager) organization.

The miscellaneous employees, represented by AFSCME and SEIU, are the least powerful of all major employee groups in the City, as reflected, for example, in their average weekly
wages shown in Table 3.3. Hence they present little or no challenge to the administration's authority and have no leverage with which to bring about more cooperative labor-management relations.

The lack of power of the miscellaneous employees is traceable to several sources. The majority of these workers are semi-skilled clerical, technical and maintenance workers. Most of their jobs are at the bottom to middle levels of the skill hierarchy in most departments and require at most a high school education to perform, although a substantial amount of working knowledge may be required as well (See Kusterer, 1977 for a discussion of the importance of such skills). (66)

Their lack of power is also traceable to a lack of strong union organization, which has many causes. First, municipal workers lack the right to strike. Although work stoppages occasionally occur despite the law, they are generally of very brief duration and answered with injunctions. The no-strike law appears to be at least a marginal deterrent to some workers. For example, when in March 1985, the SEIU began preparing for a work stoppage, some workers in City Hall, where the union is particularly weak, expressed alarm that the union might do something that was illegal, despite the fact that they were upset with the administration for not increasing their pay.

Second, the miscellaneous workers have no clear public identity and no strong base of support in the public at
TABLE 3.3
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES BY UNION
1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNION</th>
<th>WAGE ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Federation of State, County and</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Employees, Council 93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Employees International Union, Local #285</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Police Patrolmen's Association</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federation of Superior (Police) Officers</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Association of Firefighters, Local #718</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Teachers' Union</td>
<td>538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Average</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 1985 - 'Personnel Statistics Sheet,' 05/30/85, No. 0003, by Administrative Services Dept., City of Boston.
large. In many ways, their identity is bound up with that of the administration and they are frequently tarred with the same brush as the latter in criticisms of service quality or patronage levelled by the media. Moreover, the level of financial support for City services which the State, City Council and citizens are willing to provide, rests in part on the perception that the administration is competent and managing money honestly. Too much miscellaneous union criticism of administration practices may ultimately undermine workers' chances for wage raises, or undermine the union's own lobbying of the Legislature on behalf of City financial aid requests. Ironically, the administration can easily distance itself from unions who make demands for wage increases, claiming lack of ability to pay and, depending upon the circumstances, picking up public support for responsible financial management in the process. (67)

Third, many miscellaneous workers feel a primary connection with their sponsors in the patronage system, the person who helped them get their current job. This undermines their willingness to work within the union framework. "When they have a problem," says one union steward, "they ask themselves, 'should I go to my sponsor, or to the union?'" (68). From what little I was able to observe, workers generally go to their political sponsors, unless they believe that the latter will not be effective in that instance. Moreover, political sponsors and informal networks generally
are more effective in securing a raise or promotion to a higher title than the union is. This undermines the few attempts that the unions make to develop worker loyalty in City Hall and makes it more difficult to counteract patronage in City employment practices.

Fourth, the representation structure of the miscellaneous unions makes it difficult for them to find issues or experiences which tie all members together, aside from pay and benefits issues. Although AFSCME and SEIU represent primarily non-professional, clerical, technical and clue-collar workers, their jurisdictions include dozens of occupations in departments throughout the entire City. According to Lombardo (1979) and other observers, this is partly the result of the continuing rivalry between the two unions, which began in the 1950's, and partly the result of astute jerrymandering by Mayor White's labor lawyer in the late 1960's, who sought to limit the power of the unions.

Fifth, relations between SEIU and AFSCME exacerbate their weakness vis-a-viz the administration. With the exception of their joint representation of some State workers -- an arrangement that has often been fraught with conflict -- Council 93 and Local 285 have generally not cooperated with each other or approached the administration as a coalition on any issue. Since together they represent almost 40 percent of the City's unionized workforce, a coalition might be able to focus attention and make substantial headway on issues such as
the use of computer technology, raise and promotion practices, training and career development policies, and payroll procedures; issues which were often mentioned by AFSCME and SEIU officials and SEIU workers.

Yet SEIU and AFSCME leaders have seldom displayed professional respect for each other; neither during the years up to 1977, when SEIU was ruled by two men whom AFSCME considered to be a disgrace to the labor movement, nor since 1981, since SEIU has elected leaders who offend AFSCME sensibilities by adopting left-liberal political causes. SEIU leaders, for their part, express little desire to mount new initiatives to cooperate with the conservative leaders of Council 93, although they state that they do collaborate with the AFSCME Hospital local, with whom they share political beliefs and strategies.

Police officers', teachers' and firefighters' unions are able to partially overcome these sources of weakness, for two reasons: First, their members are craft workers; their jobs have to date remained largely impervious to division into discrete, centrally-coordinated tasks. In the language of Alan Fox (1974), the jobs of these workers entail 'high trust' by the public and officials who are directly responsible to the public for the performance of police officers, teachers and firefighters. For this reason, they receive a great deal of training and socialization to the ethics and hierarchies of their crafts. This tends to preclude the effective use of
patronage in hiring and promotion practices, it makes internal cohesiveness easier to achieve and it makes the authority of non-member managers easier to oppose. (See Spero and Capozzola, 1973)

Second, these workers provide services that are popular with citizens and easily recognized as valuable. Unlike miscellaneous employees, they are occasionally featured in the daily newspapers for acts of heroism. Hence, they have a distinctive identity in the public mind and, importantly, in the minds of State legislators and City councillors, whom they lobby successfully on many occasions. Because of their distinctive identity, they are not tarred by the media with the same brush as the administration and are able to prevail upon the administration for wage increases and favorable work rules.

Given the weakness of the miscellaneous employee unions, there is only one rule that the administration must observe in its dealings with them: 'Keep them from making a stink' in public that could embarrass the administration. (Lombardo, 1979) As the Administrative Services Director explained to me in December 1985: 'Union input is not the issue; You want to make sure they don't oppose you.' (69) Lombardo's analysis of union political behavior supports this view, finding that candidates for municipal office do not need active miscellaneous union support, although it is desirable, as all support is. What politicians need is for the unions not to actively oppose them. (Lombardo, 1979)
This means that there is no compelling reason for the administration to collaborate with the miscellaneous employee unions on most issues. Certainly there is no compelling reason to enter into a QWL program in which the administration shares power with unions. This was reflected in the views of all administrators, as well as of Roberts, who stated that the purpose of the QWL program was to develop a "more participatory management style" and more assertive, conscientious workers, not stronger unions. It was simply "important that the unions don't oppose the program." (70)

The concern of the SEIU leaders with their union's lack of power was a major impetus in their decision to join the QWL program. Given their weakness vis-a-vis the administration and mayor's political organization in City Hall, QWL could only help to strengthen the union; it could not harm it.

Conclusion

The City's task environment and political structure support conflicting relations between the miscellaneous employees and the administration, not cooperative ones. Hence, it is little wonder that the stimulus for QWL came from an external advocate, who brought a program that was funded by the Federal government.

The responses of key administrators and union officials to this overture reflected their disparate interests and agendas. Their only source of unity was a "sense of shared [democratic
socialist ideology,' as the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor put it, which they saw as possibly compatible with QWL. This ideology was accompanied by a vague faith on the part of Roberts and the Policy Advisor, that bottom-up worker initiatives could be a factor in, or leverage, in Roberts' view, a fundamental transformation of the service delivery system.

The responses of other key administrators were based more on the notion that workers' morale and work habits needed improvement and might improve, if they were given the chance to identify and discuss shopfloor problems with managers in their departments. Most did not perceive QWL as an initiative that would require their own time or active support. Indeed, they initiated the program on behalf of department managers who knew nothing about it.

Neither the SEIU nor the AFSCME leadership saw QWL this way. AFSCME viewed QWL as at best an insincere and ineffective attempt by the administration to address problems of concern to workers, and at worst as a waste of their own time and a destabilizing force in the union. SEIU officials saw QWL primarily as an organizing tool in departments where they had a weak presence. In a sense, they also initiated the program on behalf of others who knew nothing about it; the rank and file in City Hall whom the leaders wanted to organize.
It is safe to say that no party and particularly not the administration, displayed a very clear conception of what QWL was and what it should do. Yet their conceptions and agendas for QWL made it clear that QWL would not be a Citywide program with strong executive leadership, but a series of department-level QWL programs that the administration supported, or tolerated. Whether QWL could thrive under these conditions, whether the contexts of any departments would prove conducive to QWL and whether QWL would be accepted, in the first place, by the workers and managers for whom it was intended, remained to be seen.
CHAPTER 3 - NOTES

1) Roberts, LMCP Director, November 1984.

2) Roberts, LMCP Director, November 1984 and January 1986.


5) Director of Administrative Services, April 1984, as reported by Roberts, May 1984.


10) AFSCME Council 93 official, August 1985. Within this top-down framework, AFSCME representatives are regarded by both past and present Office of Labor Relations officials (as well as outside observers and the one department manager whom I asked about this) as being very responsive to their members' needs and attentive to details, maintaining close and frequent contact with the Office of Labor Relations, as well as lines of communication with department heads. I have no data from rank and file members with which to support or refute this view, but several SEIU leaders disputed it, claiming that AFSCME leaders do not represent their members well.

11) AFSCME Council 93 official, August 1985.

12) AFSCME Council 93 official, August 1985.


14) AFSCME Council 93 official, August 1985.

CHAPTER 3 - NOTES, Continued


19) The major conflict between the President and the militants appears to have been a five-day strike, instigated by the Hospital militants in July 1980, over wages and alleged political intimidation of workers by the Mayor's campaign organization. This work stoppage, according to some of the Hospital militants, was not authorized by the President and he supported it only after it was a fait accompli.


24) By the end of the study period, however, they stated that the program might be more effective in places like the Hospital, where they already had a strong organization.


CHAPTER 3 - NOTES, Continued


39) Director of Administrative Services Department, December 1985.

40) Director of Administrative Services Department, December 1985.

41) Director of Administrative Services Department, December 1985.

42) Director of Administrative Services Department, December 1985; Roberts, March 1986.

43) Director of Administrative Services Department, December 1985.

44) President, SEIU Local #285, August 1985 and December 1985.

45) SEIU officials, November 1985 and December 1985.


47) Director, Office of Labor Relations, November 1984.

48) Director, Office of Labor Relations, November 1984.

49) Director, Personnel Division, November 1984.

50) Interview with former City Councillor, August 1985.

51) The Democratic and Republican party structures are weak at the State level and virtually non-existent at the local level,
where elections are non-partisan. The statewide union structure is also weak and fragmented. Although business groups, such as 'The Vault' (The Coordinating Committee) and the Mass High Technology Council exercise great influence over City finances and development policies, they are generally not a presence in City electoral politics. Other groups, such as Mass Fair Share and the Citizens for Limited Taxation are active at the state level, and even to some extent at the local level, in the case of Fair Share, but as single issue groups, not multi-issue political entities.

52) Lombardo (1979) maintains that this holds true for City Council and Boston seats in the State Legislature as well.

53) See Appendix C for a discussion of these loopholes in the Civil Service employment system.

54) Director of Administrative Services Department, December 1985.

55) AFSCME Council 93 official, August 1985 and SEIU Local #285 official at various points during the study period.

56) Former Boston City Councillor, August 1985.

57) I was personally acquainted with two such patronage appointments and witnessed their disruptive effects on work relations.

58) A State Civil Service Commission attorney and State Personnel Department officials acknowledged, in July 1985, that problems existed in the system, but stated that it was improving. (See Appendix C).

59) Boston_in_Transition, 1984; Retirement Board manager, June 1985. State Personnel Department officials asserted that the system was 'self-policing,' in interviews conducted in July 1985.

60) The Finance Commission's investigation of the 'no show jobs' held by SEIU Local 285 officials in 1976 eventually led to the ouster of these officials and an end to the Mayor's practice of awarding such jobs. See note 17 above.

61) See Higgins' Style_Versus_Substance, 1984, discussions of these symbolic acts during the White administration.

CHAPTER 3 - NOTES, Continued


65) See note 61.


68) SEIU Local #285 official, October 1985 and April 1986.

69) Director of Administrative Services, December 1985.

70) Roberts, Program Director, April and May 1984; November 1984.
CHAPTER 4
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONS
IN THE ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

Introduction

This chapter discusses the implementation and operation of the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation program in the Assessing Department. The introductory section of the chapter describes the program structure and some general features of the program implementation process; the remainder of the chapter focuses on the Assessing Department.

(A) Program Structure

The design of the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation program conformed to the parallel hierarchy form commonly used in QWL programs. (See diagram in Figure 4.1)

The top tier in the program's hierarchy, called the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee, consisted of ten voting members: The Director of Administrative Services, the Supervisor of Personnel, the Director of the Office of Labor Relations, the Budget Director, the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor, the SEIU President and four union designees - The City Hall and Police Department Business Representatives and two shop stewards. The primary functions of the Oversight Committee were to plan for and direct the expansion of the program into various departments and serve as trouble shooter.
Note: Worksite Groups were to be the most frequent source of initiatives, with higher level committees providing approvals and assistance in implementation.

when the program ran into snags at the department levels.

A Departmentwide Committee was to be established in each participating department, consisting of equal numbers of middle and top managers, and worker/union representatives. The Departmentwide Committees were to meet at least once per month, to receive reports from Worksite Groups, to approve or reject their initiatives and facilitate their problem-solving efforts. The Committees were also to 'engage in active problem-solving efforts when problems taken up by the Worksite Groups cannot be adequately addressed at the worksite level.' (1)

Worksite Groups of 6 - 12 persons each were to constitute the bottom tier of the hierarchy. Each Worksite Group was to be comprised of primarily non-supervisory employees, but, in an effort to overcome the often-cited problem of line supervisor resistance to worker initiatives, line supervisors were to be included in the groups. (See Klein, 1984) The groups were to meet weekly to discuss and 'solve problems that arise in the work situation and devise ways to accomplish tasks more effectively, efficiently and enjoyably.' (2)

The program documents called for the problem-solving process to begin with agenda formation, problem definition and then problem-solving in the Worksite Group, followed by discussions and approvals from each level of authority above the Worksite Group, so that initiatives would have the support of the middle by the time they reached the Departmentwide
Committee level.

In addition to Roberts, the Program Director, the program was to have a staff of one full-time committee facilitator chosen by the administration with union approval and one half-time committee facilitator chosen by the SEIU with administration approval, as well as the half-time services of a Personnel Division clerical worker. In addition, an outside training and advisory consultant was to be hired. By the end of November 1984, these persons had been hired by the Citywide Oversight Committee and had begun working with Roberts to implement the program.

(B) Implementation Strategy

In Chapter 3, it was pointed out that key administration decision makers, who became the members of the Citywide Oversight Committee, conceived of the QWL program as mostly a tool to help department heads improve morale and services. The program would have to 'earn its spurs with department heads,' as the Policy Advisor put it, if it was to have a role in the City. This meant that the decision to implement and continue participating in the program would rest solely with department heads, rather than being directed or coordinated from the top of the administration or from the Citywide Oversight Committee.

Moreover, since top administrators viewed Roberts as an expert, 'the one who's studied all this stuff,' as one put it,
they left him with almost the entire responsibility of defining the program's purpose and of organizing support among department heads. The Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor and Labor Relations Director helped him identify departments with large concentrations of SEIU workers and made a few introductory phone calls, but the task of convincing department heads of the value of QWL was left to Roberts.

Roberts' criteria for program site selection were not extensive, since he believed that QWL was a conflict resolution tool and a social desideratum that could be implemented in almost any organizational setting. QWL success would hinge on the quality of program committee facilitation, not on pre-existing characteristics of organizational settings. As he acknowledged in January 1986:

"At first we thought it would be good to have one blue collar and one white collar department [to assess the differential effects of participation on employee attitudes and behavior], so we looked at Public Works [as the blue collar department]. But since [the department head] was out of town for a couple of weeks, we picked [other departments]. It could have gone either way, really." (3)

Once Roberts had identified a few departments whose managers were interested in QWL, the Citywide Oversight Committee was asked to make a formal decision to implement the program there. The SEIU representatives preferred Police
Operations, because they believed that civilians in the Operations Unit (who are SEIU members) had shown a potential for union activism. Administrators on the Oversight Committee preferred the Assessing Department, since some believed that the department had many morale problems. The Committee agreed to implement the program in both departments and by October 1984, the selection process had been completed.

The Context for QWL in the Assessing Department: Tasks and Politics

The discussion in Chapter 1 indicated that QWL was more likely to take root in a setting where tasks change frequently or require substantial collaboration among highly skilled workers and managers, and/or where workers (or other parties) have sufficient power to induce management to solicit worker input into decisionmaking. The contextual features which characterize the Assessing Department are quite different from these ideals, however. Indeed, the context hardly seems to be conducive to close collaboration between workers and managers or among various management levels. Department tasks are largely determined by State policy and overseen by the State. These tasks involve the provision of a uniform product (a tax bill) to a large population, which necessitates a large staff, most of whose duties are divided into narrow tasks that are directed from the top of the organization. Changes in workplans and procedures are typically directed by top
managers who are mayoral appointees and who may have little or no technical background in assessing. This creates resentment among middle managers, supervisors and workers, who have little power to openly resist directives from the top.

(A) Tasks and the Task Environment

The Assessing Department's task is to administer the City's property taxes. This requires the production of a biannual tax bill for every property owner in the City. This task is divided into three primary functions:

i) A *legal* record maintenance function, which entails the maintenance of an accurate description of all real and taxable personal property in the City and a record of its ownership. As of 1985, the city had over 140,000 real estate parcels, many of which change hands frequently or are subdivided for condominium conversions.

ii) A *valuation* function, through which the value of real property for taxation purposes is determined.

iii) A *taxpayer assistance* function, through which tax bills are prepared and sent out, abatement applications are processed, and questions and complaints are addressed.

As of November 1985, the department employed 176 persons to carry out these and various ancillary functions. The structure of the department is depicted in Figure 4.2. As the figure shows, the Department has a five-level hierarchy. The top two levels constitute the senior staff, who are mayoral
FIGURE 4.2
CITY OF BOSTON ASSESSING DEPARTMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

COMMISSIONER

ASSOCIATE
DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR,
ADMINISTRATION
& FINANCE

DEPUTY
DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR,
OPERATIONS

DEPUTY
DIRECTOR

CHAIRMAN,
BOARD OF
REVIEW

LITIGATION
UNIT

MEMBERS,
BOARD OF
REVIEW

TAXPAYER'S
ASSISTANCE/
SOC' L SVCS

8/58
HOUSING
PROGRAMS

SUPPORT
SERVICES

COMMERCIAL
UNIT

RESIDENTIAL
UNIT

RESEARCH
UNIT

FISCAL
AFFAIRS

TRAINING
ORIENTATION

PERSONNEL

AUDIT
UNIT

PERSONAL
PROPERTY
UNIT

DATA
MANAGEMENT
UNIT

INFORMATION
SYSTEMS
UNIT

Source: "Assessing Department Employee Guide," Fall 1985
appointees. Both of the major divisions in the department, Operations and Administration/Finance, have a director and deputy director, who oversee various units. Each unit has a head and the larger units also have line supervisors, all of whom are non-union, management employees. At the bottom level are non-managerial employees, most of whom are SEIU members.

The department's legal record maintenance and valuation functions are housed in the Operations Division. The legal function is performed by the (IBM) Data Management Unit, whose 30 employees collect, process and keypunch ownership and parcel data and prepare tax bills after valuation data has been added. Five workers copy title and parcel data by hand from County deed books onto formatted tables. These tables are sent to five keypunchers, who type the changes into the IBM computer. Several workers perform various tasks necessary to print out the data and check keypunch accuracy. Five ward clerks copy title change data from IBM printouts and valuation data from VAX printouts by hand, onto the department's permanent historical file card for each parcel in the city. Five engineers and assistants (members of AFSCME Council 93) handle technical problems associated with parcel subdivisions and other changes.

Routine property valuation data (collected in response to building rehabilitation permits, etc.) is collected by 25 assessors in the Commercial, Residential and Personal Property Units. (These workers are members of AFSCME Council 93 and
were not included in the QWL program or this study). Mass re-valuation data (described below), is collected through an outside contractor.

The 30-person (VAX) Information Systems Unit includes five computer programmers who develop software to process valuation data and generate reports, and fifteen data keypunchers and checkers, who enter valuation data into the VAX computer. Two line supervisors, a unit head and a deputy unit head oversee the work.

The taxpayer assistance function is housed in the Administration and Finance Division's 20-person TPA/Social Services Unit. Eight taxpayer assistants handle taxpayer inquiries by phone, mail and at the unit's service counter, using information stored in the computer or on the department's historical record files.

The Social Services part of the unit is staffed by four workers who process real estate tax abatement applications. They interview applicants and, if the applicant is eligible, recommend an approval of the application to the Associate Commissioner. Three other workers answer questions and process applications for abatement of the motor excise and personal property taxes, most of which are filed by taxpayers in person. Two supervisors oversee the unit.

The work of the Taxpayer Assistance Unit is particularly hectic during the 60 days following each of the biannual tax bill mailings, but slows down considerably after that,
allowing workers to spend more time on filing and research tasks and to work at a leisurely pace.

Prior to 1979, the Assessing Department's structure was simpler and most of its tasks were performed manually, by about 100 assessors, clerical workers, managers, civil engineers and attorneys. To calculate valuations, for example, assessors used mostly construction/rehabilitation permits and spot inspections. This method of computing valuation permitted abuses, however. As early as the 1950's, assessors were criticized by the Boston Finance Commission, City Council and media, for taking bribes to reduce valuations, for showing favoritism to politically sensitive neighborhoods and for general arbitrariness in their work. As activity in the Boston housing market and downtown office construction dramatically increased in the 1970's, criticisms of Boston assessing practices increased also. (4)

In 1979, a court order required the Assessing Department to conduct, thenceforth, a complete revaluation of all real property every three years and to use objective formulas to estimate values for the years in between. The State Department of Revenue was ordered to closely monitor the entire valuation process and certify the tax rate before bills could be sent to taxpayers. The Assessing Department was not prepared to conduct this massive property revaluation, however. It lacked adequate staff to inspect each property in the City to collect the needed data, its IBM computer system
(which was used to maintain property ownership files) lacked the software required for mass appraisal/valuation tasks, and the department lacked computer programmers who could develop software to process the valuation data.

The Mayor decided to establish an Office of Property Equalization, as a separate mayoral agency, to conduct the revaluation. The OPE, as it was called, was staffed with 100 computer programmers, keypunchers and taxpayer assistants. In 1981, the OPE acquired a Digital VAX computer and hired a vendor to develop mass revaluation software and gather data for the revaluation on each piece of real estate in the city. (5) In the Summer of 1983, the OPE was dissolved and its tasks, computer and personnel were moved into the Assessing Department. This increased the latter's size from 100 to 220 employees, added two new levels of hierarchy, routinized many tasks, created some new, ancillary tasks and created headaches for managers and workers.

From the Summer of 1983 through the entire QWL program operations period, the Department struggled with the burden of integrating the old Assessing Department with the Office of Property Equalization, while trying to carry out the normal work of the assessing process and conduct a second mass revaluation of all property, as required by the State. Although the jobs of most individual workers had been simplified through the merger, the department had become far more complex and more difficult to run. This was exacerbated
by the department's location in five different offices in three different buildings, due primarily to lack of space in City Hall. Since most of the department's functions and units are interdependent, physical dispersion made coordination of activities a difficult problem. A bottleneck or unexpected action in one unit often disrupted the work of other units.

More important, the use of two computer systems, VAX and IBM, to produce one final product, the tax bill, created substantial coordination problems and work redundancies. The flow chart in Figure 4.3 gives an indication of some of the complexity of the process.

The second mass revaluation of all City property created a very heavy workload. This work was complicated by the computer coordination problems and the use of an outside contractor to provide valuation software and organize the mass field data collection process. Throughout the revaluation process, inspectors for the State Department of Revenue frequently requested reports or spot checks of certain pieces of the product, which disrupted work schedules.

This is not the sort of task context that can easily utilize bottom-up initiative, although one might imagine that such input would be beneficial to all concerned, if there were a vehicle to organize it. As Storper and Walker (1984) point out, some amount of worker input into workplace decisions or at least mutually respectful relations between labor and management might prevail even in task settings of this sort,
FIGURE 4.3
THE IBM TAX BILLING PROCESS

Abstract Registry Data

Identify or Assign Parcel Nos.

Review/Update Office Records

Edit Title Inventory

Title Inventory Tape

Tax Tape from VAX

Tax Bill

Update Betterment File

Betterment Tape

Tax Bill

Update Clause Exemption File

Clause Exemption Tape

Residential & Commercial Tax Rate

Mail Address Changes

Mail Clause Exemption Applications

Sort/Verify Clause Exemptions

Source: City of Boston, Assessing Department
if workers have a collective power base, such as a strong union. This was not the case in the Assessing Department, however, as the next section will show.

(B) Political Structure and Routine Work Relations

As the foregoing discussion indicated, the Massachusetts State Department of Revenue exercises considerable control over the tasks and work products of the Assessing Department. The State must certify the City's tax rate each year. It can, at any time, order the City to recollect or re-process all or part of the data used to calculate property taxes. The Department of Revenue also trains and certifies assessors in the Assessing Department.

Various departments within the City also influence the internal affairs of the Assessing Department. The City Budget Director has substantial control over the department's budget. According to Assessing managers, they had neither input into nor, on many occasions, forewarnings of the Budget Director's decisions to cut department funds. (The Budget Director and Administrative Services Director asserted that they 'gave Assessing everything they wanted,' however). (6)

The Management Information Systems Division controls the Assessing Department's use of the IBM computer. The Personnel Division administers most of the paperwork required for formal hirings, promotions, terminations, etc., which takes a great deal of time. (See Appendix C for a discussion of the
cumbersomeness of the Civil Service hiring process). The Mayor's political organization also exerts influence on department hirings, promotions and, according to some Assessing workers and managers, terminations. Since the department's senior managers are mayoral appointees, they are presumably under some pressure to accept political referrals for jobs. (See below)

Within the Assessing Department, formal decision making power is concentrated in the senior managers, who are mayoral appointees. (See Organizational Chart, Figure 4.2). Although middle managers (unit heads and line supervisors) have civil service classifications, they have no formal power with which to counter the decisions and directives of senior managers. During the study period, middle managers complained to me that they lacked the power to determine work planning schedules or the overall workflow process in their own units. They had no input into decisions regarding contracting out of software development for the revaluation project, monitoring of the quality of data collected by revaluation field workers, or the number of workers in their own units. Senior managers transferred workers into and out of their units with little or no notice and, according to one, strong-armed them into accepting political appointees. (7) Throughout the study period, unit heads also complained that most senior managers refused to consider their production problems or needs for more staff. Faced with deadlines he could not meet and lack
of staff, one unit head decided to "steal people from other units who didn't realize how far behind they were." (8)

Several middle managers also complained that hiring and firing of both senior and middle managers was based on political considerations, rather than technical competence and that this led to poor planning and technical mistakes. Several stated that they themselves could have neither influence nor job security if they didn't "go out drinking with [senior management]." (9)

Line supervisors are classified as non-union, management employees. They monitor worker performance of some tasks and adherence to workplace rules, as well as keep track of the unit's or work group's total production. But for the most part, supervisors act as conduits for decisions made by senior or middle managers; often they stand by while middle and senior managers go to workers themselves with directives.

Some supervisors initially buck this system and attempt to build a more pro-active role for themselves. Resistance by middle and senior managers soon convinces them that they are out of line, however. One supervisor told me both at the beginning and end of the study period: "My talents aren't being used here...My boss won't tell me anything [about the work]...They could eliminate this job." (10) Another, after several attempts to make changes in work scheduling and working conditions in his unit provoked personal abuse by a senior manager, finally decided to "just go along to get
along, like everybody else,' as he put it. (11)

Workers, particularly SEIU clerical and technical workers, have little or no say in determining which tasks they will perform from one day to the next, much less control over the work process or workplace conditions. An estimated one-half of the SEIU workers in the department at the time the study period began had little security in their jobs, since they were working in positions for which they had only provisional civil service status. This meant that they could be demoted to their permanent, lower-paid civil service rating at any time. (See Appendix C for a more detailed discussion of the problems with the State-City Civil Service system).

As described in Chapter 3, the SEIU traditionally has been weak in City Hall departments like Assessing. Indeed, prior to the QWL program, neither of the union's two shop stewards in the department was regarded by workers or union officials as effective. Moreover, most workers did not regard the union's City Hall representative or the union as a whole as responsive or effective. Some workers claimed that they hardly knew that they had a union; many asked me to help them solve problems that were normal duties for a union steward. SEIU officials, however, claimed that the Assessing workers were afraid to file formal grievances of management actions. (See the discussion in Chapter 3).

The politics of the Assessing Department are well illustrated by the manner in which the City responded to the
1979 court order requiring the mass revaluation of all real property in the City. As mentioned above, the Mayor did not reorganize the Assessing Department or retrain its workers, but instead organized a new, mayoral department, the OPE, that was exempt from collective bargaining and civil service rules. The OPE was widely considered to be an extension of the Mayor's political organization and its work brought discredit to the administration.

Since OPE reported to the Mayor, only the Mayor could ensure that its work was coordinated with that of the Assessing Department. But as one manager remembered: 'There was no cooperation between the two departments when they were separate because their directors were at war. I was running back and forth all the time; it was terrible.' (12) After the decision to merge OPE with the Assessing Department was made, 'they just put them together, with no planning,' according to one manager. (13)

Assessing workers were apparently not informed about the merger and in some cases, perhaps, were misinformed:

'Towards the end [1982 - 1983], we kept losing people [because of staff cutbacks due to fiscal stress], but the tax bill had to get out... [In July, 1983] they brought in all these kids from OPE [to do taxpayer assistance functions]. They weren't given any training, just put up there cold. At the time, we thought it was a load off, but [management] never said, 'This is going to be the
future, would you like it?' ... 'I asked [the Associate Commissioner], is this going to be a permanent thing? 'Oh, within six months, half of them will be gone,' he said. No way.' (14)

In addition to the merger process, the results of the merger were dissatisfying to many workers. According to workers in the Old Assessing Department:

'Our job was a very full and interesting job...[but gradually, through the merger] each little [job task] was nibbled away... The job has been diminished, though it requires more time now because it all comes from different places. ...I don't particularly care for my job. I like the variety we did have. Now it's monotonous; same thing all the time.' .... 'I have no function right now. I tear papers apart and whatever has to be done... I used to enjoy coming to work in the morning. Now it is an effort just to get on the bus...Everything has been taken away from us.'(15)

For some workers, the merger also entailed a demotion from the positions they had occupied but for which they had not been able to take a civil service test, down to their permanent civil service rating (see Appendix C): 'When we combined I got the shaft and what saved me was the fact that I was permanent civil service and I went back to [a lower level job].' (16)

These workers watched with alarm while department
functions were slowly computerized, but they themselves were not given training to work with the computer. As they watched the new management fire many workers and pressure others to leave voluntarily, many came to believe that management's intention was to gradually push them out of the department. The Commissioner acknowledged to me that he did not intend to train many of the older Assessing workers for computer work, but insisted: 'I will not put those people on the street.' (17)

Many Office of Property Equalization workers also experienced the merger as a come-down from a previously more rewarding job. As one taxpayer assistant said:

"We had a unique relationship in OPE. We were all appointees ... we weren't in the union and we had a good rapport with the people we were with. ... I remember working weekends for OPE and it never bothered me...The money was less than I'm making now." "At OPE, we had real responsibility," said another. "We planned public hearings and set up the sites...Even though OPE has been characterized as political hacks, we really felt we were serving the public."(18)

When the merger came, some taxpayer assistants were reportedly promised salary increases that never materialized. They were also led to believe, they claimed, that they could continue their community outreach activities and special research projects, but by November 1984, these activities had
been cut back and they were given little support to conduct research:

'We believed we'd really turn Assessing into a professional department,' said one taxpayer assistant.

'[But] when we were transferred we became just clerks.
Same pay, but they really degraded us to lower jobs.'...
'They think we're slugs.' (19)

Keypunchers at OPE took a cut in pay and job classification status when they became Assessing workers:

'They told us we had to take the R-6 rating because that was the closest thing to our job descriptions. They said we could take a civil service test to get an upgrade to our old [non-Civil Service] titles in OPE, but we never got to take the second part of the test.' (20)

The merger also created mutual resentments between workers from the two agencies, which managers often referred to as the 'Assessing-OPE split.' As far as Old Assessing workers were concerned, the 'snooty kids from OPE' represented everything that was wrong with the new department -- those who put in long years of devoted service to the department were not recognized for their contributions and were not trained to take on new functions in the department. Other people, who knew less about the actual content of the assessing process were brought in at higher pay, to be trained, in some cases, by the older workers. (21) OPE workers resented the fact that they were resented by the Old Assessing workers and a few
attempted to distance themselves from 'that civil servant mentality.' (22)

Several workers also alleged and the SEIU President acknowledged, that the union did not play an active role during the merger. As one worker stated: 'When we spoke to the union, they said you have to file a grievance about changes in job conditions within one week...,' i.e., you're too late.

Given these conflictual labor-management relations and feelings of bitterness on the part of workers, one might imagine that routine work relations would be fraught with conflict. Yet, to a large extent, this was not the case. Work relations among workers and between workers and supervisors were fairly cooperative, as one might expect to find in a more stable bureaucratic organization.

As the interview and survey data reported in Table 4.1 indicates, workers expected each other to cooperate with everyone to help get the work done, to be sociable and to do one's assigned job. In the few cases when a co-worker failed to follow such expectations, a simple one-on-one discussion was usually sufficient to resolve the problem. When such discussions failed to produce the desired behavior changes, however, workers resorted to social exclusion or backstabbing as disciplinary mechanisms.

Perceived relations between line supervisors and workers
TABLE 4.1
ASSESSING DEPARTMENT ROUTINE WORK RELATIONS AMONG WORKERS

(1) What do workers in your work area or unit expect of each other? (Open-ended interview question, November, 1984). N = 15 worker interviews; 21 responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate with everyone to help get the work done.</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be friendly and sociable</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your job as it is defined in your job description.</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do workers usually follow each other's expectations?
(Paper and pencil survey question, December, 1985)
N = 49 workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Always</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About half of the time</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, usually not</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) What happens when workers do not follow each other's expectations?
(Survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985).
1984: N = 47 worker and supervisor surveys; 54 responses*
1985: N = 59 worker and supervisor surveys and responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A co-worker discusses it with the person and they work it out together</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The offending person is socially excluded and becomes an outsider</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The offending person is harrassed or stabbed in the back</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A group of workers gets together and everyone helps to straighten it out</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The offending person is yelled at by his or her co-workers</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) Do workers treat each other fairly?
(Survey question, November, 1984) N = 71 worker surveys; 78 responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, fairly</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, but there's no particular pattern of discrimination</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other types of unfairness (racial, gender, etc.)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* First and second responses combined. See footnote, Table 4.2
were similarly cooperative, as reported in Table 4.2. Supervisors expected workers to do their assigned tasks as best they could and to cooperate with everyone to get the work done. Workers expected supervisors to carry their share of the workload and to answer their questions. Workers generally followed supervisors' expectations, because they perceived supervisors as competent to handle their tasks and as being paid to do so. When a supervisor-worker infraction occurred, a one-on-one discussion was the preferred conflict-resolution mechanism.

In short, despite deep resentments caused by the merger and continuing rationalization of department functions, routine relations among workers and between workers and supervisors were cooperative and, in many cases, amiable. What accounts for this?

First, although the merger narrowed and de-skilled many taxpayer assistance and direct production jobs, it also expanded the number of ancillary tasks, such as computer programming, computer training and special research. Workers in these jobs found them to be challenging and interesting and to allow for some autonomy in execution. (See Table 4.3) Moreover, workers in the taxpayer assistance unit and those who had had contact with taxpayers or field inspections previously, stated that they enjoyed serving the public and having the opportunity to help people. This is illustrated in Table 4.3, which shows responses to the survey question: "What
TABLE 4.2
ASSESSING DEPARTMENT ROUTINE RELATIONS BETWEEN WORKERS AND LINE SUPERVISORS

(1) What do supervisors expect of workers?
(Open-ended interview question, November, 1984)
N = 15 worker and 4 supervisor interviews; 21 responses

- Do your job as it is defined in your job description. 43%
- Do the best and most professional job you can. 14%
- Cooperate with everyone to get the work done. 14%
- Do anything s/he asks, even if it’s not in the descrip. 9%
- Figure things out on your own and don’t bother him/her. 9%
- Make the supervisor look good to his/her superiors. 9%

(2) Do workers usually follow supervisors' expectations?
(Survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985)
1984: N = 74 workers, supervisors and middle managers
1985: N = 76 workers, supervisors and middle managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Always</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About half of the time</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, usually not</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Why do workers follow supervisors’ expectations?
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984) N = 54 worker, supervisor, middle manager surveys; 82 responses

- Supervisors are paid to make decisions and give orders 31%
- Supervisors know the job best and what needs to be done 31%
- Supervisors treat workers OK, so workers should do what supervisors want them to. 15%
- Supervisors will get you fired or make your life miserable if you don’t do what they want. 13%
- Other 9%

(4) What happens when a worker does not do what a supervisor expects? (Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984) N = 56 worker, supervisor and middle manager surveys; 60 responses.

- The supervisor discusses it with the person and they work it out together 55%
- The supervisor yells at the person 15%
- The supervisor gives the person a formal, written reprimand 8%
- The supervisor discusses it with the whole group and everyone helps to straighten things out 7%
- Other 15%
TABLE 4.2, Continued

(5) What do workers do when they disagree with their supervisor?
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985)
1984: N = 55 worker, supervisor, middle manager surveys; 60 responses.*
1985: N = 73 worker, supervisor and middle manager surveys and responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They discuss it with him or her and work it out</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do what the supervisor wants as best they can</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do what the supervisor wants just enough to get by</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They tell the supervisor but get no response</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They just refuse to do what the supervisor wants</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) What do workers expect of supervisors?
(Open-ended interview question, November, 1984)
N = 15 workers and 4 supervisors

- Be responsive; answer their questions, etc.
- Let them do their work; don’t interfere.
- Be an authority; give clear directions.
- Carry your weight; do your fair share.

(7) Do supervisors treat workers fairly?
(Survey multiple choice question, November, 1984)
N = 67 workers, supervisor and middle manager surveys; 78 responses*

- Yes, fairly: 64%
- No, they play favorites: 15%
- No, they don’t pay attention to what is going on: 4%
- No, their behavior is based on politics: 5%
- No, they discriminate by race or sex gender: 9%
- Other: 3%

(8) Do workers treat supervisors fairly?
(Survey multiple choice question, November, 1984)
N = 77 worker, supervisor and middle manager surveys; 83 responses*

- Yes, fairly: 76%
- No, they try to do little work: 16%
- Other: 8%

* Survey respondents were asked to choose two of six possible responses and to prioritize their choices with a 1 or 2. Since almost one-half of the respondents on the 1984 survey did not prioritize, but simply checked two responses, their two choices were combined in this report.
do you like most about your tasks?"

Second, although some workers were left with no clear task definition as a result of the merger, most production jobs were even more clearly and narrowly defined than they had been previously. Hence, for most workers, there was little need for discussions with co-workers and/or line supervisors as to what needed to be done or how it would be done.

Third, the merger did not combine workers from the Assessing Department and OPE into single units. Hence, for the most part, relations among workers and supervisors could proceed as they always had, unaffected by resentments of the merger. Over the years, bonds of friendship and camaraderie had developed among many workers and supervisors within units. One indication of these bonds is the responses to the survey question: "What do you like most about your unit?," which are provided in Table 4.3. Another indication is the fact that workers almost always used the pronouns 'we' or 'us,' rather than 'me' or 'I,' when describing the effects of the merger or other management actions on workers.

The taxpayer assistance unit was the one exception to this rule, since here young workers from OPE were combined with older workers from Assessing. Although they had different tasks, these two groups occupied the same 4,000 square feet of space. Assessing workers resented the higher pay of OPE workers. They called the OPE group 'the thorn between the two roses' and, as late as December 1985, stated that 'we don't
TABLE 4.3

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT WORKER AND SUPERVISOR ATTITUDES ABOUT THEIR JOBS AND ABOUT THE WORKPLACE IN GENERAL

(1) Job Satisfaction
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985;
KEY: 1 = Very Satisfied; 2 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Not Satisfied at All; Averages are reported here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the job in general</td>
<td>1.9 (N=82)</td>
<td>1.9 (N=68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with pay</td>
<td>2.5 (N=77)</td>
<td>2.3 (N=70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisf. with promotion opportunities</td>
<td>2.1 (N=78)</td>
<td>2.3 (N=69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with employment security</td>
<td>2.3 (N=77)</td>
<td>2.0 (N=71)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) What people like most about their tasks
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984)
N = 79 worker and supervisor surveys; 137 responses*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My tasks are challenging and interesting</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can organize and do the work the way I think best</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like serving the public</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work load is good; I can handle what I’m asked to do</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) What people like least about their tasks
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984)
N = 74 worker and supervisor surveys; 98 responses*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My work load is bad; I’m asked to do more than I can do</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing; I like everything about my tasks.</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tasks are boring or repetitious</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot organize and do the work the way I think best</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) What people like most about their work area or unit
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984)
N = 73 worker and supervisor surveys; 130 responses*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-workers respect and appreciate me</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People cooperate and share the load</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors or managers respect and appreciate me</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get to talk to other workers and make friends</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*First and second responses combined. See footnote, Table 4.2.
need these OPE people." (23)

Fourth, since workers had no authority and supervisors had little, it made little sense to become embroiled in arguments that could only make worklife unpleasant without solving problems. When repeated one-on-one discussions failed to resolve a conflict (among workers or between workers and supervisors), the last recourse was social exclusion and sometimes, backstabbing.

In short, workers and supervisors maintained amiable and functionally cooperative relations as they went about their routines. As one supervisor described it: 'I just go along to get along, like everybody else.' (24) Little though was given to middle or senior managers, except when the latter appeared in the worksites or sent demands for changes in procedures, personnel or work rules. By and large, workers and supervisors regarded these as ill-considered intrusions and when possible, they resisted them. For example, they attempted to undermine senior management's unilaterally imposed production quotas and in some units, routinely violated the rigid 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM working hours policy.

**Responses to and Agendas for QWL**

The Assessing Department's tasks, political structure and worker - manager conflicts were reflected in disparate and, for the most part, incompatible agendas for QWL on the part of managers and workers.
Management Goals and Responses to QWL

Soon after taking office in January 1984, Flynn appointed an Assessing Commissioner. This Commissioner had no prior experience with assessing or with the City government, but acknowledged that he viewed himself as a 'white knight' who could 'turn this place around' and then move on to bigger challenges in the public or private sector. (25) Over the course of the study period, he was appointed to prestigious task forces and committees and included in Boston Magazine's list of people to watch in 1986. His agenda for the department consisted of essentially four components, each of which reflects the features of the department's task environment and political structure discussed above:

First and foremost, he needed to conduct a mass property revaluation which was satisfactory to the State Department of Revenue. Everything else was secondary. As he put it: "Without the revaluation, there's no you, there's no me, there's no City and there's no QWL... We've got a guy sitting here [from the State] looking over our shoulders." (26)

Secondly, as a former PR director with another public agency, he demonstrated and expressed a strong desire to improve the image of the department in the eyes of the general public and business community. During February and March 1985, local newspapers published interviews with the Commissioner, in which he criticized the department's performance prior to his arrival, and claimed to be
'professionalizing' and firing many people or convincing them to leave 'because they were being asked to do a day's work.' Four months later, a local business weekly published a report based upon the work of one of the department's senior managers, which claimed that the Commissioner had totally revamped the tax valuation and abatement processes. This won praise from the business community. (27) He also attended to the details of building an image. At one point, for instance, he instructed a worker to review the tax assessments of news reporters and other media officials for accuracy.

Thirdly, the Commissioner wanted to complete the merger process by further rationalizing operations. In the long term, this meant acquiring valuation software for the City's IBM computer, so that the department could do away with the Digital VAX. (Such a transition would have to await readiness by the City's Management Information Systems Department, which manages the IBM system). It also meant computerizing many of the legal record maintenance functions which were still done by hand. In the short term, rationalization meant trimming the staff, developing production quotas for hourly workers and further developing job tasks to optimize specialization of function and managerial flexibility in task assignments.

Between January 1984 and November 1985, the Commissioner trimmed the staff from 220 to 176 full-time employees and instituted production quotas for some hourly workers. During 1984, the department experienced a forty percent staff
turnover rate.

The Commissioner expressed no desire to accomplish these goals through QWL or any other sort of labor-management cooperation program. Decisions regarding planning, task assignments and the execution of tasks were to remain solely within the hands of upper management, although this was never stated clearly. When I asked the Commissioner about this after the program had been in operation for several months, he stated:

"Sure, we can discuss [the number of pieces of a given product we’re going to produce in a given day]. But if I say it’s going to be 25 [pieces], it’s still going to be 25 [after the discussion]." (28)

When Roberts approached the Commissioner in the late Summer of 1984 about implementing the QWL program, however, the latter expressed great enthusiasm for the idea. He had been planning to start a 'human resources program' at some point, he stated, that would include a department newsletter and worker commendation awards. He stated a belief that QWL could fit into this kind of program by affording workers a chance to express their dissatisfactions with the merger and overcome, thereby, the 'Assessing - OPE split.' (29) Yet he expressed no ideas as to the kinds of issues that would surface in the program and when asked in November 1984, stated:

'A lot of times, the things that upset bureaucrats are the
little things, like where their desks are... It's good to have [the Budget Director] on the [Citywide] Oversight Committee, because maybe a couple hundred dollars to buy things like portable walls would make them happier. (30)

Roberts admitted later: '[In the beginning, the Commissioner and I] never discussed the details of what [the program] might do.' (31)

(B) Worker Goals and Responses to QWL

SEIU workers and (non-union) line supervisors reacted to the QWL idea with a considerable amount of ambivalence and apprehension, reflecting their experiences of the merger and relationship with senior management, but also their desires for changes in the department. The figures below show their responses to survey questions administered in November 1984, on their views about the program.

Q. Is the LMCP a good idea?  55 yes;  3 no;  26 do not know

Q. Would you like to participate by being in a Worksite Group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>IBM (legal)</th>
<th>VAX (valuation)</th>
<th>TPA/SS (assistance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Workers from the Old Assessing Department were extremely reluctant to join the program: "We already have a worksite group here," said one. "What we need is a raise." The SEIU President told them that, through the program, the workers might attract more attention to themselves and thereby better their chances for getting a raise. (32)

Other workers from the Old Assessing Department, chiefly those in the IBM Data Management Unit, expressed skepticism that top management would do anything to improve things: "It won't do any good. You'll never change them." Some of these workers viewed the initial research interviews as their vehicle to 'tell them we want fair treatment,' but they were not about to volunteer for face-to-face encounters with management. (33)

Workers who had previously worked in the Office of Property Equalization also expressed skepticism. According to one worker in the taxpayer assistance unit, his co-workers at first all refused to participate: "At first I was the only one willing to do it [out of a belief in socialism and worker control]. I said [to the others], If you refuse, they'll tell you you had your chance to get what you wanted and you turned it down." (34)

Some workers were afraid of reprisals if they disagreed with management. One taxpayer assistant stated that if he joined the program, he would end up speaking his mind, which "might cost me my job" and "I've got a family to take care
of... I'd be too afraid."(35)

At several points during the first three or four months of the program, Old Assessing Department workers in particular, often expressed the fear that they might be disciplined for provoking a conflict with management, despite repeated statements by program staff that no worker could be laid off or discharged for anything he or she said in a meeting. As late as January 1986, several workers still stated in interviews that they did not believe that the QWL program had afforded them security from management reprisals.

Only one group, the VAX Information Systems Unit keypunchers expressed a desire to join the program. Many of these workers had been hired in the previous six months and did not appear to fear management reprisals.

Many workers in this group and others who accepted the program, also regarded it as 'management's idea;' something that management wanted, and they used this as a defensive tactic. For example, when two VAX keypunchers with only provisional status were fired in January, 1985 for what their co-workers considered to be unjust cause, the group threatened to boycott the program training session until the workers were given a hearing.

The workers' agendas for QWL reflected their tremendous dissatisfactions with senior management policies, as depicted in Table 4.4. This table shows that, in response to an open-ended survey question asking 'What would you most like to
**TABLE 4.4**  
ASSESSING DEPARTMENT WORKER DESIRES FOR CHANGE

(1) If you could change anything, what would you most like to change? (Open-ended survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985). 1984: N = 65 surveys. 1985: N = 49 surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Desired</th>
<th>1984 (%)</th>
<th>1985 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay and/or promotion systems should be made more fair</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workflow planning and/or task assignments</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve communications between workers/supervisors and upper management</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the office climate and attitudes generally</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve training and competence of department personnel</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the quality of communication between supervisors and workers</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve communications and fairness among workers</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve safety/cleanliness of work area</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) What people like least about their work area or unit  
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984)  
N = 71 worker and supervisor surveys; 105 responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Like</th>
<th>1984 (%)</th>
<th>1985 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working conditions are dirty and/or unsafe</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing; I like everything about it</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors or managers do not respect or appreciate me</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (poor planning, workflow scheduling, training)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers do not respect or appreciate me</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Are job hirings and promotions done fairly?  
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985)  
1984: N = 77 worker and supervisor surveys; 96 responses.* 1985: N = 72 worker and supervisor surveys; 82 responses.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairness Opinion</th>
<th>1984 (%)</th>
<th>1985 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, it’s based on politics</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, but there’s no particular pattern of discrimination</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, fairly</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, it’s based on sex discrimination</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, it’s based on race discrimination</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* First and second responses combined. See footnote, Table 4.2
change?, workers and line supervisors identified issues which would directly involve decisions by senior management: Pay, promotions, training and job evaluation procedures, scheduling workflow and task assignments, and better communication generally between their level and senior managers.

This is not to say that workers and supervisors did not perceive there to be any problems at the level of their particular units. Responses to the multiple choice survey question 'What do you like least about your unit?,' show that there were many housekeeping issues, such as dirty floors, dangerous wires, poor air circulation and asbestos covered ceilings, which aggravated workers. Although these problems could ultimately be solved only through actions of other departments, they became the primary focus of worksite group activity.

In summary, the tasks, task environment and political structure of the Assessing Department do not support highly cooperative relations between managers and workers. Department functions are largely determined by state policy and overseen by the state. These functions involve the provision of a uniform product to a large population, which necessitates a large staff, most of whose duties are divided into narrow tasks that are coordinated at the top of the organization.

A one-time jolt from the organization's environment led to
a major reorganization of work processes, but the nature of this jolt did not induce greater collaboration in production processes. Rather, the reverse is the case, as the service population became larger and the product more standardized after 1979.

These changes created dissatisfaction and conflict among workers and exacerbated the cleavage between top and bottom, which arises from the top-down decision making structure and from the lack of an effective union voice representing worker interests at the senior management level.

Within this context of worker-manager distrust, fear and conflict, workers have sustained sufficiently cooperative relations among their immediate peers and a general tactic of going along to get along, so that open conflict can be avoided. Personal friendships and, for some, the enjoyment of serving the public, make worklife tolerable and sometimes enjoyable.

Hence, it is easy to see why many workers stated that the QWL program was a good idea, but why they themselves were reluctant to participate. They saw plenty of things that were wrong with the department, but they perceived most of these problems as the result of conscious management policy. Since senior management's daily activities convinced them that management had no interest in changing those policies, many workers could not see how a QWL program would suddenly bring changes.
On the other hand, the SEIU President and QWL program staff actively solicited worker involvement in the program. By early December 1984, they had enough volunteers to constitute one Worksite Group in each of the three large units with a preponderance of SEIU members: IBM Data Management, VAX Information Systems, and Taxpayer Assistance. Moreover, during the initial two-day, worker-manager training session in January 1985, Assessing senior managers stated that 'We are deeply committed to this program, as part of our human resources initiatives.' Roberts encouraged the workers to take the initiative, saying 'This is your program,' despite the fact that funds to implement initiatives were limited. By the time the program began, most participants stated that the program was worth a try. (36)

Program Operations in the Assessing Department

The structure of the Boston Labor Management Program in Assessing consisted of three Worksite Groups and a Departmentwide Committee. One Worksite Group was organized in each of the major functional units with a preponderance of SEIU workers: IBM Data Management, VAX Information Systems (keypunchers and ancillary workers) and Taxpayer Assistance (TPA/Social Services). The organization of Worksite Groups by functional unit, rather than say, across units or by issue, reflected the program ideology of focusing on the point of production, as well as Roberts' agenda of developing shopfloor
groups into self-managing worker teams.

Each Worksite Group met for one hour per week. The Assessing Departmentwide Committee met for 90 minutes, once per month for the first six months and thereafter twice per month, until the program stopped in mid-August. Each group elected a chair and recorder.

Both facilitators were present at each Worksite Group meeting. Both they and Roberts facilitated Departmentwide Committee meetings. In keeping with Roberts' goal of making QWL committees permanent structures which would transform the City's service delivery system, facilitators used a light touch in steering the groups. They limited their interventions to teaching participants how to conduct meetings so that everyone participated, how to identify issues for discussion and how to make decisions through consensus, rather than majority rule.

As the following description of the program process in each of the Worksite Groups and Departmentwide Committee indicates, however, the committees did not become self-managing worker teams. Instead, the deep conflicts between labor and management described above, continually rose to the surface and ultimately undermined the program. Table 4.5 provides a chronology of the program implementation and operation processes in the Assessing Department.

(i) The IBM Worksite Group: The IBM Data Management Unit handles the legal ownership maintenance function in the
TABLE 4.5
PROGRAM OPERATIONS IN THE ASSESSING DEPARTMENT
CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1984</td>
<td>Roberts, the LMC Program Director, discusses the LMC Program with the Assessing Department Commissioner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1984</td>
<td>The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee chooses the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit as pilot sites for program implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1984</td>
<td>Departmentwide Committees are constituted in the Assessing Department and Police Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A twelve-hour 'Kick - Off Retreat' is held at the Harvard Business School for members of the Citywide Oversight Committee and Departmentwide Committees in the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit. The participants review and modify a document drafted by the program staff to express the labor-management Cooperation Program's philosophy: 'Commitment Toward Cooperation.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1984</td>
<td>Worksite Groups are constituted in the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1985</td>
<td>A two-day training session is held at Boston College for all program participants, but attended mostly by members of the Assessing and Police Departmentwide Committees and Worksite Groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worksite Groups and Departmentwide Committees begin meeting regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1985</td>
<td>Interviews by the Assessing Commissioner that are interpreted as degrading to Assessing workers appear in The Lab and The Christian Science Monitor and provoke bitter exchanges at Assessing Departmentwide Committee meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A petition to sweep the floors and take care of other housekeeping chores is circulated by the IBM Worksite Group in the Assessing Department, but then confiscated by a manager, exacerbating tensions between workers and managers and between the program director and facilitators.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4.5, Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1985</td>
<td>The Taxpayer Assistance Worksite Group presents its flex-time plan to the Assessing Departmentwide Committee for approval. The plan is approved by a senior manager a couple of weeks later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1985</td>
<td>Program participants in the Assessing Department attend a one-day retreat at the Kennedy School of Government to learn from past problems and refine the labor-management cooperation process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1985</td>
<td>Roberts, the Program Director, fires the full-time facilitator. The SEIU leadership calls a moratorium on all further program meetings until a hearing on the matter can be held by the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee. No hearing is ever held, however.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1985</td>
<td>The Director of the Administrative Services Department and the President of the SEIU Local 285 reach agreement on a solution to the LMC Program staff conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1985</td>
<td>The Labor - Management Cooperation Program is officially restarted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessing Department Managers state publicly that the program cannot resume in that department until April 1986, due to the department's heavy workload. Privately, some managers state a desire to leave the program permanently.

April 1985: The Assessing Department publicly announces that it will not re-join the LMC Program.
It is the oldest intact unit in the department; its current tasks and computer technology were developed in the early 1970's. The IBM Worksite Group included two title abstractors who work at the County Registry, copying ownership changes from County deed books by hand; two ward clerks, who record title changes and other data by hand onto the department's permanent historical file for each parcel in the city; two IBM computer keypunchers; and two line supervisors. All were women over the age of 45 who had been with the department for at least 10 years and who felt particularly jaded about the merger.

This group was not able to accomplish very much. Most of its members wanted a wage classification upgrade and/or a return to the broader tasks that they had enjoyed before the merger. Failing that, they wanted training on the computer for the new jobs, so that they would be assured of their place and value in the department. For several weeks, stories of unfair treatment by management and tearful pleadings for fairness dominated the discussion in this group. Some of the worker participants sincerely believed that the purpose of the QWL program was for them to tell their stories to the QWL facilitators, who would then, they hoped, see to it that their grievances were redressed.

The facilitators urged the group to develop concrete proposals for the kinds of training they wanted, or to agree on one small problem and devise a detailed solution to it.
But at least half of the members 'just didn't get it,' as one put it later. They were not prepared to plan or take action; they simply wanted management to treat them well. Moreover, age-old disputes among some participants often rose to the surface and derailed productive discussions.

At the urging of the facilitators, the IBM group reluctantly turned its attention to housekeeping issues and finally decided to circulate a petition among all members of the department, requesting that the floors be swept, washed and waxed on a regular basis. The petition was addressed to a senior manager whom the group assumed would deliver the petition to the head of the Real Property Department (which handles housekeeping issues).

This manager confiscated the petition before it had been circulated very far. Roberts became alarmed that the Worksite Group had precipitated a conflict with senior management and gave the chairperson of the group what she and others considered to be a reprimand for dealing with senior management in such an 'adversary way' (i.e., by circulating a petition rather than developing a detailed proposal and inviting the senior manager to discuss it with them). This upset the group, particularly since Roberts identified himself as a manager; the women could not understand why management, who had initiated the program, was now berating them for developing an initiative. One member resigned immediately.

The floors we were inspected by the Real Property Department,
in response to a request from the above-mentioned manager. For a few months, they were washed regularly and the facilitators presented this as a victory for the group. Yet the management reaction and another dispute between the group's chairperson and the Commissioner took their toll: By April 1985, the group began to fall apart and stopped meeting regularly.

At about this time, the Unit Head instituted daily production quotas which the workers could not understand and which they found distressing. This contributed to their feelings of powerlessness and despair. Although the group struggled along for a while, it made only one small improvement in the format of a data table used by title abstractors and finally disintegrated in June. Table 4.6 lists the group's accomplishments.

ii) The VAX Information Systems Worksite Group was comprised of keypunchers and keypunch checkers, five of whom had recently been hired. All in the latter group were under the age of 30; the others were over 50. In addition, the Unit Head and Deputy Unit Head also attended meetings.

None of these workers expressed a desire to remain in their boring, $200 per week jobs for long. Many set their sights on a job in the private sector. Turnover among the younger workers was 75 percent during 1985.

Yet this was a socially cohesive group, most of whom
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE ADDRESSED BY THE IBM DATA MANAGEMENT WORKSITE GROUP, 1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ISSUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Maintaining Work Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Wash floors throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Electrical system in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registry of Deeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Physical Working Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Purchase/rent water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coolers withdrawn by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Department action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Workflow Management/Scheduling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Revise Registry of Deeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) New title abstracting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>procedure developed by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management is too difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Staffing/Overtime schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Job Duties, Pay, Career Ladders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Retraining/cross-training for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new computer jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Establish career ladders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Job audits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
worked together and whose work atmosphere was generally cheery. As mentioned above, they threatened to boycott the QWL training sessions after two of their members were fired without a hearing. The group's supervisor, who encouraged mutual worker help and took a personal interest in each worker, was well respected. Its three older members (one of whom became a union steward as the program began), were trusted and respected by the younger workers.

Largely because of the leadership exercised by these older workers and their follow-up of issues between meetings, the VAX group achieved some important health and safety improvements, such as the removal of dangerous wires and carpets that transmitted electric shocks, rearrangement of desks and occasional washing of the floors. They put in numerous calls to the Real Property Department and at one point threatened to call OSHA if the wires were not removed. When the program stopped in August, the group was beginning to address the issue of VDT safety and had brought in union experts to discuss it.

Yet this group's progress was also limited by broader factors beyond its control. Relations with manager, the deputy unit head, which were tense when the program began, steadily deteriorated as the mass property revaluation process continued. The manager often gave them large keypunch jobs to complete on short notice and changed projects midway through completion. This, along with malfunctions in the VAX computer
system and bugs in the programs they used, destroyed their work rhythm and added frustration to the monotony of their tasks.

The group made frequent attempts, both through the QWL program and informally, to gain input into workflow scheduling and the design of computer programs, but these were staunchly resisted by the deputy unit head and ignored by the unit head. When the deputy unilaterally instituted a daily production quota system, the workers resisted, thus further increasing the tension.

For her part, the deputy unit head said she was being pressured by both workers and senior managers. The latter dictated production schedules which she believed could not be fulfilled on time and made major changes in the schedule on short notice, sometimes, apparently, in response to State inspection requests. Her requests to senior management for input into the planning process and for more staff were ignored, she claimed, until the mass property revaluation was way behind schedule.

On the other hand, she perceived the QWL program as inciting workers to make demands of her which she could not fulfill and as wasting valuable keypunch time to do it:

'If they want something, they can come to me and ask for it. I don't know why they have to go into that room every week and just sit around and try to think up things they want to change. ... [The union steward] is becoming a real
Norma Rae: always reading union books and everything on work time. I'm losing over 50 hours of production time a month because of this program." (37) The Unit Head and QWL facilitators attempted to convince the deputy (and the workers) that she should not take group initiatives personally, but should help the group identify ways to solve the problems and let the workers take the initiative to solve them. Yet even on simpler issues, such as painting the keypunch room, this approach did not work. When the group decided to tackle this issue and a worker showed up in the office of a senior manager to discuss the group's intentions, the manager criticized the deputy for not handling the issue herself, through the usual chain of command. After this incident, the Departmentwide Committee determined that workers were allowed to contact this manager on housekeeping issues, but by this point, the deputy had come to dislike the program and the pressures it created for her. (See Schlesinger 1984, for a discussion of these sorts of problems in QWL programs).

The VAX Worksite Group also wanted a wage classification upgrade in the short-run and training for better-paid, more interesting jobs in the department in the longer-run. Like the IBM group described previously, they were unable to do much about these issues except to bring them before the Departmentwide Committee (as discussed below). Table 4.7 provides a list of accomplishments by the VAX Worksite Group.
TABLE 4.7
ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE
VAX INFORMATION SYSTEMS WORKSITE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>ADDRESSED</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Maintaining Work Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Remove rugs</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Removed in January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Paint walls</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Painted in March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Remove garbage; wash and sweep floors</td>
<td>January-June</td>
<td>March*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Physical Working Conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Remove ceiling asbestos</td>
<td>May-June</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Rearrange computer terminal wires</td>
<td>January-April</td>
<td>Wires rearranged in April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Install personal lockers</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Purchase/rent water coolers</td>
<td>June-July</td>
<td>Decision in July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E) VDT health/safety problems</td>
<td>June-August</td>
<td>None in LMC Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Workflow Management/Scheduling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Manager's production quotas seen as unreasonable</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Management refused to alter quotas in January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) More staff needed</td>
<td>January-March</td>
<td>None within LMCP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Workers want more imput into production flow and scheduling decisions</td>
<td>February-July</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Floors were washed and swept once but were not maintained, so the issue surfaced again later.
### TABLE 4.7 (CONTINUED)
### ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE VAX INFORMATION SYSTEMS WORKSITE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>ADDRESSED</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D) Workers want overtime instead of contracting out, or at least input into work product of contractor</td>
<td>March-April</td>
<td>Worker participates in selecting contractor in April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) Job Duties, Pay, Career Ladders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Addressed</th>
<th>Action Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A) Cross-training</td>
<td>January-August</td>
<td>Some workers get word processor training as of May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Career ladders</td>
<td>January-August</td>
<td>None within LMCP, but Assessing's Employee Mobility Committee and Citywide effort started in 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Job audits</td>
<td>January-August</td>
<td>None within LMCP, but audits began in January 1986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5) Regulatory Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Addressed</th>
<th>Action Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A) Sick leave and absenteeism monitoring notices seen as threatening and degrading</td>
<td>January-February</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Manager cancelled all phone privileges unilaterally</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Unit head in IBM group settles issue with manager in March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iii) **The Taxpayer Assistance, or TPA/Social Services Worksite Group**, was comprised of five young workers and one supervisor from TPA, all of whom, except for the supervisor, had worked for OPE; and two older workers from Social Services who had been with the department for over ten years.

This group never achieved the camaraderie of the VAX group, primarily the Old Assessing workers in the group resented the OPE workers for their higher pay and for the merger in general.

There were philosophical differences group members as well. OPE workers and particularly the group's chairman, believed that the purpose of the QWL program was for them to take control of the shopfloor, to unilaterally enact initiatives which would assist them in running a professional unit. They resented the notion that QWL might be 'just a suggestion box,' as the chairman sometimes put it. Old Assessing Department workers called the chairman's rhetoric 'too radical' and expressed a fear of management reprisals if the program went on for long with so much conflict. By March 1985, they began to complain that the group was weighted too heavily in favor of OPE. These tensions made it difficult for the group to achieve agreement on even mundane issues.

Both OPE and Old Assessing workers resented the unit supervisor on the committee. In the Worksite Group, he browbeat workers to become more active, but then demoralized
them by insisting that every proposal be well planned and sensitive to any possible senior management concerns with production and accountability.

Yet, thanks in part to his leadership, the group developed an elaborate flex-time proposal that allowed three workers to begin work at 8:00 AM, rather than at 9:00. The group also rearranged their desks, improved air circulation, purchased a refrigerator and had one of their restrooms cleaned.

The issue of most concern to the group was the perceived lack of salary equity within the unit. Members also wanted more recognition as professionals, more training in State assessing law and procedures, better coordination with units whose work affected theirs and a more cooperative relationship with senior management in managing the affairs of the unit. These issues could not be addressed within the Worksite Group.

The training and salary issues were brought to the Departmentwide Committee, as discussed below. Over the course of the study period, however, the group's relationship with senior management became worse rather than better, as the latter reportedly 'use[d the unit] as a dumping ground for people they're trying to get rid of,' unilaterally introduced unpopular and unwieldy performance measuring devices and gave direct orders to workers to complete research and other assignments, which disrupted their other work and contradicted supervisors' expectations. By the end of the study period, morale in this unit appeared to have sunk lower than any other
unit in the program. Table 4.8 lists the accomplishments of this group. (38)

iv) The Assessing Departmentwide Committee consisted of five workers: One representative from each Worksite Group; one VAX computer programmer; and one representative of clerical workers who worked in another building separate from most of the department. It also included the Commissioner and two senior managers (the Chairwoman of the Board of Review and the Director of the Administration/Finance Division), as well as the head of the IBM Data Management Unit.

Each of the three Worksite Groups brought their most important issues to the Departmentwide Committee -- Issues of pay equity, computer training for better jobs, fairness in promotion to better jobs, and recognition and training as professionals for the jobs they currently held. For several reasons, however, it took the Committee until August to sort out these issues and begin to develop a rational process for addressing them. Until then, each of the monthly meetings ended in confusion and often bitterness between workers and managers.

First, as described in detail above, relations between workers and senior managers were not very harmonious to begin with. Between Departmentwide Committee meetings, events often took place which increased labor-management tension, which would then be brought to the Departmentwide Committee
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE ADDRESSED BY THE TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE WORKSITE GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ISSUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Maintaining Work Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Clean/maintain restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Wash/sweep floors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2) Physical Working Conditions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Desk/portable wall layouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Heating/AC/Ventilation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Purchase/rent water coolers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Workflow Management/Scheduling</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Counter assignments/lunches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Personnel shifted in and out of unit by senior management unilaterally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Communication from other units on actions, plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Flextime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4) Job Duties, Pay, Career Ladders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Training &amp; Cross-Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Career development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5) Regulatory Procedures</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Office donations/collections for birthdays, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
meetings. The aforementioned newspaper articles which extolled the Commissioner for making people 'do a day's work' caused tremendous tension just as the program was beginning. This was exacerbated by the fact that, for the first few months, the Commissioner failed to attend most meetings for very long. The harsh and defensive reactions of one senior manager to Worksite Group initiatives (as described above) contributed to the acrimonious climate.

Second, certain program operational features exacerbated these problems. In the official program documents, the role and functions of the departmentwide committee had been roughly defined as facilitating Worksite Group processes and reconciling particular worksite claims with departmentwide interests. Yet most Committee members were not sure or not in agreement about these functions. Indeed, even the facilitators were confused about the Committee's roles and the power of management within the Committee. When asked by the Commissioner at the first meeting what the Committee was supposed to do, Roberts had no ready reply.

This led to conflicts between those who thought that power rested with the Worksite Groups and that the Committee was a rubber stamp or technical assistant, those who thought that power rested with the Committee (as the formal program documents envisioned), and the majority of workers and managers who conceived of the Committee as the place for management to listen and respond to worker requests. These
conflicting conceptions muddied many discussions.

A case in point is the aforementioned flex-time initiative of the Taxpayer Assistance Worksite Group. By the time the group had developed a proposal which addressed the unit supervisor's concerns with any possible senior management objections -- almost six weeks -- the group was demoralized that it was taking so long just to get permission for a couple of people to come to work an hour earlier. As the Worksite Group prepared to submit its proposal to the Departmentwide Committee, the chairman insisted: 'If the Committee doesn't accept this, we're going right to the [Citywide] Oversight Committee. And if they don't accept it, they can take this program!' (39)

Accordingly, the chairman presented the group's proposal to the Departmentwide Committee in a tense atmosphere. When the Administration Division Director stated that he had problems with the proposal that he would have to study, the Worksite Group chairman became upset. The Division Director approved the proposal within the next couple of weeks, but felt that he had been pushed into doing so. As a result, neither he nor other managers wanted to discuss flex-time at subsequent meetings and the issue was not raised again, much to the chagrin of other workers who wanted to introduce formal* flex-time arrangements in their units.

* as opposed to the informal, surreptitious arrangements which existed.
Departmentwide Committee minutes were not widely disseminated or always clearly written. Some workers gave conflicting or contradictory interpretations to their Worksite Groups as to what was happening at Committee meetings. According to senior managers, workers also failed to keep them abreast of Worksite Group activities, either by delivering copies of group minutes to them or verbal reports of group activities.

The 90-minute Departmentwide Committee meetings were often poorly organized. The two worker members who did not represent Worksite Groups were often confused about the issues being raised and discussed, but efforts to establish a weekly lunchtime caucus of all of the worker representatives foundered on personality problems and management disapproval of program activities beyond the Worksite Group and Departmentwide Committee meetings.

Although both facilitators and Roberts attended each Committee meeting and all three intervened in group processes, the staff offered little leadership or direction, believing that leadership and direction would develop in the Committee if they simply maintained a participatory process. This facilitation style, as well as increasingly visible conflicts between the facilitators and Roberts, added to the tension and slow progress of some meetings.

The third problem with the Departmentwide Committee was that each group of workers had different experiences from the
Assessing - OPE merger and different aspirations; hence their substantive concerns and priorities on the issues of training, pay equity, promotional fairness and their relationships with management tended to differ and were presented differently, so it was not easy to develop just one course of action. This was exacerbated by the fact that workers did not present these desires as well laid-out proposals and management did not respond in a positive and encouraging manner.

The problem was even more complex than this, however. As mentioned above, the Commissioner had his own agenda of developing a human resources program for the workers, which ultimately came to include provisions for training and employee mobility. In March 1985, he formed a management committee to develop such a program because he believed that workers 'can't handle' that kind of planning work. (40)

Roberts served on the Commissioner's Human Resources Committee as a working member, but did not encourage the Commissioner to include a worker on the committee; he told me later that the Commissioner would not have accepted such a suggestion. The most Roberts was able to do, he said, was to persuade the Commissioner to allow workers to develop their own ideas about career ladders, training and promotions, to be incorporated into the Commissioner's overall plan.

Yet this was communicated at Departmentwide Committee meetings in what workers and the two facilitators regarded as very ambiguous terms. At one point during the confusion of an
early April meeting, Roberts offered the following as clarification: 'What [the Commissioner] is saying is 'Go ahead and work on your plans [for career ladders and training, etc.]. Maybe they will be included in the overall plan that we're developing on the human resources committee and maybe they won't. It all depends.'"(41)

No concrete framework was developed by the Departmentwide Committee to guide such complex work by the workers, however and none was suggested. Although most worker members of the Committee were upset that 'management is working on career ladders without us,' as they put it, they and the facilitators decided that unless management provided information about the current and probable future structure of the department, as well as a clearer mandate as to what plans they were to produce, they could not work on any plans for career ladders. Workers continued to bring up the issue at subsequent meetings, however.

Early in August, the outside consultant developed a framework to help the Departmentwide Committee design a process for developing career ladders, cross-training and job descriptions, that would possibly integrate the many agendas of department members into a single, rational process of labor - management decision making. According to the full-time facilitator, however, neither she nor Roberts really understood what to do with the framework before presenting it to the Departmentwide Committee. The Committee had just begun
to work with this framework when the QWL program stopped meeting in August.

The fourth major problem with the work of the Departmentwide Committee, was that the fate of the issue of most importance to workers, pay equity, was formally in the hands of another department, Personnel, which administers the civil service classification and compensation system. In order for the Assessing Department to formally respond to allegations of inequitable pay classifications as a result of the merger, the Personnel Division's Classification and Compensation unit had to conduct an audit of many of the jobs in the department.

Although the Assessing Commissioner filed a request with Personnel for job audits early in 1985 and kept promising workers that the audits would start in six months, Personnel was not prepared to even begin the lengthy audit process until January 1986. In the meantime, the Assessing Department used informal classification upgrades to increase the pay of certain workers, which mollified those who received the upgrades, but reinforced the general perception by workers and middle managers that senior management was arbitrary or politically-motivated in its personnel practices. (42)

Other issues also required the cooperation of other departments. As noted in the discussion of Worksite Groups above, all groups addressed issues of cleanliness and safety, since they were sources of aggravation and appeared to be easy
to accomplish. After the initial, aforementioned conflicts between Worksite Groups and the senior manager over housekeeping processes had been settled, it was determined that this manager would maintain an elaborate record of all outstanding housekeeping problems, the resolution of which he would coordinate with the Real Property Department.

Yet the status of this record was only reported back to the Departmentwide Committee once and workers ignored, or forgot about its existence. By July 1985, Worksite Groups were again contacting the Real Property Department directly to make maintenance requests. By December, several workers reported to me that basic maintenance (trash disposal, floor sweeping, etc.) had deteriorated again.

**Perceptions of the QWL Program After One Year**

**(A) Management Views**

From August 15 through November 1985, no program committee meetings were held, due to a moratorium called by the union. When the program was re-started, Assessing management declined to have the department participate until March, citing a heavy workload due to the mass property revaluation, which by that point was several months behind schedule. Privately, senior managers expressed great frustration with the program and skepticism that it would be reformed in a way that would address their concerns. By April 1986, the department had
Senior managers expressed several deep concerns about the program. First, "the program has no groundrules," as one put it. They thought that workers would use the program to construct detailed, clear proposals to accomplish specific, narrow objectives. Instead, 'a lot of people used this program to just bitch and moan,' meaning that the barrage of complaints and underlying tensions which surfaced at every Departmentwide Committee meeting were not, in their view, a desirable form of worker involvement. (43)

Second and relatedly, they felt that the Department Committee meetings had been 'obsessed with process,' rather than focused on concrete objectives. They considered this to be a waste of precious time, both theirs and the workers,' given the tight schedule imposed by the State for completion of the mass revaluation. They faulted the program staff, in particular, for showing 'no appreciation of the way this department works or understanding of our deadlines,' since they perceived the staff as having allowed the program to degenerate into the obsession with process and the distraction of some workers during work hours. (44)

Third, they expressed exasperation with other departments, such as Personnel, for failing to conduct a timely classification and compensation study* of the department. Real

*In January 1986, the Personnel Division began the long-awaited classification study.
Property, for failing to respond adequately to requests for maintenance improvements, and the Director of Administrative Services, for failing to provide more support on these and related issues. They also expressed frustration with the Budget Director, whose austerity measures reflected, in their view, a lack of sensitivity to the Department's need to finish the revaluation and produce a timely tax bill.

They did not believe that the QWL program was set up in such a way as to address these concerns, since, in their view, it did not afford department managers adequate access to decision making on these issues. Moreover, one senior manager told me they feared that if the department remained in the program under the current structure, workers might have better access to the Budget Director's ear than they, since he was a member of the Citywide Oversight Committee.

By November 1985, the Commissioner and another senior manager had developed a Human Resources Program which the Commissioner believed was better suited to his goals for worker involvement than QWL. The program consisted primarily of three components, an 'Employee Mobility Program,' a 'Seminar Program' and a department newsletter. The seminars were one-day, off-site affairs on topics such as purchasing real estate and personal career development. The purpose of the Employee Mobility Program was to allow workers to try out various jobs in the department for a month at a time, to see if they would like that kind of work, should an opening
arise. The Commissioner stated privately that he hoped this program would be a substitute for the QWL program. Publicly, he claimed that he had designed the Human Resources Program in response to problems identified by workers in the QWL meetings. He stated that the Human Resources Program was proof that he had made QWL a success in his department.

(B) Views of the SEIU Leadership

Throughout the course of the QWL program, both the SEIU President and SEIU QWL facilitator frequently charged that Assessing managers were failing to live up to the cooperative principles of the QWL program and demonstrating that they wanted to control the entire process. For evidence, they cited what they considered to be management's unresponsive behavior at Department Committee meetings, harsh treatment of workers on routine work and personnel issues and the Commissioner's penchant for personal publicity. Indeed, they even stated a belief that a conflict among program staff was caused in part by the Commissioner.

In short, the SEIU leaders did not express the view that the QWL program had been successful in the Assessing Department. By the end of the study period, however, they had achieved part of their goal of identifying leadership in the department and developing stewards, who, at the insistence of the SEIU President, had been appointed to the Commissioner's Human Resources committees. Through these new stewards, the
President stated, the union could at least monitor management's contract compliance better than it could prior to the program. (45)

(C) Views of Workers and Line Supervisors

Perceptions of workers and supervisors about the QWL program as of the end of December 1985, were mixed. As Table 4.9 shows, both participants and non-participants gave the program, on average, a mediocre 'Okay' rating, but the responses were distributed somewhat evenly between 'good' and 'terrible,' indicating a mix of sentiments.

Asked in an open-ended survey question to cite the program's biggest accomplishment or most positive effect, over 40 percent of the respondents stated that the program had achieved nothing. Others cited increased communication between workers and managers, housekeeping improvements and the flex-time plan as substantive accomplishments.

Likewise, a polarization of sentiments was evident in answers to the survey question 'Would you like to participate in the program now?' Over one-third of those who had participated in the program stated that they would like to participate, while almost one-half stated that they would not like to. Only 18 percent of those who had already participated expressed uncertainty, as opposed 40 percent of non-participants who did so.

With the exception of the IBM workers, few participants
TABLE 4.9
ASSESSING DEPARTMENT WORKER AND SUPERVISOR ATTITUDES ABOUT THE LABOR-MANAGEMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM AFTER ONE YEAR

(1) Did you participate in the Labor-Management Cooperation Program? (Survey, December, 1985) N = 72 responses

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) How would you rate the program? (Multiple choice survey question, December, 1985) N = 41 worker and supervisor surveys and responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrific</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okay</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrible</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) If you joined the program, but stopped participating before August, 1985, explain why. (Open-ended survey question, December, 1985). N = 7 worker responses

The program was a waste of time; it did nothing: 57%
There were management reprisals against workers: 14%
Other: 29%

(4) Would you like to participate in the program now? (Survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(5) What are the program's biggest accomplishments to date? (Open-ended question, December, 1985) N = 26 worker and supervisor responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>42%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication/listening/airing problems</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various housekeeping improvements</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flex-time plan in Taxpayer Assistance</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The re-starting of the program</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) How much effort should the SEIU devote to programs such as the Labor-Management Cooperation Program? (Multiple choice survey question, December, 1985). N = 51 worker and supervisor surveys and responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot of effort</th>
<th>43%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A fair amount of effort</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much effort</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No effort at all</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(7) What issues should the union focus on? (open-ended survey question, December, 1985). N = 28 worker and supervisor surveys; 30 responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairness in promotions/establishing career ladders</th>
<th>20%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary raises/position classification upgrades</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace fairness in general</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More union responsiveness to workers in general</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved training</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More worker input into workflow planning</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
left the program while it was in progress, except to leave the department. Of those who did leave, four out of seven stated that the program was accomplishing nothing and was a waste of their time. One cited management reprisals as a reason for quitting.

When I asked a few workers how QWL meetings which took place on 'company time' could be a waste of their time, their responses were similar to that of one IBM worker: 'I don't need those meetings to get away from my work. If I need to take a break, I can do so. There's no sense to sitting in a room and just arguing if it's not going to accomplish anything.' Others stated that going to a meeting simply put them behind in their work, or created a heavier burden for co-workers, which they considered to be unfair. (46)

Among those participants who stated a desire to continue participating in the program, there were no common demographic characteristics (but note that the total number of respondents on this question was quite low). Those individuals who had taken leadership roles in worksite groups at the beginning of the program (five persons, three of whom were still in the department by the end of the study period), still expressed a desire to participate in the program. Hence, as Witte (1980) found in his analysis of worker desires for or against participation, the experience of participation itself does not necessarily increase individuals' desires for more participation.
In addition to attitudes about the program, the second survey also repeated questions about workplace relations, job satisfaction and the things that respondents most wanted to see changed in the workplace. These responses were almost mirror images of those in the first survey, illustrating the general feeling that life had not changed much during the course of the program. (See Tables 4.1 and 4.5, above.)

The ten workers whom I interviewed and conversed with in December 1985 indicated feelings of bitterness toward senior management in general. Some stated, for example, that they did not trust management’s intentions in the upcoming job audits (which began in January, 1986) although this had been one of their major requests in the program. "We’re going to try to get over on them," said one. "We think they’re going to use [the audits] to get rid of some more people." (47)

Yet, almost all survey respondents expressed a desire that the union continue efforts such as the LMC program in the department, as indicated in Table 4.9.

**Conclusion**

On the basis of this analysis of QWL in the Assessing Department, one must conclude that the department was not a conducive setting for a grassroots-based QWL program, despite the initial enthusiasm expressed for it by senior managers. Its tasks and political structure created tremendous tension and distrust between labor and management. These tensions
were particularly acute during the process of computerization and reduction in personnel that began prior to program implementation and continued while the program was in progress. For this reason, worker and manager goals for the department and for the QWL program were disparate.

The QWL program was unable to overcome or reconcile these conflicts. Its facilitators and program director were unable to project and establish goals and "groundrules" for the program which were clear and agreeable to all. Their attempts to implement an open and participatory conflict-resolution structure under these conditions were swamped by the tensions and customary decision making style of the organization.

On the other hand, one cannot deny the improvements in shopfloor conditions or the conduct of a comprehensive job audit. Although one might well argue that these are very basic items which should be taken care of as a matter of course, it is unlikely that they would have been addressed in this setting, without the QWL program.

Moreover, the union was able to achieve its goal of identifying leadership and establishing better contacts with the rank and file. By the end of the study period, management had found a form of worker involvement with which it felt comfortable and which it believed would promote worker satisfaction.

In short, the QWL program was not a total failure in the Assessing Department, but as the department's departure from the program indicates, QWL could not take root there.
NOTES - CHAPTER 4


2) ibid., pp. 20 - 23.

3) Roberts, LMCP Director, January 1986


5) By all accounts, this initial revaluation was a disaster. By January 1983, the vendor had provided only a partially operating software system. Its data gatherers had provided data that was so incorrect that the OPE had to hire scores of additional field data collectors in the Summer of 1982 to re-collect the data, which was then processed manually. The Assessing Commissioner in 1984 stated that the initial revaluation data was 70 percent wrong.

   In June 1983, the State Department of Revenue reluctantly approved the revaluation and tax rate for FY84, but extracted a memorandum of understanding which stipulated that the City would have a viable valuation software system by June of 1984 and that a Department of Revenue agent, paid by the City and State, would be hired to closely monitor the City's progress over the next three years.

6) Assessing Department senior managers, November 1984 and December 1985; Administrative Service Director and Budget Director, December 1985.


NOTES - CHAPTER 4, Continued

12) Assessing Department senior manager, November 1984
14) Assessing IBM unit worker, November 1984
15) Assessing IBM unit workers, November 1984
16) Assessing IBM unit worker, November 1984
18) Assessing Taxpayer Assistance Unit workers, November 1984
19) Assessing Taxpayer Assistance Unit worker, November 1984
20) Assessing VAX Information Systems unit worker, November 1984
22) Assessing Taxpayer Assistance Unit worker, November 1984
23) Assessing Taxpayer Assistance (Social Services) Unit worker, October 1985
25) As quoted to me by a worker in October 1985, but similar to statements made to me by the Commissioner in November 1984.
27) See Note 4.
31) Roberts, LMCP Director, January 1986.
32) Reported to me by SEIU President and LMCP staffworker, December 1984.
CHAPTER 4 - NOTES, Continued

37) VAX Information Systems Deputy Unit Head, April 1985.
38) Assessing Taxpayer Assistance Unit Workers, August 1985 and December 1985.
40) As reported to me by a middle manager in September 1985.
41) Roberts, LMCP Director, April 1985.
44) ibid.
45) SEIU Local #285 President, December 1985.
47) Assessing IBM Data Management Unit workers and Taxpayer Assistance Unit workers, January 1986.
CHAPTER 5
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONS
IN THE POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT

Introduction
This chapter discusses the implementation and operation of the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation Program in the Police Operations unit. First, the tasks and political context of the Police Department and Operations Unit are described. The next sections describe the responses of workers and managers to QWL and the first year of program operations in the unit. The last section of the chapter discusses the views of workers and managers about the program after one year.

The Context for QWL in the Police Operations Unit: Tasks and Politics
Neither the tasks nor the political structure of the Police Operations Unit seem particularly conducive to the long-term stability of QWL. The unit's tasks are routine (albeit stressful) and becoming more so over time, with increasing automation; hence there is little need for problem-solving in the workplace, let alone worker-manager collaboration in problem-solving. Politically, the Operations unit has little power in the Police Department. Civilians, moreover, who comprise over 50 percent of the Operations unit staff, are widely regarded by uniformed personnel as 'second
These factors support conflict-ridden routine relations among workers and supervisors, as well as feelings of pessimism and apathy about life at work.

(A) Tasks and the Task Environment

The primary purpose of the 2,300 member Boston Police Department is to preserve law and order. Its constituencies are citywide and its tasks are regulated and/or influenced by a variety of state and Federal statutes, agencies and professional organizations. The Department's activities receive frequent media attention, as well as occasional criticism by the City Council's Committee on Public Safety and occasional inquiries conducted by the Boston Finance Commission.

As Fogelson (1977) describes, the importance of the policing function has made it the focus of reform movements over the past century. These movements have sought, overall, to make police more responsive to the law, more sensitive to the needs and concerns of particular social groups who had little influence in shaping the law and more efficient in the execution of these goals.

The development of a centralized operations coordinating unit located at Police Headquarters is the product of the most recent wave of reform in policing, which hit Boston in the early 1970's. Increased citizen concern with inner-city crime during that period and since then, prompted increases in
police department budgets and the introduction of more efficient procedures. At the same time, the closing of neighborhood stations and the partial replacement of foot patrols and two-person cars with one-person cars during the 1970's and 1980's, as well as citizen concern with police response time, increased the importance of accurate and timely communications within the department citywide. The Operations Unit was developed to fill this need.

The Operations Unit occupies a 15,000 square foot area on the top floor of Police Department Headquarters. Because of its vital role in the department communications process, the Operations unit is called 'the nerve center of the department.' After 5:00 PM, it is the nerve center of the City, since all other City offices are closed.

The core of the Operations unit is the emergency police dispatch system. It consists of six to twelve civilian telephone operators who take emergency calls to the 911 number, ask a standard set of questions of each caller, assign a priority rating of 1, 2, or 3 to the call, depending upon the nature and level of emergency, and pass the relevant information to eight police dispatchers, who distribute the calls to police in vehicles. Each 911 operator position has a terminal connected to the Police Department's IBM computer. The terminal's screen displays a 17-line program into which the operator types the information taken from emergency callers. After punching in the information, the operator
files it in the computer and it appears on the screens of the uniformed dispatchers in another section of the unit. Over the course of the study period, additional automation was introduced or planned for the 911 function. In January 1985, a new phone system was installed, which keeps track of the number of calls taken by an operator, the time spent on each call and the amount of time the operator spends away from the terminal. By July 1986, the department was planning to introduce an Enhanced 911 System, which automatically traces a call to its location and provides the information on the operator's screen.

The 911 system operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Over 3,000 911 calls are taken each day, about 50 percent of which require some type of police or ambulance attention. All calls to the 911 number are automatically tape recorded. This provides the unit a means of checking its own performance and a means of checking citizen complaints regarding police response time or gathering data for crime investigations.

In addition to the 911 operators and police dispatchers, additional tasks have gradually been added to the unit since 1971, as the Police Department has become more centralized. Six civilian positions serve internal department communication functions and one maintains contact with State and Federal communications systems. The internal communications positions take and process stolen car and missing person reports from
district police stations and serve as information back-up for officers in the street, running background checks on persons and cars through various computerized files. Other ancillary positions include a call screening operator, who takes reports from victims of crimes which require no immediate police attention; a general police information operator; and a unit clerk, whose duties include taking daily absenteeism reports for the entire department, keeping a log of Operations unit personnel assignments and monitoring police radio channels.

The Operations unit is overseen by a lieutenant, who is assisted by two civilian clerical workers. Routine supervision is handled by two or three duty sergeants or lieutenants. The latter are not working supervisors, for the most part. Since the tasks of the unit are fairly routine, their job is basically to 'just keep it running,' as one put it. (2) This requires the performance of a variety of tasks, including answering occasional questions from civilian operators about the priority rating to be assigned to a particular call; occasionally deciding which top priority calls to respond to when all available officers are attending to other calls; conducting research on citizen complaints or in response to information requests from superiors; and random monitoring of patrol officers through the latter's use of their radios. Supervisors also perform various personnel management functions in the unit, including keeping shifts adequately staffed and making civilian task, seating and lunch
assignments for each shift, monitoring civilian operators' use of standard questions when taking a call and disciplining workers for infractions of workrules.

During the study period, the size of the Operations unit fluctuated between 130 and 150 persons, but generally consisted of about 65 dispatchers and supervisors and 65-90 operators and ancillary workers. The 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM shift, which is the largest, usually had a staff of 20 - 25 civilians, three supervisors and eight - ten dispatchers.

(B) Political Structure and Routine Work Relations

The Police Department has more autonomy vis-a-viz the City administration than the Assessing Department and other departments located at City Hall (Police Headquarters is located about one mile from City Hall). Middle and senior managers, for example, state that they feel little or no political pressure from the administration, which they claim is quite different from the situation at City Hall. (3) The Police Department's relative autonomy is due, in part at least, to its history as a State-regulated institution -- until 1962, the State appointed Boston Police Commissioners. Even today, mayors appoint commissioners for five year terms that extend into the next mayor's term. The department's relative autonomy from the administration is also due to its high visibility in the City Council and press. When Mayor Flynn appointed his jogging partner as Police Commissioner and
some his campaign workers to managerial positions in the department, the press and Council accused him of attempting to politicize the Police Department; a criticism that is generally not made of similar appointments in other departments. Nevertheless, the department's budget is approved by the City Council like that of any other line agency and the department's Labor Relations Division and Personnel Division must process their paperwork through the City Hall Office of Labor Relations and Personnel Division.(4)

Within the complex hierarchy of the Police Department itself, the Operations unit occupies a position of low standing. All procedures in the unit (eg., for handling emergency calls, reporting in sick, etc.) are determined by the Superintendent of Field Services or by the Superintendent in Chief who runs the department on a day-to-day basis. (See Figure 5.1) All requests by the unit for expenditures, changes in procedures, training, etc., must be approved by these upper levels in the hierarchy, as well as other divisions that may be affected (eg., budget, personnel, information systems, the Police Academy).

Evidence of the unit's low status in the department is abundant. Other units in the department frequently transfer civilian operators into their units with the Superintendent's acquiescence. During 1984 and part of 1985, the Superintendent did not replace workers who left the unit until the number had dropped to less than 65 -- 25 below the number
FIGURE 5.1
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Boston Police
ORGANIZATION
February 1985
authorized in the Police Department budget. Since 1980 or so, civilians received no formal training from the Police Academy. They were simply told to sit with an experienced worker for a couple of weeks. (5)

Throughout the study period and apparently for quite a long time before that, the work area was not well maintained. Water from the roof dripped on computer terminals and the unit was not cleaned or fumigated to remove fleas. Some of the computer equipment was not serviced and other equipment, such as headphones for the new 911 phone system, was not provided in sufficient numbers, so that operators had to cradle receivers with their chin and shoulder while typing information into the computer. Moreover, the 911 computer program would only accept street names that were accurately spelled and it was not updated to accept street name changes. Operators often had to search around for one of the tattered street manuals in the unit before they could enter a call into the computer, which wasted time and caused stress. These problems were of great concern to workers, as reflected in Table 5.1. (See also Table 5.5 below)

The Unit Head was also concerned about the unit's problems and appeared, throughout the study period, to be trying hard to have them solved. Yet he frequently complained that he had no power with the 'higher-ups,' as he called them and had to take 'maybe' as answers to his requests for improvements. This is remarkable, since the Operations Unit Head who
TABLE 5.1
POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT
WHAT WORKERS LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE WORK AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What workers like least about their work area or unit. (Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N = 43 surveys; 66 responses.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working conditions are dirty and/or unsafe                                                          41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors or managers do not respect or appreciate me                                              18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers do not respect or appreciate me                                                               8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor scheduling of personnel and tasks                                                               9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing; I like everything about my unit                                                              5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other                                                                                                  20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Survey respondents were asked to choose two of six possible responses and to prioritize their choices with a 1 or 2. Since almost one-half of the respondents on the 1984 survey did not prioritize, but simply checked two responses, their two choices were combined in this report.
initiated the QWL program in November 1984, became Superintendent in Chief in February 1985, when a new Police Commissioner was appointed by the Mayor. Despite the Superintendent's espoused agenda for the unit and for QWL, he soon lost touch with both. Civilian workers often grumbled that he had forgotten them once becoming Superintendent. When I asked him about various Operations issues at the end of the study period, such as training, a classification upgrade for civilian workers and new operator headphones, he was not sure of their status.

Two factors appear to account for the unit's low standing in the department. First, its tasks are routine and its work is predictable, although a failure to follow the prescribed routines can bring public criticism and disgrace to the department. Compared to the more uncertain environment of the patrol officer, Police management apparently considered the 911 function to be so predictable and easy to perform that for the first few years, they staffed the unit with 'problem cops,' officers who were deemed no longer fit for street duty because of age, infirmity or instability. Commissioner DiGrazia (1972-1976) introduced low-paid civilians into these and other jobs not requiring sworn officers to save labor costs, but this hardly enhanced the unit's status, since civilians are generally considered by officers to be second-class citizens. As long as the unit is not embarrassing the department in the public eye, its desires for resources
can apparently be ignored. (6)

 weakness of the SEIU in the Police Department also contributes to lack of clout of the civilian units, such as Operations. The highest civilian non-managerial job classification in the department until July 1986 was R-9, base pay for which was $245 per week, before taxes. Attempts by civilian Operations unit workers to secure a classification upgrade in 1981 were unsuccessful, which was due, in part, they claimed, to lack of support from the SEIU. Moreover, Operations unit workers claimed that they received little or no attention from the union’s Police Department representative. During the study period, workers on the evening and night shifts occasionally asked me if I was their union representative and a couple expressed surprise to hear that they were represented by a union. Some of the more informed workers claimed that they disagreed with the union leadership’s left-of-center political stands and endorsement of Flynn’s liberal, black opponent in the 1983 mayoral race. They asserted that the union should get them a raise and get out of politics, or leave them alone entirely. (7)

 The internal politics of the Operations unit reflect its routine tasks, low standing in the department and the second class status of civilian workers. All formal decisionmaking and control of the unit emanates from the Unit Head and supervisors. Most civilians have no formal authority, although civilian clerical workers perform a few tasks that
require decision making. As noted above, the uniformed supervisors control even civilian seating assignments and trips to the restroom.

Supervisors do not relish their jobs and many openly admit that they do not like working in the Operations Unit at all. 'I'm a street man; I don't belong up here,' is a typical refrain. Yet, most of these officers are over the age of 50 and they recognize that they will not see street duty again. Nor do they relish working with civilians, the majority of whom are women and/or under 30 years of age: 'Cops like to be with their own kind,' they say. 'These kids are OK, but...' (8)

For this reason and because the work is routine and supervisor and worker duties do not overlap very much, the extent and nature of formal and informal supervisor-civilian contact varies, depending upon personal styles. Some supervisors take a very formal and militaristic approach to running the unit, demanding that workers keep quiet on the job and meting out a great deal of discipline in the form of written reprimands. This was the style of the Unit Head who initiated the QWL program. His predecessor reportedly prohibited workers from even reading on the job while waiting for calls. (9)

The majority of supervisors are reportedly far more relaxed and lenient. They perceive the civilian operator jobs as dead-end and feel sorry for the workers who stay in them,
believing that 'they’re in a rut,' as some put it. They make liberal use of commendation days (days off for good service or working overtime) and allow a few workers to leave early when there are few calls, since, as one said: 'I have nothing else to offer them.' On the night shifts in particular, they joke with workers and use formal discipline sparingly. (10)

In general, supervisors do not expect a great deal from civilians: 'Just don’t come in shitfaced, is all I expect,' said one. 'Just answer the phone, really. There’s nothing much to it,' said another. 'Come in, show up for work,' said another. (11) From what I could gather, supervisors perceive their relationships with civilians to be fairly smooth and routine, as the survey responses in Table 5.2 show. They perceive that workers follow their expectations, for the most part and believe that they themselves are responsive to workers’ technical questions, requests to get particular tasks, take longer than the 30 minutes allotted for lunch break, or go home early when there is little work.

Many civilian workers experience their jobs and their relationships with supervisors differently, however. Most workers take the civilian operator job for one of two reasons: At least half of the workers take the job as a second household income; many workers on the 4:00 PM shift are mothers with young children. A few take the job as a means of paying their way through school and some take it for lack of
TABLE 5.2

POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT
SUPERVISOR PERCEPTIONS OF WORKER-SUPERVISOR RELATIONS

(1) What do supervisors expect of workers? (Open-ended interview question, November, 1984)  N = 5 interviews; 8 responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do your job as it is defined in your job description</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate with others to get the work done</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show up for work on time &amp; report to me when leaving your post for any reason</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a good attitude; be courteous to the public</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do workers generally follow supervisors' expectations?
(Multiple choice survey question, November 1984 and December, 1985).
1984: N = 5 surveys. 1985: N = 3 surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Following Expectations</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, always</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About half of the time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, usually not</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) What happens when workers disagree with a supervisor?
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1985 and December, 1985).
1984: N = 5 surveys. 1985: N = 3 surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution of Disagreement</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They discuss it with him/her and work it out</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They refuse to do what the supervisor wants</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do what the supervisor wants as best they can</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do what the supervisor wants enough to get by</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know all of the jobs and give advice when needed</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be fair and consistent in discipline and in giving days off</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to workers' requests for time off, etc.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run an amiable place; be easy</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
any career plan. The other half, as of November 1984, took the job as a first step into a career as police officers or in related professions. Since eligibility for the Police Academy ends at age 32, several workers stayed in the unit for ten years or more, hoping that their names would come to the top of the police trainee list before they became ineligible.

Almost all civilian operators find the 911 operator job exciting at first. It brings them into direct contact with and allows them to really help people in need, as reported in Table 5.3. Yet the actual percentage of emergency calls is quite low. Less than half of the 3,000 calls taken per day require police attention; the other half are crank calls or non-police information calls. Of the calls which are legitimate 911 calls, less than 225 are priority #1 calls, i.e., crime in progress, fire, life-threatening situation, or assault report. Hence, as reflected in Table 5.3, the novelty soon wears off and the job becomes drudgery. Periods of non-stop calls, followed by periods with almost no calls, create stress; this is exacerbated by verbal abuse from agitated callers and by the fact that 911 operators are allowed only 30 minutes of official break time per eight-hour shift.

Workers who have mastered the 911 job are sometimes assigned to the 'backroom,' which is where the internal department communications positions are located, or to one of the ancillary jobs in the unit. The backroom lines are much
### TABLE 5.3

POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT

ATTITUDES OF CIVILIAN OPERATORS ABOUT THEIR JOBS

---

(1) Job Satisfaction of civilian workers
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985)

KEY: 1 = Very Satisfied; 2 = Somewhat Satisfied
3 = Not Satisfied At All. Averages are reported here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1984 (N)</th>
<th>1985 (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the job in general</td>
<td>2.0 (46)</td>
<td>2.0 (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with pay</td>
<td>2.8 (45)</td>
<td>2.6 (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisf. with promotion opportunities</td>
<td>2.8 (44)</td>
<td>2.7 (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with employment security</td>
<td>2.2 (39)</td>
<td>2.0 (38)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) What workers like most about their tasks. (Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984) N = 45 surveys; 85 responses.*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like serving the public; helping people</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My tasks are challenging and interesting</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can organize and do the work the way I think best</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work load is good; I can handle what I'm asked to do</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) What workers like least about their tasks. (Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984) N = 41 surveys; 65 responses.*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My tasks are boring or repetitious</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work load is bad; I'm asked to do more than I can</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot organize and do the work the way I think best</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing; I like everything about my tasks</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not like dealing with the public</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*First and second responses combined. See footnote Table 5.1.*
busier than the 911 lines. This heavy workload creates stress, which is compounded by verbal abuse from police officers on the other end of the line. (12)

Many civilians perceived relations between themselves and supervisors to be dissatisfying as well, as indicated in Table 5.4. In contrast to the supervisor perceptions reported in Table 5.2, some workers, especially those who aspired to a law enforcement career or who had learned all of the jobs in the unit, claimed that supervisors expected workers to 'know everything, even without training' but, for their own part, were often unable or unwilling to answer their questions on police procedures and displayed no understanding of, or interest in learning the computer system and solving technical problems. Even the Unit Head who initiated QWL, according to some workers: 'Always turns your questions back on you.' Some supervisors readily admitted that they had little or no understanding of the computer system or of the details of some civilian jobs. (13)

Some workers also took exception to supervisors' inconsistent personnel management practices, which had the net effect of being both strict and ineffective, as shown in Table 5.4. They claimed that supervisors played favorites in making task assignments and distributing other benefits, such as commendation days and permission to leave early. They also claimed that many workers did not obey the supervisors and managed to avoid taking their fair share of 911 calls. Since
### TABLE 5.4
POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT
WORKER PERCEPTIONS OF WORKER-SUPERVISOR RELATIONS

(1) What do supervisors expect of workers?
(Open-ended interview question, November, 1984)
N = 13 worker interviews; 20 responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do your job as it is defined in your job description</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate with others to get the work done</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show up for work and come on time</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know everything, even without training</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do whatever they say</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do workers follow supervisors' expectations?
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, always</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About half the time</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, usually not</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) What happens when workers do not follow supervisors' expectations?
(Multiple choice survey question, November, 1984).
N = 35 worker surveys; 41 responses.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The supervisor writes the person up or gives him/her a formal reprimand</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The supervisor yells at the person</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The supervisor discusses it with the person and they work it out</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The supervisor tries to have the worker fired</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (including 'nothing')</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 5.4, Continued


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They discuss it with him or her and work it out</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They just refuse to do what the supervisor wants</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do what the supervisor wants just enough to get by</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do what the supervisor wants as best they can</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They tell the supervisor but get no response</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Care about the work and give good technical advice 37%
Be fair and consistent in discipline and in giving days off 37%
Back workers up when citizens complain about service 13%
Be friendly and easy in running the workplace 13%

* First and second responses combined. See footnote, Table 5.1
the unit was shortstaffed in 1984 and most of 1985, this issue was particularly salient for many workers.

The lack of formal training for civilian operators also provoked conflicts between operators and supervisors. New operators were trained by observing experienced operators for several days. Although workers and supervisors alike admitted that this was not an adequate procedure, workers claimed that they were often unfairly berated by police dispatchers and supervisors for not taking enough information from a caller or for handling callers improperly. (14)

The combination of disparate worker aspirations, largely routine but stressful tasks, inadequate staffing and training, a poorly maintained work environment and perceived unresponsiveness or arbitrariness by supervisors, was reflected in relations among workers as well. As Table 5.5 indicates, workers generally expected each other to cooperate to get the work done, to do one's fair share and, to a lesser extent, have consideration for others when requesting days off and be friendly. Yet many workers were not perceived as following these expectations, but as spending a lot of time in the restroom, strolling about the unit, or trying to 'kiss up to' supervisors for early release from work or other perks.

At first, offenders are 'yelled at.' "C'mon, plug in," was a typical refrain. Sometimes a one-on-one discussion also took place. Operations workers eventually handled recalcitrant co-workers through social exclusion, however,
TABLE 5.5

POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT

ROUTINE WORK RELATIONS AMONG CIVILIAN WORKERS

(1) What do workers in your unit or work area expect of each other? (Open-ended interview question, November, 1984)
N = 13 interviews; 19 responses.

- Do your fair share and cooperate with everyone to help get the work done 47%
- Do your job as it is defined in your job description 37%
- Be friendly 11%
- Keep the place clean 5%

(2) Do workers usually follow each other's expectations?
(Multiple choice survey question, December, 1985)
N = 39 worker surveys

- Yes, Always 33%
- About half of the time 54%
- No, usually not 13%


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The offending person is socially excluded and becomes an outsider 33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The offending person is yelled at by his or her co-workers 23%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A co-worker discusses it with the person and they work it out together 20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The offending person is harassed or stabbed in the back 15%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A group of workers gets together and everyone helps to straighten it out 3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other 5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* First and second responses combined. See footnote, Table 5.1.
since they had no power to enforce expectations of their co-workers.

Although social exclusion was used as a disciplinary device among workers in both the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit, it was far more prevalent in the latter. Available data suggests at least two reasons for this. First, since supervisors followed no consistent procedures for making job assignments and dispensing perks, the distribution of assignments created jealousy among workers. (15)

The second reason for the prevalence of social exclusion as a disciplinary technique among workers is that, despite the large volume of calls, there is a sufficient amount of dead time on each shift, especially for 911 operators on the night shifts, so that workers had time for socializing. Since performance of most of the jobs themselves requires little worker interaction, socializing and personalities generally, become important determinants of relations among workers. Younger workers often socialize after work, so bonds and antipathies have several roots. The result is a worker culture based on cliques. The cliques are more or less exclusive and internally cohesive, depending upon various factors, but their existence is palpable.

Although cliques and friendships make life on the job tolerable for many workers, only 12 out of 45, or 27 percent, stated in November, 1984 that they would like to continue
working in the unit for long. Indeed, out of 63 civiliam operators on the job in November 1984, 19 had left by December 1985. (The total number of civiliam had increased to 93 by December 1985.) Yet for civilians who wish to continue working in the Police Department, very few opportunities for career advancement or pay increases exist. (16)

Some workers remain in the unit in spite of their dissatisfactions, hoping that things might get better someday, but doing little or nothing to make changes. Some, particularly the dozen or so who still desire a career in policing and know the technical functions and tasks of the unit well, become activists. These workers filed the unsuccessful mass compensation grade appeal described above. They also tried to organize a 4-3 workweek schedule in the Summer of 1984; it was approved by the Unit Head, but foundered on the opposition of other workers.

The Police Operations Unit's tasks, political structure and conflictual routine relations were reflected in the responses to and agendas for QWL of managers and workers.

Manager_and_Worker_Goals_and_Responses_to_QWL

(A) Management Goals and Responses to QWL

New unit heads in the Operations unit are appointed by the Commissioner once every two or three years. From 1983 to February 1985, the Unit Head was a reform-minded manager who
was widely regarded as a 'mover and shaker.' His espoused goal was to 'professionalize' the unit, in accordance with his philosophy of professional police work. This philosophy included a rigid code of worker discipline and strict obedience of superiors' commands. It also included comprehensive, formal training of workers, payment of high wages to 'get the best caliber of person,' the institution of civilian trainers, use of the latest technology and maintenance of good work equipment. (17)

During his term, the Unit Head claimed to have reduced the number of citizen complaints over 911 service (which includes complaints about police response time) from 300 per year to less than 60, through liberal use of suspensions, firings, threats and reprimands of workers. He purchased a new 911 phone system (without consulting workers), which he liked for its worker monitoring system, but which workers found unwieldy. Because of his demonstrated penchant for discipline and control, he was known to the workers as a 'jerk,' 'psychopath,' but to some as a 'fair guy.' Privately, he told me a few times: 'I'm sure everyone thinks I'm a prick.' (18)

Despite his success at disciplining workers, the Unit Head was unable to get formal training or wage classification upgrades for civilian operators and, throughout 1984, unable to convince his superiors to replace civilian workers who left the unit. Hence, when he learned that Roberts was looking for pilot sites for the QWL program, he suggested the Operations
unit. He stated that the program might be able to help him get the staff increases, training and wage upgrades that he had not been able to get through his own efforts. He stated that he was sure that workers would ask for these things and that, in any case, there would be no challenges to his authority. He also expressed confidence that the workers would be able to organize and prepare sophisticated initiatives on these matters, citing as evidence the elaborate four-day workweek proposal that several workers had attempted to put through a few months previously. (19)

In addition to the Unit Head, the Director of Police Labor Relations was also instrumental in bringing the QWL program into the Police Department. He expressed the view that a new organizational culture based on labor-management cooperative decision making was essential if the department and the City generally, was to function well. Over the course of the study period, he reportedly encouraged other senior managers to take the program seriously. (20)

(B) Worker and Supervisor Goals and Responses to QWL

Civilian Operations workers and supervisors responded somewhat more positively to the QWL program idea than did their Assessing counterparts, as indicated in their responses to the November 1984 survey questions below:

Q. Is the LMCP a good idea? 39 yes; 1 no; 15 do not know
Q. Would you like to participate by being in a Worksite Group?

24 yes; 10 no; 20 do not know

Unlike Assessing workers, civilian operators did not voice fear of management reprisals as a reason for not wanting to, or being unsure about participating in the QWL program, although in interviews conducted in November 1984, a couple expressed their general dislike of their Unit Head's harsh disciplinary practices. Instead, workers gave the following reasons for reticence about participating:

First, workers had heard very little about the program prior to the survey.

Second, some workers were skeptical that QWL, or even the SEIU, was the right vehicle to address their concerns. As explained above, many workers felt that the union should get out of politics and get them a raise, or leave them alone entirely. Even the activists who volunteered for the program demonstrated their discontent with the union and management, by organizing for a walk-out of the QWL training sessions in January 1985. The SEIU President convinced them at the last minute that they had a better chance of getting a raise if they stayed in the QWL program.

Third, some of those who had previously attempted to organize the 4-3 workweek schedule were leery about attempting any further initiatives with their co-workers.

Nevertheless, a critical mass of workers was willing to
become involved with the QWL program. Even duty supervisors, whose general tolerance was necessary for success and whose participation on the Worksite Groups was desired, were supportive or at least not opposed to the program.

In addition to a wage increase and/or chance for promotion into a better paying, more rewarding job, important worker objectives for the program, as indicated in Table 5.6, included fairness in task assignments, formal training for civilian operators, an increase in the staff, the institution of civilian supervisors, and general improvements in the quality of communications between supervisors and workers. These responses show the tensions within the Operations unit between uniformed and civilian personnel, as well as the common sentiments of both parties that the lot of civilians should be improved. In short, they indicate that in Operations, as in Assessing, the initiatives of grassroots QWL groups would require department-level and perhaps City level action to be successful.

Program_Operations_in_the_Police_Operations_Unit

Choosing Worksite Groups for the Operations Unit was a difficult task for the program staff. The existence of three shifts raised the question of how many worksite groups there should be and, if there were to be more than one, how their activities would be coordinated. Although some argued for one group on the day shift, with a representative from each of the
TABLE 5.6

POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT
CIVILIAN WORKERS' AND UNIFORMED SUPERVISORS' DESIRES FOR CHANGE

If you could change anything, what would you most like to change? (Open-ended survey question, November, 1984 and December, 1985). 1984: N = 49 worker and supervisor surveys and responses. 1985: N = 36 worker and supervisor surveys and responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Description</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay and/or promotion systems should be made more fair</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workflow planning and/or task assignments</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the office climate and attitudes generally</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve training and competence of unit personnel</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the quality of communication between supervisors and workers</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire more people</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute civilian supervisors</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve communications and fairness among workers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
night shifts, the SEIU leadership argued that anyone who wanted to participate should be given the opportunity to do so, so there was a need for more than one group. A two-group arrangement was chosen: One group would be comprised of members from part of the 8:00 AM shift and the 12:00 AM shift and one group would be comprised of the 4:00 PM shift and part of the 8:00 AM shift.

In addition to the two Worksite Groups, a Police Departmentwide Committee was constituted. It consisted initially of four workers: One from each of the Worksite Groups and one steward each from two other units with large numbers of civilians. After the first three months, however, only the representatives from the two Worksite Groups continued to attend regularly. The Departmentwide Committee was also to have four middle managers: The Operations Unit Head, the Director of Police Labor Relations, the Director of Police Personnel and one Operations Unit supervisor. After a new Police Commissioner took office in February 1985, the make-up of the Committee changed slightly; the supervisor position went vacant and the Assistant to the Director of Police Administrative Services began to attend. Table 5.7 provides a chronology of the program implementation and operations process in the Police Operations Unit.

The Worksite Group structure of two groups from mixed shifts proved to be very unstable. By April 1985, the groups
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August - September 1984</td>
<td>Roberts and the Head of the Operations Unit discuss the QWL program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1984</td>
<td>The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee chooses the Police Operations unit and Assessing Department as pilot sites for program implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1984</td>
<td>Departmentwide Committees are constituted in the Police Department and Assessing Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A twelve-hour 'Kick Off Retreat' is held at the Harvard Business School for members of the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee and Departmentwide Committees in the Police Department and Assessing Department. The participants review and modify a document drafted by program staff to express the Labor-Management Cooperation Program's philosophy: 'Commitment Toward Cooperation.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1984</td>
<td>Two Worksite Groups are constituted in the Police Operations Unit; one comprised of workers from the midnight and 8:00 AM shifts; one comprised of workers from the 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM shifts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1985</td>
<td>A two-day training session is held at Boston College for all program participants, but attended mostly by members of the Departmentwide Committees and Worksite Groups. Operations workers plan to walk out of the training sessions to protest the fact that they have been working without a contract since June 1984. At the last minute, the SEIU President dissuades them from taking this action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worksite Groups and Departmentwide Committees in the Police Operations Unit and Assessing Department begin meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1985</td>
<td>Police Commissioner Jordan resigns and Mayor Flynn appoints Commissioner Roache as his successor. The Head of the Operations Unit is promoted to Superintendent in Chief and leaves the Labor-Management Cooperation Program's Police Departmentwide Committee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
April 1985: The 4:00 PM shift Worksite Group splits, due to conflicts among group members over the 4-3 workweek proposal. Some members of the group join the 8:00 AM shift group. A small Worksite Group remains on the 4:00 PM shift.

A 911 worker representative from the 8:00 AM shift Worksite Group tells the Police Departmentwide Committee that the civilian staff shortage and poor training procedures have reached a point of crisis. Managers on the Committee promise to address the problem and within a few weeks, some new workers are hired in the Operations Unit.

July 1985: A woman is raped and beaten and a witness calls the 911 emergency three times, but police do not arrive on the scene for over 30 minutes. This results in a scandal and a series of critical hearings on the 911 system by the City Council's Committee on Public Safety. Mayor Flynn appoints a committee of nationally recognized experts on 911 to study Boston's system and make recommendations.

August 1985: Roberts, the Program Director, fires the full-time facilitator and the SEIU leadership calls a moratorium on all further program meetings until the issue is discussed and resolved.

October 1985: The Committee on 911 submits recommendations to the Flynn administration to improve the 911 emergency response system and explicitly endorses the civilian training and career ladder proposals of the 8:00 AM Shift Worksite Group.

November 1985: The Director of the Administrative Services Department and the President of the SEIU reach agreement on a solution to the program staff conflict.

December 1985: The Labor-Management Cooperation Program is officially re-started.

January 1986: A small 8:00 AM Shift Worksite Group and the Police Departmentwide Committee resume meeting, albeit very irregularly, making little or no progress on initiatives.

July 1986: Mayor Flynn signs an executive order upgrading the pay classification of civilian workers in the Police Operations Unit.
TABLE 5.7
CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS, Continued

----------------------------------------------------------

September 1986: The Labor-Management Cooperation Program holds a short conference for managers and workers from departments throughout the City.

A Worksite Group is constituted in the Payroll Office of the Police Department.
had split into an 8:00 AM shift group, which was joined by a few 12:00 AM workers and a small 4:00 PM shift group. Only the 8:00 AM group was able to accomplish anything of substance, however.

From the start, the 4:00 PM shift experienced several problems: First, some basic requirements for successful program operations were not met. Many meetings were casually conducted and suffered from a lack of clear task orientation on the part of workers. Indeed, the slow-moving, quasi-informal atmosphere of the evening shift seemed to be simply transported into the meeting room each week. Follow-through on even minor group decisions, such as purchasing cheap ashtrays using the unit’s petty cash fund, was inconsistent or non-existent. Although weekly minutes were written and posted, communications between participants and non-participants were poor. Some non-participants told me they had no idea what went on in the meetings and did not see the minutes.

Second and more important, the 4:00 PM group could not carve out an agenda that was distinct from the 8:00 AM group. Since the latter group was addressing issues which affected the entire unit (such as the career ladder package and 4-3 workweek), the 4:00 group had to discuss them as well, but could never take the lead on an issue.

Third, two antagonistic cliques were represented in the group until the end of April and neither the chairman nor
facilitators could overcome the conflict. The chairman himself was an activist who worked on the 8:00 AM shift and who had poor relations with the leaders of one of the cliques.

When the Worksite Groups were discussing a 4-3 workweek proposal, the clique animosities on the 4:00 PM shift exacerbated the already complex issues involved in changing work patterns and days off. The facilitators urged the group members to take responsibility for all of the workers on their shifts and not to try to push through their ideas over the opposition of others, but this advice was not heeded. Finally the initiative was scuttled and the members of one clique left the group. The chairman and other workers from the 8:00 AM shift joined the 8:00 group. This left only five members of the 4:00 group, two of whom soon departed when their work hours changed.

Fourth, when the 4:00 group did finally identify two distinct issues in June and July -- the lack of headsets for 911 operators and the lack of safe, legal parking for nightshift workers -- they were not able to pursue them through the Police Department and City Hall bureaucracies. They were misinformed or told that various people were looking into the issues, but they could not find anyone or even any department to admit responsibility or knowledge of the status of the issues. Even the Unit Head, who attended almost every group meeting, could get no concrete answers on these issues from his superiors. As late as January 1986, the 911
operators reportedly still lacked headphones. The only issue successfully addressed by this group was replacement of rough toilet paper with softer paper. The issues addressed by this group are listed in Table 5.8.

The 8:00 AM group took the lead on developing several important initiatives for the unit: (1) Increasing staff levels, which had fallen to dangerously low levels during 1984; (2) Instituting a 4-3 workweek which, as noted above, foundered on the resistance of some persons on the 4:00 PM shift; and (3) Developing a career ladder/training/job classification upgrade package.

This group also experienced problems. Its efforts to improve maintenance of the work area, for instance, had only temporary effects, due to lack of cooperation from the department responsible for maintenance and lack of persistent worker follow-through. Yet the group also had several factors working in its favor.

First, much of its was done by two dedicated and knowledgeable activists, who spent substantial time both on and off the job developing proposals, surveys and attending meetings. They were respected and trusted by other members of the worksite group as representatives at the Departmentwide Committee meetings and enjoyed good relations with supervisors and managers.

Neither these two leaders, nor other members of the 8:00 group, however, had strong support from the less active
### TABLE 5.8
ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE
4:00 PM SHIFT WORKSITE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE ADDRESSED</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Maintaining Work Area</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Clean work area</td>
<td>January; August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Softer toilet paper</td>
<td>January-February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2) Physical Working Conditions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Poorly lit work area</td>
<td>January; March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) New television for lunchroom</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Headsets for 911 operators</td>
<td>June-August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Parking for workers</td>
<td>June-August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Workflow Management, Scheduling</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Use of P.A. system by civilians</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Change day-off schedule to cover weekends, etc.</td>
<td>February-April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Institute 4-3 workweek</td>
<td>February-April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Update computer file with new street names; get more hardcopies</td>
<td>June-August</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 5.8 (Continued)

ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE
4:00 PM SHIFT WORKSITE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>ADDRESSED</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4) Job Duties, Pay, Career Ladders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Cross-training of 911 workers for &quot;backroom&quot; civilian tasks</td>
<td>January-February</td>
<td>Some training by workers, January-February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Revise &amp; distribute 911 operators' manual</td>
<td>January; March; June</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) More training for 911 operators</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>None as of January, 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Career Ladder</td>
<td>February-March</td>
<td>8:00 shift group &amp; department committee develop package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Regulatory Procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Smoking &amp; Non-Smoking Areas</td>
<td>January-March; June</td>
<td>Worker survey in February; No action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Make suggestion box</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
members of their shift or from other shifts. The latter reportedly criticized the 8:00 group for 'making policy' for the unit. Yet the critics reportedly refused to participate or to observe group meetings.

The second factor working in favor of the 8:00 group was that the Departmentwide Committee eventually played a supportive role for the Worksite Group. This support was not strong at first, however. Despite initial advocacy for the program by the Police Labor Relations Director, the change in Police Department administrations in February 1985 and the reported lack of communication from City Hall administrators about the program to the new Police Administration, led to irregular meetings and a few conflicts about the program itself, for the first few months.

In April, one of the 8:00 AM group leaders made an impassioned speech at a Departmentwide Committee meeting, claiming that shortstaffing and lack of formal training had undermined the quality of 911 service to such an extent that he himself would never call 911 in an emergency. The new senior managers on the Committee responded by immediately requesting job postings by the City Personnel Division and by adding more civilian operators into the FY86 budget. By December, there were 93 civilians in the unit. The managers also began to work with the two worker leaders to refine the Worksite Group’s proposals to introduce up to twenty civilian trainer and civilian supervisor positions, to upgrade the base
pay of all operators and to provide formal training by the Police Academy for operators.

Third, a 911 scandal in July 1985, created media and City Council pressure on the administration to improve the Operations unit. A woman was raped and beaten but police assistance did not arrive for over 30 minutes, despite three calls to 911 by a witness. As it turned out, the slow response was due primarily to a shortage of police cars, but the Council's Public Safety Committee and the media presented the incident as a 911 operator foul-up.

A blue ribbon committee of nationally known 911 experts was set up in August to study the problem. This committee included a union steward who was one of the two 8:00 AM worksite group leaders. Through the efforts of this worker, the committee accepted the Worksite Group's career ladder/training/pay upgrade plan, as well as a proposal to install an Enhanced 911 System, which automatically identifies the location of 911 callers, and made them the body of its recommendations to the Flynn administration in October 1985.

Program participants, both workers and managers, stated in December 1985 that it may have taken months or years to get the worksite group's plan approved by the City's Personnel and Labor Relations divisions and by the State Civil Service system review machinery, if not for the assistance of the blue ribbon committee and media attention. As of July 1986, none of the committee's recommendations had been implemented,
although the base pay upgrade had reportedly been authorized
by the Mayor and the 8:00 AM shift group and Departmentwide
Committee had begun to discuss implementation of the Enhanced
911 System with telephone company officials. Table 5.9 lists
the issues addressed by the 8:00 AM shift Worksite Group.

Perceptions of the QWL Program After One Year

(A) Management Views

In December 1985, the Police Superintendent in Chief, the
Director of Police Administrative Services and his Assistant,
the Police Personnel Director and Police Labor Relations
Director all stated that, for the most part, the QWL program
had been a success in the Operations unit and that they were
committed to working with civilian operators to implement the
recommendations of the blue ribbon committee. They also
stated, however, that they had no power to influence the speed
of the City Hall and State review processes of those
recommendations and that they assumed approval would take some
time.

Half of these managers also stated that, although QWL was
a good idea, they had no plans to implement it in other units,
since it required too much of their time. One stated that the
program would only be viable if it focused specifically on
increasing worker productivity.

Two other managers also took issue with the program's
### TABLE 5.9

**ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE 8:00 AM SHIFT WORKSITE GROUP, 1985**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>ADDRESSED</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Maintaining Work Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Clean work area and restrooms</td>
<td>January; May</td>
<td>New custodian hours set by management in January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Softer toilet paper</td>
<td>January-February</td>
<td>Approved in February; New stock in use by May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Lunch/break room messy &amp; used by 'outsiders'</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Management posts notice to outsiders not to eat in room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Physical Working Conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Improve vending machine selections</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Notified vendor in January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Parking for workers</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>None as of January, 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Workflow Management, Scheduling*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Hire more civilian workers</td>
<td>January-February; April-June</td>
<td>May-July: Vacated positions filled; July-January, 1986: 20 positions added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Change day-off schedule to cover weekends, etc.</td>
<td>January-May</td>
<td>Survey of workers in February; New schedule made by management in May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Institute 4-3 workweek</td>
<td>January-May</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Overtime compensation; day off or money</td>
<td>January-February</td>
<td>Unclear; management policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Job Duties, Pay, Career Ladders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Cross-training of 911 workers for backroom rotations</td>
<td>January-February; June-July</td>
<td>Some training in January, stops by February because some worker resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1) Compensation of worker trainers</td>
<td>May-July</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Supervisors should know and do some civilian operator tasks</td>
<td>January; April</td>
<td>None direct; career ladder package addresses issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Career ladder, Wage Classification upgrade</td>
<td>March-January, 1986</td>
<td>New job descriptions by group and department committee; Wage upgrade by July, 1986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These issue often overlapped in worksite group discussions
+ Initially proposed by manager at department committee meeting, 2/27
strategic focus and operations. One expressed the view that
the sites had not been adequately assessed before being
selected for program participation and that it was foolish to
believe that a grassroots program could last for long in a
unit comprised of semi-skilled workers with high turnover. In
his opinion, only a unit comprised of professional workers,
such as police officers would be suitable for a permanent,
grassroots-based program, but he deemed current relations with
the Police Patrolmen's Association too fractious to permit
such an effort.

Another manager expressed great frustration with the
entire program administration process and particularly with
what he considered to be a total lack of communication or
guidance from administrators on the Citywide Oversight
Committee. He stated that the program could not thrive in the
department unless City administrators provided more support
and direction and he was not optimistic that such support
would materialize.

(B) Views of the Union

The SEIU leadership was generally pleased with the outcome
of the program in the Operations Unit. Although they became
frustrated with the administration in the Winter and Spring of
1986 for what they considered to be foot dragging on the
latter's part in implementing the job upgrade/training
package, they regarded the package as a great success. The
estimated $25.00 per week raise that the base pay upgrade would bring 'makes the whole program worth it,' said the President. (21)

Moreover, the President praised the program for having created better links between Operations workers and the union leadership, stating that workers 'are calling this office a lot more now.' She also stated that workers 'are more aggressive now,' citing an increase in grievances filed in December over working conditions. (22)

(C) Views of Workers and Supervisors

Perceptions of workers and supervisors about the QWL program as of the end of December 1985, were mixed, much like those of Assessing workers. As Table 5.10 shows, both participants and non-participants gave the program an 'okay' rating, on average, but the responses were distributed mostly between 'good' and 'terrible.' Thirty-five percent stated that the program had helped to increase communication and discussion of problems in the unit, but the same number stated that the program had accomplished nothing. Only four persons, or 24 percent of the respondents, cited the increase in staff or job upgrade and career plan as accomplishments, however.

Of those who left the program while it was in progress, two said they did so because the program was accomplishing nothing and two reported that they left because of conflict with other workers. Many others left the worksite groups over
### TABLE 5.10

**POLICE OPERATIONS UNIT**

**WORKER AND SUPERVISOR ATTITUDES ABOUT THE LABOR-MANAGEMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM AFTER ONE YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Did you participate in the Labor-Management Cooperation Program? (Survey, December, 1985). N = 41 surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) How would you rate the program? (Multiple choice survey question, December, 1985). N = 24 surveys and responses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(3) If you joined the program, but stopped participating before August, 1985, explain why. (Open-ended survey question, December, 1985). N = 7 surveys and responses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The program was a waste of time; it did nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program disrupted relations among workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 5.10, Continued

(5) What are the program’s biggest accomplishments to date?  
(Open-ended survey question, December, 1985). \( N = 17 \) surveys and responses.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, listening, airing problems</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased staff; career ladder; raises</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various housekeeping improvements</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) How much effort should the SEIU devote to programs such as the Labor-Management Cooperation Program?  
(Multiple choice survey question, December, 1985). \( N = 22 \) surveys and responses.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot of effort</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fair amount of effort</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much effort</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No effort at all</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(7) What issues should the union focus on?  
(Open-ended survey question, December, 1985). \( N = 15 \) surveys; 20 responses.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wage raises; position classification upgrades</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More union responsiveness to workers in general</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness in promotions; establishing career ladders</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace fairness in general</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased staffing</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved training</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the course of the program, but most did so because they were transferring out of the unit or because their work hours changed so that they could no longer attend meetings.

Asked whether or not they would like to participate in the program now, worker responses overall showed a slight decline in desire to participate over the previous year. Among those who had participated, however, sentiments were extremely polarized, with five indicating they would like to participate, four indicating they would not like to and none undecided. Those participants who still wanted to participate were the activists from the 8:00 AM group. Only one participant from the 4:00 group indicated a desire to participate. Polarization was also evident in views as to whether the union should continue to participate in programs of this sort. Although the vast majority of respondents stated that the union should participate, a sizable minority stated that the union should not do so.

Two factors seem to account for these responses. First, the lukewarm to negative assessments of program accomplishments are attributable to the fact that no improvements had been implemented as of December 1985. Second, communications between the activist workers, who had helped to organize the upgrade/training package and other workers in the unit was almost non-existent. The old clique antagonisms and a split between some of the activists and the unit's many new and untrained workers, precluded discussions
about the status of program initiatives.

These splits are reflected in the results of the survey of work relations conducted in December 1985, which are included in Tables 5.4 and 5.5, above. As these tables show, perceived work relations, both among workers and between workers and supervisors, were actually less cooperative in 1985 than they had been in 1984. According to several workers, none of the new civilian operators had been trained very well and because so many were hired over such a short period of time, many were being shown the ropes by workers who themselves had only six months of experience on the job. Veteran workers deplored what they considered to be poor handling of callers, but their attempts to correct the new workers provoked conflicts. Most of the supervisors had ceased to exercise strict discipline or guidance and those who continued to do so were often ignored by the new workers.

Between December 1985, when the program resumed following a four-month moratorium and September 1986, Worksite Group activity was at a much lower level than during the first eight months. The 4:00 PM group did not meet at all. Only six to eight operator activists attended meetings of the 8:00 AM group regularly. Some stated that they did not want the new workers to attend group meetings since "they're part of the problem" with the unit. (23)
Conclusion

On the basis of this description of QWL in the Police Operations unit, one must conclude that this was not a particularly conducive setting for a grassroots-based QWL program. Its routine tasks, low standing in the department’s decision making hierarchy, worker-supervisor conflicts and cliques among workers, produced a politically fragmented unit, whose members could not agree on how to use what little power the program afforded.

Yet, the combination of several factors led to program achievements in this unit. First, the existence of a few leaders who were sufficiently frustrated, knowledgeable and interested in improving the unit, was enough to generate initiatives. They were opposed by many workers, but the opposition was not coherent enough to undermine their determination. Second, these leaders enjoyed good relations with most supervisors and with the unit head; one leader performed mostly ancillary tasks which brought him into frequent working contact with supervisors. Moreover, supervisors and the unit head supported the workers’ agenda.

Third, senior department managers supported the workers’ agenda and helped to refine and implement it. This support was due to two factors: (1) Advocacy by the Police Labor Relations Director of the concept of QWL as a vehicle to change worker-manager relations, and of the idea that management must initially demonstrate its commitment to better
relations by cooperating with reasonable worker initiatives; 
(2) More important, pressure brought to bear on management by 
the media and City Council to show improvement in the 
Operations Unit helped to make the worker initiatives a higher 
priority than they would otherwise have been and fostered the 
development of a good working relationship between managers 
and the two worker leaders.

Yet, despite the pressure exerted by the media, successful 
worker initiatives and management support did not translate 
into timely implementation of improvements. From November 
1985 through June 1986, for instance, the training/upgrade 
package was shunted between several offices: Police Personnel, 
Police Administrative Services, City Personnel, City Labor 
Relations, State Personnel and the Mayor’s Office. Similar 
problems with inter-unit and inter-departmental cooperation 
dermined initiatives to get headsets, parking for night 
shift workers and improved maintenance of the work area.

As of September 1986, it appeared that the QWL program 
would continue to function on a low level in the Operations 
Unit, at least until the upgrade/training package and Enhanced 
911 System were implemented, thanks to continued interest by a 
few activists and willingness by some managers to work with 
them. Assuming that formal civilian trainer positions are 
introduced and that formal cross-training and rotation of all 
workers on all jobs takes place, it is possible that worker 
cliques may begin to break down, increasing cohesiveness and
cooperation in the unit generally.

Beyond that, however, the long-term future of QWL in the Operations unit is unclear. As more parts of the 911 task are automated, there may be fewer problems to solve and hence, less need for Worksite Groups. More important, the unit's low standing in the department hierarchy may render efforts to achieve further improvements more time consuming and frustrating than than they are worth to workers. The most likely future for worker involvement, is that police aspirants will continue to be active in pressing for improvements and will attempt to maintain contact with senior managers to further these goals. In other words, worker involvement may take the form of traditional union steward activism, with peripheral involvement by the rank and file.
CHAPTER 5 - NOTES

1) Civilian managers and workers allege that uniformed personnel treat civilian workers this way. One senior civilian manager said: 'If this were India, it would be a perfect example of a caste system. Civilians are second-class citizens. They are not expected to be heard from very often.'

2) Police Operations Unit supervisors, November 1984


4) Managers in the Police Administrative Services, Personnel and Labor Relations Divisions complained about the cumbersomeness of these arrangements on a few occasions during the Spring of 1985 and in December 1985 interviews.


6) For an analysis of the civilianization of the Police Department under Commissioner DiGrazia, see Albert, 1975.


9) Operations Unit workers and Unit Head, November 1984.


12) Throughout the study period, civilian operators on the backroom internal lines repeatedly charged that police officers treated them poorly when calling for background checks on individuals or to report or check the status of stolen cars and missing persons.


15) A case in point is the "backroom" internal communications jobs. Adequate performance of these jobs requires great deal of working knowledge of department procedures and of the procedures of the backroom itself. Since there is no formal training for the jobs, new workers are almost totally reliant upon veterans to learn the ropes. Since the workload here is quite heavy, there is little time to train new workers. Moreover, since veterans have established norms of task sharing that alter the official division of labor, untrained newcomers often gum up the system. During the study period, several workers complained that they had been treated so badly during their first few days in the backroom that they asked not to be assigned there again. Supervisors tried to honor these requests, thus exacerbating the staff shortage problem in the backroom and reinforcing the social divisions among these workers.

16) All civilian jobs in the Operations Unit carried the same R-9 classification until July 1986. Few civilian clerk jobs elsewhere in the Police Department carried higher ratings.

17) Police Operations Unit Head, November 1984. See also Fogelson (1977) for a description of militaristic philosophies of police organization.


19) ibid.

20) Police Labor Relations Director, November 1984.


22) ibid.

CHAPTER 6
PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Introduction

Most studies of QWL claim that effective executive leadership is one of the most important determinants of QWL operational success. (Nadler, Hanlon, Lawler, 1980; Walton, 1975; See also Selznick, 1957). Effective leadership is required to establish a program as a legitimate organizational priority and to create meaningful incentives for organization members to be open to change and adopt new behaviors. Particularly in bureaucratic settings, where different departments or units perform different functions which are determined at the top levels of the organization, executive leadership is required to guide the change process if any change is to take place at all, so that the right departments or individuals adopt new behaviors when needed.

By these criteria, executive leadership of the Boston QWL program was ineffective. The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee -- the entity formally charged with responsibility for program leadership -- played almost no operational role whatsoever in the program. The administrators on the Committee claimed that QWL was "Robert's program" and that it was his responsibility to conduct the program successfully. Yet, as each week went by, Roberts alienated program participants. By the end of the study
period, he was regarded as technically incompetent and/or personally dislikable by almost everyone in the program who knew him -- manager, worker and administrator alike.

It is difficult not to blame Roberts for many of the program's problems. Yet the discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 showed that the interests and agendas of workers and managers were either fundamentally incompatible to begin with, or unattainable because of lack of responsiveness and timely cooperation from other departments. Only strong mayoral or top administrator leadership could have adjudicated these worker-manager conflicts or secured the cooperation of internal service departments to accomplish program initiatives.

Yet strong executive leadership leadership was incompatible with the administration's conception of QWL and with the lack of strong interest by top administrators in QWL. As noted in Chapter 3, the Mayor was not even informed about the program during its first two years of existence. It is this lack of interest and lack of a foundation of cooperation and trust between the administration and the SEIU which constituted the leadership void in the program and not Roberts. This was amply illustrated by the fact that it took the union and administration almost four months to re-start the program after Roberts' firing of a group facilitator brought the program to a halt and that it was primarily union persistence that finally resolved the impasse. Indeed, the
administration exhibited no leadership before, during, or for a long time after this conflict. (1)

The discussion in this chapter will describe the activities of the Labor-Management Oversight Committee, Roberts' difficulties as program director and finally, the administration's and union's responses to a program crisis precipitated by Roberts' firing of a facilitator. Table 6.1 provides a chronology of important events in the implementation of the program, focusing on leadership activities.

The Role and Performance of the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee

The Oversight Committee was comprised of top level executives from both Labor and Management. The management side was represented by the Director of Administrative Services, the Director of Personnel, the Director of the Office of Labor Relations, the Budget Director, the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor and his assistant. The SEIU side was represented by the President, the City Hall and Police Department Business Representatives and two shop stewards. Roberts was the executive director of the Committee.

According to the official program design documents, the primary functions of the Oversight Committee were to plan for and direct the implementation of the program into various departments and to serve as a trouble-shooter when the program
### TABLE 6.1

**CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LABOR - MANAGEMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1984</td>
<td>Roberts proposes that the City of Boston and miscellaneous employee unions, AFSCME Council 93 and SEIU Local #285 apply to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for funding of a labor-management cooperation program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1984</td>
<td>The City of Boston designs a program structure and applies to the FMCS for funding of the Labor-Management Cooperation Program for 18 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1984</td>
<td>Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service funding is received. The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee is constituted and a memorandum of understanding between the SEIU and Flynn administration is signed. The memorandum officially acknowledges the program and provides that either party may cease participating if it chooses to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1984</td>
<td>The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee chooses the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit as pilot sites for the program. The Committee also hires two program facilitators and a training and process consultant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1984</td>
<td>A twelve-hour, 'Kick-Off Retreat' is held at the Harvard Business School for members of the Citywide Oversight Committee and Departmentwide Committees in the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit. The participants review and slightly modify a document drafted by the program staff to express the Labor-Management Cooperation Program's philosophy: &quot;Commitment Toward Cooperation.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1984</td>
<td>Worksite Groups are constituted in the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1985</td>
<td>A two-day training session is held at Boston College for all program participants, but attended mostly by members of the Departmentwide Committees and Worksite Groups. Worksite Groups and Departmentwide Committees begin meeting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
February 1985: The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee reviews the results of a study of routine workplace relations in the Assessing Department and Police Operations Unit.

June 1985: The Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee officially chooses the Retirement Board for participation in the Labor-Management Cooperation Program. One Worksite Group and one Departmentwide Committee is constituted in the Retirement Board.

August 1985: Roberts, the Program Director, fires the full-time committee facilitator. The SEIU leadership calls a moratorium on all further program meetings until a hearing on the matter can be held by the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee. No hearing is ever held, however.

November 1985: The Director of the Administrative Services Department and the President of the SEIU Local #285 reach agreement on a solution to the staff conflict, including provisions for a new program co-director to be hired along with Roberts and for a new program facilitator to be hired. The Oversight Committee officially endorses this solution.

December 1985: The Labor-Management Cooperation Program is officially re-started. A new Sub-Committee of the Oversight Committee meets several times to work through unresolved issues of the solution to the staff conflict.

January 1986: Worksite Groups and Departmentwide Committees resume meeting in the Retirement Board and Police Operations Unit.

February 1986: A critical, first-year evaluation of the Labor-Management Cooperation Program is presented to the program staff by the author of this study.

April 1986: The Assessing Department publicly announces that it will not re-join the Program.
TABLE 6.1

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS, Continued

September 1986: The Labor-Management Cooperation Program holds a short conference for managers and workers from departments throughout the City. The Mayor sends a letter to the conference, professing his support of the Program.

Worksite Groups are constituted in the Payroll Office of the Police Department and in the thirty-person Rent Equity Board. Plans are made to implement the Program in the Inspectional Services Department also.

The person appointed as Program Co-Director in November 1985 becomes sole Program Director. Roberts, the original Director, is reportedly assigned a consulting role, with no direct responsibility for program management. Nevertheless, conflicts between Roberts and the Director over control of the Program reportedly continue into November 1986.
ran into snags at the Departmentwide Committee level. (2)

This was a vague job description. Directing implementation and trouble-shooting could entail either a pro-active role or a more passive role, depending upon one's perspective. Few attempts were made by Committee members to establish a clear role and set of tasks for the Committee, however. By default, the Committee played a very passive role. Indeed, but for its decisions to hire staff and implement the program in Assessing and Police Operations in the Fall of 1984 and its decision to expand the program into the 32-member Retirement Board in May 1985, the Committee played no direct role at all in program operations throughout the study period.

From January through July, 1985, meetings were scheduled about once every six weeks. Each meeting lasted 60-90 minutes. At the February meeting, I presented the results of a study of workplace relations in Assessing and Police Operations, which I had conducted in November. The next scheduled meeting did not take place, as the administrator members failed to attend. At the next few meetings, the Committee discussed the idea of a program newsletter and TV report on the program, as well as planning a program-wide conference or picnic and lobbying U.S. Congress to continue to fund the FMCS program. The July meeting was officially deemed unnecessary and cancelled. After that, no further meetings of the entire Committee were held until November 1985, due to a
staff conflict and program moratorium.

Each meeting also included brief reports by the two program facilitators on the status of Worksite Group activities. Oversight Committee members would generally ask for more details on specific issues, some administrators would ask a few questions about worker morale in the groups, and the meeting would move on to other topics.

On a few occasions, Roberts and the SEIU President raised the question of whether the Oversight Committee should engage in active problem-solving itself, on a Citywide level. The issue of poor air circulation in City Hall, which had been discussed by one Assessing worksite group, was bandied about as a possible project, but then dropped. The problem of lack of career ladders for workers was discussed and a career ladder committee, separate from the QWL program, but including Roberts, the SEIU President and the Labor Relations Director, was constituted in the spring of 1985. The committee had produced neither reports to the Citywide Oversight Committee nor tangible products as of July 1986.

In the meantime, administrator attendance at Oversight Committee meetings was spotty. The Director of Administrative Services attended no meetings at all. The Budget Director and Chief Policy Advisor seldom stayed for the entire meeting and sometimes for as little as 10 minutes.

At the departmentwide and worksite group levels, there was little cognizance of the Oversight Committee’s existence, let
alone knowledge of its activities. Oversight Committee minutes were only distributed among Oversight Committee members. At one point, an administrator expressed a desire to visit a worksite group, but the visit reportedly never took place. The idea of having the Mayor visit a worksite group was also discussed, as a way of introducing the Mayor to QWL and showing workers that they had his support. Tentative plans for the visit were made, but never followed through. At no point during the study period was the Mayor informed of the program's existence, according to the Chief Policy Advisor and Personnel Director. (3)

In the meantime, the program became bogged down in Assessing and Police Operations. Some of the problems in these two departments were directly caused by lack of responsiveness by departments which provided services to them. In Assessing, for instance, maintenance problems festered or were resolved only temporarily by the Real Property Department. The comprehensive employee job audit did not take place until a year after the issue was first identified and reported to the Personnel Department by Assessing managers. Police Operations groups experienced similar problems with their housekeeping initiatives. The 911 operator job upgrade initiative was shunted around from office to office for several months (during 1986), its whereabouts unknown to program participants. The unit's effort to get headphones for operators fared similarly. Even within the
Police Department, coordination among units whose support was necessary to complete worker initiatives was lacking. Some of the department's new senior managers, however, claimed as late as December 1985 to have received no communication from the City administration about the program or the existence of the Oversight Committee, from which they inferred that QWL was not a priority.

In the Retirement Board, the first issue which workers addressed when they began meeting in June 1985, was the impending relocation of their office to another floor, which was organized by the Real Property Department. Worker and manager efforts to address their concerns about the move with Real Property reportedly fell on deaf ears, however.

Other interdepartmental problems did not undermine QWL initiatives directly, but disrupted workflow and work relations and made the climate for QWL in Assessing and Police Operations inhospitable. Workers and managers frequently complained about the City's inefficient payroll procedures; it reportedly took up to three months for some to get their first paycheck and up to two months to be paid for overtime work. Computers were poorly maintained and continually broke down in the Assessing and Police Departments, or reached their capacity limits in the middle of Assessing keypunch projects.

The Oversight Committee failed to consider or analyze these interdepartmental issues, however. Nor did it attempt to examine the work procedures, staffing plan or budgetary
level of the Real Property Department, to see whether it was realistic to expect that Department to improve its performance in the Assessing Department, to increase its budget or make other arrangements for maintenance. The Oversight Committee did not analyze the work of the Personnel Division. Had it done so, it would have discovered that Personnel lacked trained staff to conduct job audits in the Assessing Department, contrary to the Assessing Commissioner's promises to workers that the audits would soon begin.

Without leadership from the Oversight Committee, the QWL problem-solving process became mired in the routine relations and politics among departments. Responsiveness and extra-ordinary cooperation do not characterize those relations. As the Assessing Commissioner put it a few times: 'I can't do anything about Real Property.' Likewise, when asked why it took over two months just to get an initial response from the City Personnel Department to the Police Operations job upgrade request, the Police Personnel Director stated: 'I'm not going to push him. There's a lot of things I need to get from the City. I have to maintain a relationship; I can't jeopardize it just over one thing.' One 17-year veteran middle manager summed up relations among departments by saying: 'The expectation is, don't have expectations. 'You say I said that? When did I say it? What do you have in writing?'' (4)

In short, the Oversight Committee played no operational
role in the QWL program. It did not coordinate the problem-solving process among departments and did not communicate any goals or incentives for the program to department managers or workers. Hence it did not make QWL a priority among department decision makers, or even effect permanent changes in the practices of departments like Real Property.

Ironically, while the program operational process was floundering, the Oversight Committee focused, on the one hand, on media exposure, conferences and national QWL program funding and, on the other hand, on the micro-politics of worksite groups. What accounts for this?

One explanation is that the program design was inappropriate for the problems that workers wanted to solve. Since initiatives were supposed to be neatly packaged by Worksite Groups with middle management approval and then taken to the departmentwide committees, receiving Oversight Committee intervention only if they ran into snags, it took a while before any snags became visible to the Committee. By the time snags were apparent, workers were already frustrated that nothing was being accomplished on their initiatives.

Yet even at this point, the Oversight Committee did not actively intervene in, for example, the Assessing job classification upgrade or Retirement Board re-location issues. Moreover, it never attempted to think through problem-solving processes during or before they took place at
the Worksite Group level, by identifying major decision points and anticipating necessary interventions. Why did the Committee play such a passive, do-nothing role?

Administrators placed the bulk of the blame for the program's problems on the staff. One stated in August 1985, that the problem lay with the full-time facilitator, whose reports to the Committee on worksite group activities were devoid of details on the process and lacking in strategic analysis, the administrator claimed.

Others blamed Roberts, the Executive Director of the Oversight Committee, for failing to organize the work of the Committee effectively and for wasting their time on trivialities. 'There's no way I'm going to spend time in a meeting talking about newsletters. If that's all it's going to be, I'm not going to be there,' said one administrator. 'I was there out of guilt, not interest.' 'It pissed me off,' said another, 'that the whole thing seemed geared to getting a positive press release.' (5) Another said: 'I kept telling [him] that I didn't have time to attend those meetings and wanted to send a representative, but he was rigid about it, so I just stopped coming.'

Asked why they had failed to voice any of these opinions at Oversight Committee meetings, administrators responded that they viewed QWL as "Roberts' program." He was 'the only one who's studied all this stuff," said one. 'I guess I just believe in giving everyone their shot,' said another. "For
the first few months I just sat there," said yet another. "I mean, what do I know; these people are all the experts." (6)

These responses also indicate a low level of commitment on the part of administrators to the program. Yet Roberts clearly failed to organize what little commitment existed. As one administrator stated: "It's the role of the program director and staff to develop the issues and present them to the Committee so we can make a decision." (7) The outside consultant to the program concurred: "You don't use the time of a [top administrator] for little issues... You call on him once in a while for important things..." (8)

Roberts, however, perceived his actions differently. In order to fully understand the leadership problem in the program and the staff conflict which halted the entire program for several months, an analysis of Roberts' position and purposes is necessary.

Roberts' Goals and Organizing Difficulties

Roberts' goal was to transform the City service delivery system to one characterized by worker self-management at the bottom levels of departments and a more participatory management style overall. The key component of that vision was the QWL committees, particularly the Worksite Groups, which, once instituted, would gradually become more cohesive and take on more decision making responsibilities. This ideological conception of QWL stood in stark contrast to the
more instrumental purposes of workers and the union and to the superficial and somewhat paternalistic conceptions of QWL by administrators and senior department managers.

Roberts' primary operational objective was to get the committees to meet; to make the participatory discussion process happen. Assuming that the discussions were truly participatory, which appropriate facilitation by the staff would ensure, he believed participants would learn to be cooperative and to use the committees to regulate the workplace. (9)

As the program began, however, administrators failed to attend training sessions and committee meetings and refused to give Roberts their time to address operational issues. Department managers failed to attend departmentwide committee meetings. This convinced Roberts that management was 'not very committed to this thing.' (10) Yet he had no power to induce management commitment to his concept of QWL, or to make them attend meetings and discuss issues with workers. Indeed, as a Deputy Director of Personnel for Human Resources, he had very limited authority within the Personnel Division, much less with other departments. Administrators expressed no concern with his lack of power, since they thought of QWL as a service to department heads, not a policy, but this was hardly adequate for Roberts' ambitious purposes.

To inculcate his idea and practice of QWL in the City and particularly with managers, Roberts eventually developed a
strategy consisting of three components:

First, he badgered administrators and managers to attend meetings and, in some cases, instructed them as to how they should interact with workers in these meetings.

Second, he made, or attempted to make liberal use of the media, as a way of convincing both participants and potential participants, as well as parties whom he considered to be influential in the service delivery process (e.g., the City Council), that QWL was a wonderful and successful innovation which they should support. (11)

Third, he self-consciously and publicly cast himself in the role of a manager, a member of the 'management team,' so that he could approach managers and administrators as one of their own, offering his consulting expertise and QWL, as tools for developing a modern approach to human resources management. As a Deputy Director of Personnel, of course, he could hardly have presented himself as a worker and his formal job description called for him to develop other human resources initiatives in the City, such as a performance appraisal program. Yet it is fair to say that Roberts presented himself as a management partisan, someone who was working for management, to teach them participatory decision making and to help them implement worker self-management in the City. (12)

Roberts' strategy was partially successful. He was able to induce assessing managers to attend Departmentwide
Committee meetings and to induce administrators to at least make appearances at Oversight Committee meetings. He convinced the head of the Retirement Board to join the program in May 1985 and to have Roberts and the outside consultant conduct a few training seminars for his middle managers. The Assessing Commissioner asked Roberts to serve on his Human Resources Committee. Roberts impressed almost everyone with his zeal and commitment to the program and with his self-proclaimed knowledge of QWL theory. (With the exception of the SEIU President and outside consultant, no one claimed to have any knowledge of QWL theory, beyond that conveyed by Roberts).

Yet his strategy was ultimately unable to produce the results he sought, or even to put the QWL program on a firm footing. His perspectives and actions clashed with those of other participants and precipitated several conflicts with the staff and with the union.

First, Roberts' insistence upon administrator attendance at Oversight Committee meetings and responsiveness to issues he raised between meetings, alienated some and led them to make only symbolic gestures of support. Even the union President, who attended all meetings and devoted a great deal of time to the program, stated in December 1985 that she had no more desire to spend so much time hassling with Roberts over various issues during the course of each week. His apparent attempts to coach some department managers on how
they should interact with workers in meetings alienated them, they said and made them uncomfortable. (13)

Second, Roberts' focus on media led some administrators on the Oversight Committee to believe that nothing important was happening in the program and that Roberts was attempting to 'project before there is substance,' as one put it. The program facilitators, SEIU President and several administrators and managers also believed that Roberts' attempts to get media exposure for worksite groups were disruptive to the work of the groups, as well as selfishly motivated, as Roberts displayed his name prominently in written PR for the program. (14)

Third, Roberts' focus at meetings on participatory discussions, as well as his role as a management partisan, led to what several administrators and managers considered to be an 'obsession with process' to the detriment of concrete problem-solving, as well as to what the consultant, union and facilitators called an 'obsequiousness toward management.' (15) For example, Roberts never presented the Oversight Committee with an analysis of the decisions and actions that various managers would have to take to bring lasting changes in maintenance practices or job audits in the Assessing Department, a job reclassification in Police Operations, or discussion of the Retirement Board's concern about their relocation. He told me later that he did not raise these issues because he did not want to 'embarrass management,' but
to my knowledge, he never conducted such an analysis, even for his own private use. Yet he privately applauded the union President and facilitators when they expressed exasperation at meetings that problems were festering because of lack of responsiveness by managers.

By April 1985, senior managers in the Assessing Department said they considered Roberts to be 'utopian' and a 'goo-goo-ga-ga hippie from the 1960's,' because of his proposals to the Human Resources Committee to re-construct the department based on principles of worker self-management. Senior managers in the Police Department considered Roberts' offer to serve as their consultant on human resources issues totally out of line and told him, as Roberts interpreted it, to 'fuck off.'

At the same time, Roberts' management partisanship in Assessing and later in the Retirement Board, was a source of great concern to the union President and QWL facilitators. They opposed his reprimand of an Assessing worksite group which had provoked conflict with a manager by circulating a petition to clean the floors; they claimed that Roberts' management status demoralized the group and undermined the credibility of the facilitators.

They also opposed Roberts' membership on the Assessing Commissioner's Human Resources Committee. Like the worker representatives on the Assessing Departmentwide Committee, the President and facilitators viewed this committee as
contradictory to the purpose of QWL as they perceived it -- to facilitate open discussion and cooperative decision making between labor and management on issues identified by workers. The Human Resources Committee dealt with the issues of primary importance to workers -- career ladders, training and job descriptions. Yet no workers were included on the committee and management offered no reports on the committee's progress. The fact that management was producing its plan for their careers frustrated workers and upset the QWL facilitators and union President. (19)

Unfortunately, Roberts' organizing difficulties were equalled by a personal style which most program participants and several other administrators and managers found alienating. By the end of the study period, almost all administrators, managers, and union officials I interviewed offered negative remarks about his personal style and/or technical competence. Moreover, of the six persons who worked with him most frequently on the program, all stated that they could not trust him to honestly report actions or statements from one person to another.

Yet, despite Roberts' apparent inadequacies as a program director, it is not Roberts' lack of leadership qualities per se that undermined the program. Rather, it is the lack of leadership exercised by the administration and lack of a clear agenda and support for QWL that allowed Roberts to operate as he did and for as long as he did in the program. This is
further illustrated by the staff conflict that grew into a major labor-management conflict in the program.

Staff Conflict and Program Crisis

Given the manifold operational problems described in Chapters 4 and 5 above, as well as the personality clashes mentioned in this chapter, it should not be surprising that the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation Program stumbled into a life-threatening crisis only eight months after it had begun.

The conflict centered around Roberts and the full-time facilitator, who began to quarrel soon after the latter was hired in November 1984. Roberts claimed that the facilitator was incompetent and insubordinate. She claimed that he was incompetent and autocratic. Their conflicts drained energy from the staff and contributed to the tensions of program committee meetings in the Assessing Department. In the Spring of 1985, the outside consultant and SEIU President attempted to resolve the difficulties. These attempts appeared to improve relations somewhat, but on August 14, Roberts suddenly informed the facilitator that he was relieving her of her duties.

The union President and half-time facilitator were outraged by Roberts' action and stated that it should have been preceded by an open discussion of the full-time facilitator's performance. Moreover, they stated that it was
Roberts and not the full-time facilitator, who was the source of problems in the program. Relations between Roberts and the SEIU President had already become quite strained by this point because of minor actions which upset the President, such as Roberts' attempted surreptitious taping of meetings and conversations for his own research and his perceived management partisanship.

The union President called for a moratorium on program meetings until a formal hearing could be held on the incident at the next Oversight Committee meeting. Provisions for such hearings had been made in November 1984 after a dispute involving Roberts and the half-time facilitator. A hearing was scheduled for the following week.

Roberts organized a meeting of the administration side of the Oversight Committee for the morning prior to the scheduled hearing. This meeting was attended, for the first time in months, by the consultant and all administrators, including the Director of Administrative Services, who had not attended Oversight Committee meetings in a year. The focus of this meeting was on damage control; how to mollify the union so the program could continue. The prevailing view was that the union had overstepped its bounds by questioning the right of a manager to fire a non-union subordinate without progressive discipline. Indeed, there was no attempt to discuss the merits of the firing itself, the relationship between Roberts and the facilitator or other aspects of the program which
might have contributed to the conflict. The issue was immediately cast as one of management rights versus union demands.

The fact that the union had come to the defense of the full-time facilitator was taken as evidence by some administrators that the union had gained 'too much power' in the program generally and had assumed 'control over [the full-time facilitator].' (20) This charge had surface validity, as the union side and, particularly the SEIU President, had devoted considerable time to the program since its inception, whereas administrators were at most peripherally involved. Yet since the program itself had little or no power, the charge that the union had gained 'too much power' was specious. The charge showed, however, that most administrators had little cognizance of the program's purpose or problems and no desire to consider any merits of a union's opposition to a manager's firing of a non-union subordinate.

Despite the fact that a Labor-Management Oversight Committee hearing had been scheduled for that afternoon, the administrators cancelled it, stating that it would 'be a shouting match...to roast Roberts.' Instead, two administrators met with the union President and half-time facilitator and worked out a compromise solution to the crisis. The solution provided for the full-time facilitator to be hired back under six months probation and for an effort
to be made to work out the differences between her and Roberts.

This solution was presented to a second meeting of the administration side of the Oversight Committee in September, which was also attended by Roberts and the consultant. It was determined, however, that reinstatement of the facilitator was unacceptable and that the Director of Administrative Services would convey this to the union and attempt to work out something else. (21)

In the meantime, no program committee meetings took place. Each worksite group wrote a letter to the Oversight Committee, denouncing Roberts' action and voicing support for the full-time facilitator, whom they had come to trust and respect. The representatives of the worksite groups wrote to the Mayor at the end of August, asking for a speedy and fair resolution of the crisis. Several workers and managers stated both publicly and privately that they considered Roberts' unilateral action to be a violation of the cooperative principles of QWL.

Several more weeks went by, but the Administrative Services Director failed to contact the union President. Early in October, the President contacted the Director, suggesting that the SEIU and administration initiate a general discussion about the program's problems and leave open, for the time being, the issue of the facilitator's firing. Nothing came of the President's overture, however, so at the
end of October, she threatened to withdraw from the program, unless the Administrative Services Director contacted her within a week. The Director then contacted her and conversations began.

By the end of November, the SEIU president and Administrative Service Director had reached an agreement which provided that the full-time facilitator would take another job in the City. Roberts would become co-director of the QWL program, along with a person who was close to some top administrators. The purpose of this arrangement, several administrators said later, was to keep Roberts as their expert on QWL, but to bring on someone to supervise the staff who 'has better people skills.' (22)

When asked why it had taken over three months to resolve the crisis, both administrators and union officials said they did not know. Union officials and one administrator surmised that the union's threat to quit the program was perceived by the Director of Administrative Services as potentially embarrassing, before both the program's Federal sponsors and the Boston public. The Director himself denied this, however. He stated that he had purposely stalled: 'In view of the emotionality of the issue, a cooling-off period was appropriate.' (23) He claimed in December 1985 that the program was viable, had been a success in the Assessing Department and should continue, now that the personality conflict between Roberts and the facilitator had been settled.
Whatever his exact motives may have been, it seems clear that the Administrative Services Director would not have acted as soon as he did and perhaps not at all, had the union not continued to press the issue. As his other actions with the SEIU and AFSCME during the study period indicated, the Director did not believe in collaborative relations with unions and he did not see the QWL program as a priority (see Chapter 3). QWL was a nice idea and if it could improve worker morale, that was great, but he was not about to spend inordinate amounts of time focusing on it or even on the crisis. The union’s threat to leave the program seemed simply to induce him to patch up the conflict as a way of getting it out of the way. There was no discussion of the program’s problems (aside from the union’s assertion that Roberts was a problem) and the resolution did little to put the program on a firmer footing for most of the following year.

The new program co-director had no background at all in QWL. Nevertheless, she expressed a philosophical attraction to improving human resources management in the City and putting the program on track. She evinced a leadership style which that was perceived by the staff and union as more direct and honest than that of Roberts. (24) From December 1985 to November 1986, however, she reportedly struggled with Roberts over issues of control of the program and the program’s approach to department managers. Although her efforts and those of the facilitators resulted, by September 1986, in
Roberts' removal from co-directorship of the program, the struggle itself indicated that the leadership void in the City had not been filled.

Indeed, the program languished from December 1985 through August of 1986. Oversight Committee meetings were often cancelled or postponed and accomplished little or nothing substantive. The Assessing Department officially quit the program, with no resistance by top administrators or by the union. Activity in Police Operations and the Retirement Board (which had joined the program in May 1985) remained at a very low level and workers were reportedly demoralized.

Yet a few events kept life in the program and gave hope to program staff workers. First, when the Federal funding ran out in March 1986, the Administrative Services Director agreed to fund the program for the remainder of the fiscal year, as well as pick up the estimated $125,000 yearly cost of staff salaries for FY87. Second, a new Personnel Director joined the administration in May 1986 and claimed to embrace the QWL concept as a useful component of a modern human resources management program. (25) Third, in September 1986, a QWL conference was held for managers and workers throughout the City. Worksite groups were then constituted in the Payroll Office of the Police Department and in the 30-person Rent Equity Board. Plans were reportedly made to implement worksite groups in the Inspectional Services Department as well. Fourth, the SEIU leadership had come to view the
program as an excellent vehicle for organizing departments and developing stewards and worked hard to keep the program alive.

In short, by November 1986, the program had been rejuvenated. Although the administration did not appear to view QWL as a priority, it was obviously willing to support QWL activity at the department level.

The next chapter will address the question of whether these developments bode well for the eventual institutionalization of QWL in Boston.
CHAPTER 6 - NOTES

1) Had there not been such a leadership void, it is hard to imagine how Roberts, who a program observer and longtime worker in the Personnel Division called 'the most hated person in City Hall' (November 1985), could have been retained for long as the director of a program designed to improve communications.


4) Assessing Department Commissioner, April 1985; Police Department Director of Personnel, December 1985; Assessing Department management assistant, November 1984, respectively.

5) Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor, January 1986; Budget Director, January 1986; Assessing Department Commissioner, December 1985.

6) Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor; Assistant to Chief Policy Advisor; Personnel Division Director, December 1985 and January 1986.


9) Roberts, LMCP Director, November 1984 and January 1986; also informal interviews, April 1984 through March 1986; Roberts memos and notes, January - April 1985.


11) This approach was explained and advocated by Roberts on several occasions between April 1984 and April 1986, especially in 'Searching for Public Sector Excellence,' a paper written by Roberts in May 1984, describing his organizing efforts from April 1983 through May 1984 and during bi-weekly meetings of the Learning Action Group (staff plus researcher, consultant, SEIU President, administrator) during the early Spring of 1985, as well as at Citywide Oversight Committee meetings. Specific publicity efforts include an editorial in The Boston Globe, January 1984 and an editorial written by Robert Kuttner in June 1986; 'Turning Japanese,' an article in The Boston Ledger, February 1985; Roberts' participation in a debate over QWL at the University of
Massachusetts, Spring 1985 and invitations to managers from non-participating departments to observe the Worksite Groups during February and March, 1985.

12) Roberts presented himself most adamantly and publicly from November 1984 to August 1985. Specific instances include a formal interview in November 1984; public statements at a the two-day orientation and training session for participants in January 1985; statements at Learning Action Group meetings (see note 11, above) in February 1984 and at the Assessing Departmentwide Committee meetings in April 1984; statements related to the contract negotiations between SEIU Local #285 and the City in late March 1985; statements at the Assessing Department training sessions at the Kennedy School of Government in June 1985; statements to members of Worksite Groups in justification of his firing of the full-time facilitator in August 1985.


16) Roberts, Program Director, January 1986.


19) Roberts advised the workers to be patient and wait for management to complete its plan and in the meantime work on their own ideas, but without a framework which only management had the information to provide, workers could not work on their own.

CHAPTER 6 - NOTES, Continued

21) Throughout this protracted conflict, the outside Training and Process Consultant did not play a neutral or mediator role, as one might expect of a third-party consultant in a labor-management cooperation program, but supported Roberts' actions. Indeed, throughout the entire study period, the consultant limited his contact mostly to Roberts even when he was on site, and relied almost entirely upon Roberts for his source of information about the program. This behavior can be explained, in part at least, by the fact that no administrator took responsibility for the program, so the consultant's only contact on the administration side was Roberts. Roberts also provided the consultant with detailed, written notes of his conversations with administrators, union representatives and staff, which the consultant took to be accurate. (In January 1986, the consultant stated that this had been a mistake on his part). The result of this consulting practice, however, was that when the staff conflict developed into a program crisis, there was no one associated with the program who was regarded as a legitimate mediator by both the union and administration.

22) Director of the Personnel Division and other administrators on the Labor-Management Oversight Committee, December 1985.

23) Director of Administrative Services, December 1985.


CHAPTER 7
PROSPECTS FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION

This chapter discusses the prospects for Boston’s QWL program to become a permanent feature of workplace governance systems in the City. The discussion is divided into two sections. The first section describes and analyzes the actions and perceptions of the SEIU and Flynn administration which led to a continuation of their official commitment to the QWL program beyond the initial pilot phase, which ended in March 1986.

The second section draws upon the analyses of organizational tasks, political structure and routine relations in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, as a basis for speculation about the probable long-term status of QWL in the City. The finding is that because the Mayor’s primary tasks are not to provide high-quality, basic services, but to satisfy other constituent demands, sustained support from the Mayor is unlikely. Hence the institutionalization of QWL as a permanent workplace governance structure is also unlikely. Yet, persistence by the SEIU, as well as episodes of reformism by individual managers and administrators, may lead to recurrent cycles of QWL initiation, implementation, minor accomplishments and then crisis or decline.
MinnacQfL

Kochan and Dyer (1976) argue that several conditions are necessary for labor and management to maintain commitment to cooperative change efforts beyond the initial implementation phase: The more each party regards its initial goals as having been achieved and likely to be achieved in the future, the more likely it is that it will maintain its commitment. Continued commitment is also more likely when each party’s initial goals have not been displaced by higher priority goals, when the initial stimulus for the effort remains and when the benefits of the effort to date are seen as being equitably distributed. (pp. 69-70)

(A) The Union View

Despite the poor performance of the QWL program during its first two years of operation, the SEIU leadership was able to make progress toward its goal of identifying and developing union stewards and of generally improving its connections with the rank and file in City Hall departments and in the Police Department. The program’s poor performance may have even helped the union in this regard, since the program first raised worker expectations and then disappointed them (as described in Chapters 4, 5 and 6). As the SEIU President stated in December 1985: "We’re getting a lot more calls now from [workers in Police Operations]. People are more willing
to call this office and complain." (1) In short, the union leadership perceived that the program was strengthening the union, possibly at the expense of the administration's hold on worker loyalties; hence the union's primary goal was being achieved in the program.

The union also achieved some concrete improvements in working conditions through the program. Assessing workers eventually received job audits and a few health and safety improvements. During the Summer of 1986, the long-delayed civilian 911 operator position classification upgrade went into effect and training of 911 operators reportedly was begun.

Finally, the SEIU President stated in December 1985 that the program had helped the union establish more contact with top administrators than they had enjoyed under the previous administration. (2)

The only negative aspects of the program were the time it took from the President's other activities, the anger of a few 911 operators who disagreed with the union's handling of the four-day workweek issue and, as of December 1985, the frustration of the SEIU City Hall Representative that issues which she deemed priorities were being sidetracked to handle program issues. (3) Despite their frustration with management, the SEIU leadership decided that they were better off with the program than without it. They expressed the view that they might be able to achieve even more gains if the
program were implemented in departments where the union was stronger, such as in the Hospital. (4) This signified a change from the leadership's earlier refusal to implement QWL in the Hospital, for fear that it might undermine the union.

(B) The Administration View

The administration expressed no clear agenda, goals or expectations for the QWL program at the outset, aside from improving worker morale and making workers feel they were part of "the team;" that they had a "stake in what is going on here," as the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor expressed it. (5) Indeed, the Mayor was not personally involved in any way with the program, which indicated that QWL and the performance of basic service agencies generally, were not high priorities in the administration.

Administrators' assessments of the program after its first year of operations were also vague and ambiguous. Although some administrators, such as the Labor Relations Director, the Personnel Director and the assistant to the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor, expressed the view that the program was not doing very well at all at that time, others stated that they perceived it as successful. The Administrative Services Director, for example, stated that the Assessing Commissioner informed him that QWL had worked very well in that department. Within the same two-week period, however, the Assessing Commissioner and other senior managers informed me that they
thought the program had not done well in their department. (6) The administration's willingness to let the program languish from December 1985 through August 1986 certainly indicates the program's low status. Yet, in the Spring of 1986, Roberts and the new program co-director claimed that the administration had acknowledged internally that the program was not performing well and was taking steps to rejuvenate it. (7) In interviews conducted in June and August 1986, the City's new Personnel Director stated that the program had not performed well to date, but that he viewed it as an important component of a modern human resources management approach to personnel administration and would do everything he could to put the program on a firm footing. (8)

It seems then, that key administration decision makers continued to view QWL as a desirable tool for improving worker morale, but not as a priority of any sort. The program's $125,000 annual price tag was apparently seen as small, compared to the City's $1 billion annual budget.

Both the Administration and SEIU leadership therefore maintained their commitment to the LMC program through the end of the 18-month Federal funding period and into a first year of operations funded solely by the City (through June 1987). As of September 1986, both sides expressed optimism that the program would soon begin to thrive. (9) A successful Citywide QWL conference in September 1986 and the constitution of Worksite Groups in the Police Payroll Office and Rent Equity
Board lent credence to these optimistic statements.

**Prospects for Long-Term Institutionalization of QWL**

Over the longer term, QWL success and permanency depends upon more than just competent program administration and smooth operations; it requires a hospitable organizational context. A hospitable context is one in which frequent adjustments or improvements in work processes is required to fulfill organizational tasks to the satisfaction of the relevant task environment. A hospitable context is also characterized by political structures in which the labor-management balance of power is sufficiently equal that cooperative methods are necessary to accomplish organizational objectives.

In the Boston organizational context, neither of these requirements are met. The Mayor's primary tasks -- as dictated by constituent demands -- are to provide economic development projects and innovations which foster image building and neighborhood links. Less important is the smooth functioning of basic service departments and responsiveness to them by internal service departments, except when press reports or public policy changes necessitate sweeping reforms (as happened in the Assessing Department after a 1979 court order).

The task/electoral environment in Boston also induces mayors to maintain viable campaign organizations, the primary
basis for which is the awarding of patronage appointments. Patronage appointments demoralize the career civil servants who attempt to further their careers without doing political work; they come to believe that the system as a whole is not fair and not technically rational, as hard work and skill are not the most valued qualities in an employee. This undermines service quality.

Workers -- particularly the miscellaneous employees who were the targets of the Boston QWL program and the subjects of this study -- have little power to do anything about the perceived lack of fairness and technical rationality of their departments. They lack the right to strike and, more importantly, the unions which represent them have little or no clout with the administration or regulatory institutions. Nor do these unions collaborate to increase their strength vis-a-vis the administration.

Many workers and middle managers make their peace with these conditions. Lack of perceived alternatives, but also the satisfaction of helping people, personal friendships and for many, employment security, induce them to carve out a niche for themselves and settle in.

This is not a hospitable context for QWL; hence it is not surprising that QWL did not do well during its first two years in this city. No forces within the context generated a need for QWL, and particularly not for initiatives from workers performing routinized and increasingly automated tasks.
Nevertheless, it appears likely that the current QWL effort will continue to function for some time and that similar innovations and reforms will be attempted in the future, for two reasons:

First, QWL appears to be a vehicle through which weak and fragmented unions, such as the SEIU, can use administration resources to organize their memberships. The administration appears willing to tolerate such activity, so long as its scope and focus is limited to individual departments. Any assertion of power by the union as a whole, or the suggestion that the administration cooperate with unions on Citywide initiatives, however, is clearly not acceptable to the administration, as indicated by the events described in this narrative (especially the administration's conception of QWL and handling of the program staff conflict). (10)

Second, QWL appears, on the surface at least, to be compatible with various management goals and beliefs. Managers who want to develop their reputations by reforming City government and then 'move on to new challenges' in the public or private sector, see QWL as part of 'modern human resources management,' as they believe it is practiced in the private sector and believe it will help them induce workers to do what they want them to do. (11) Some see QWL as a manifestation of, or vehicle for the pursuit of their political ideologies.

Third, the top-down decision making patterns, politically-
motivated personnel management practices and perceptions of poor working conditions create, it seems, a sufficient amount of dissatisfaction among workers, that volunteers will be available for change programs.

Taken together, these three factors create the illusion of a shared agenda that can be accomplished through QWL. Yet, as this case study has attempted to illustrate, the agendas are fundamentally disparate. As this becomes evident, QWL processes are undermined.

The ideology of QWL espoused by many practitioner-theorists (for example, Argyris 1978, 1981; Ronchi and Morgan 1983), is that a QWL committee should and can serve as the forum in which conflicting interests and agendas are exposed and reconciled. Yet the many fractious and unproductive committee meetings which took place in the Boston program illustrate how utopian this conception of QWL is. Given the nature and extent of labor-management mistrust in the departments which participated in this program, daily meetings and highly skilled facilitators would be required to surface and resolve the conflicts. Yet daily meetings would hardly suit the needs or desires of managers (or most workers, perhaps). Indeed, many middle and senior managers in the Assessing Department, the Police Department and the Retirement Board* complained that the Labor-Management Cooperation

*The Retirement Board joined the program in June 1985.
Program took too much time as it was. As Simon (1957) pointed out long ago, people are often willing to do with less than what they perceive as ideal; they 'satisfice.'

More fundamentally, it seems clear that managers in these departments are not interested in changing their mode of communication with workers. Managers perceive QWL as a human relations program for workers; not as a vehicle for introducing egalitarian worker-manager relations. In the absence of task environments that make worker-manager collaboration necessary for organizational survival or strong unions that can induce managers to be responsive and participatory, grassroots-based QWL committees are unlikely to become permanent features of the employment relationship.

It therefore seems safe to conclude that the Boston municipal context is not conducive to the institutionalization of QWL as a permanent feature of the workplace governance system. This context does, however, appear to be a somewhat hospitable setting for the initiation of QWL and similar innovations. Hence one might reasonably predict that QWL and other 'modern human resource management' techniques (such as performance appraisal systems, flex-time arrangements and at least pro-forma career ladders) will go through more than one peak and peter-out cycle in the City. Dissatisfactions and tensions caused by the lack of responsiveness of the state civil service system and internal City service departments, will prompt reformist managers, activist workers and union
leaders to initiate reforms. These reform attempts will score modest achievements before being overwhelmed or limited by the existing context.
CHAPTER 7 - NOTES

1) President, SEIU Local #285, December 1985.

2) ibid.

3) SEIU Local #285 staffworker, December 1985

4) President and steward, SEIU Local #285, July-August 1985 and December 1985.


6) Director of Administrative Services Department and Assessing Department senior managers, December 1985.

7) Roberts and LMC Program Co-Director, July and August 1986, as reported to me by a colleague.

8) Director of Personnel Division, August 1986, as reported to me by a colleague.

9) Roberts and Co-Director of the LMC Program, Director of Personnel Division, SEIU Local #285 President and steward, July-August 1986, as reported by a colleague.

10) It is possible, perhaps, that a QWL program that is successful in the short- to medium-term may change the organizational context in ways that make it more conducive to the long-term viability of QWL. If the SEIU is able to use QWL as an effective tool for shopfloor organizing, as it did to some extent in the Police Operations Unit and Assessing Department, it may be able to modify one feature which makes the Boston municipal context unconducive to QWL; namely, the lack of power of miscellaneous workers. As the preceding discussions showed, lack of strong shopfloor organization contributes to the relative powerlessness of miscellaneous employees. If the SEIU is able to develop strong shopfloor organizations in City departments, it is reasonable to expect worker-manager relations there to become more systematic, less capricious and possibly more cooperative.

Yet, as of Fall 1986, it was far too soon to tell if increased union presence on the shopfloor through QWL Worksite Groups would lead to permanently stronger shopfloor organizations. Over the longer term, factors such as the increasingly routine nature of many clerical jobs may have a dampening effect on shopfloor organization. Indeed, by April 1986, some of the increased union activity in Police Operations and Assessing reported several months earlier, had already died down somewhat. The new or recently activated shop stewards had reportedly settled into somewhat less active
representational roles, and polarization between activists and non-activists -- which was evident in Police Operations throughout the program -- had resurfaced.

Moreover, even if union shopfloor power were to eventually increase as a result of QWL, it is unlikely that the administration would willingly work with such a large and cohesive worker organization in a QWL program. As this essay has sought to make clear, the administration has not perceived QWL as union-management cooperation at all and has demonstrated that it will resist attempts by the union to interfere in what it considers to be its rightful powers.

11) Between November 1984 and January 1986, several managers told me they were motivated by these goals, including Roberts and the LMC Program Co-Director, two administrators on the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee, one senior manager and one middle manager in the Police Department, two senior managers in the Assessing Department, two middle managers in the Retirement Board and a senior manager in another department that did not participate in the LMC Program.
CHAPTER 8
QWL IN OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

Introduction

The foregoing account showed that the Boston municipal context was a somewhat hospitable setting for the introduction of QWL, but not for the implementation or institutionalization of QWL as a permanent feature of the workplace governance system. More specifically, the primary stimulus for QWL in Boston came from an outside advocate who secured Federal funding for the effort, not from any conscious search on the part of labor or management.

Once initiated, QWL was all but ignored by the administration, since the nature of the latter’s primary tasks and task environment precluded serious attention to labor-management issues or even a focus on providing high-quality basic services. Yet, the union came to see QWL as a suitable vehicle for its organizing agenda. Its strong support for QWL helped to sustain the effort, in spite of neglect by the administration.

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the Boston experience with that of other cities, as a way of judging whether the municipal context is generally a somewhat favorable setting for initiation but not for smooth implementation or institutionalization, or whether Boston is an unusual case.
To answer such a question completely would require a replication of the Boston research for each city to be compared. That task is beyond the scope of this paper. It is possible, however, to compare program operations and contextual features with those other cities, insofar as the latter are reported in the survey and case study literatures. On this basis, inferences can be drawn about the conduciveness of municipal contexts generally for QWL.

Available data allow for two levels of analysis. The first level of analysis uses survey and case study literature to present a cursory description of all local government QWL efforts, as of 1983 (but also including Boston). This includes an analysis of local QWL programs by jurisdiction population and employment, extent of unionization (as a proxy for worker power), nature of initial stimulus (insider versus outsider and ideological versus pragmatic*), source of funds, program structure, and types of accomplishments.

The second level of analysis consists of brief case histories of four of the most well-known and longest-lasting municipal QWL programs: San Francisco, Pima County, New York City, and Columbus. Each case study includes a brief analysis of worker power in the political structure, the nature of the

* A pragmatic stimulus would conform to Kochan and Dyer's (1976) notion of a 'felt hurt' that induces labor and management to search for a solution like QWL. An example of an ideological stimulus is Boston's program, where an outsider and administrators thought QWL was a nice idea, but not a necessity.
QWL program stimulus, the program structure and program operational dynamics.

Several important conclusions emerge from the data: QWL efforts of one sort or another have been initiated in over 500 municipalities. Yet over 90 percent of these municipalities have populations of less than 100,000. Most programs are modest in scope and size, consisting of one or two committees involving only a handful of persons directly. Many QWL programs begin with the help of outside funding and through the prodding of an external advocate.

The primary focal points of QWL activity are issues of worker satisfaction, especially worker's status in the bureaucracy. The secondary focus is on adjustments in work procedures and work rules. Issues of organizational policy, deployment of resources, determination of pay, or service delivery procedures, do not appear to be focal points of QWL activity.

The case study data show that big-city programs tend to suffer from administration neglect and management resistance, but that strong union support enables most programs to survive, at a low to moderate level of activity, for several years, at least. In short, many features of Boston's QWL program are present in other municipal QWL programs.
In 1984, the International City Management Association conducted a survey of 2,603 cities and towns throughout the United States. Of the 1,265 cities which responded to the survey, 539* reported using some type of job enrichment program as an employee incentive, including labor-management committees (in 290 cities), quality circles (in 98 cities), problem-solving task forces (in 192 cities), job redesign (in 128 cities), and job rotation (in 118 cities). Over 90 percent of these cities had populations of less than 100,000, however; indicating that QWL has not spread to or done well in large, urban bureaucracies. (International City Management Association, 1985)

Unfortunately, the International City Management Association survey report provides no data on the size, participation rates, accomplishments, or any other feature of the municipal QWL programs. Hence the remainder of the discussion will rely upon data supplied by the following sources:

*This is many more than the "fewer than ten actively involved with QWL," acknowledged by Olsen in 1985 and quoted in the introduction to this thesis. The discrepancy can be explained by Olsen's "actively involved with" qualifier and by the fact that most local level programs consist of only one department committee or labor-management committee (see Department of Labor survey, below). A Department of Labor official also stated in September 1986 that, although he believed that many QWL programs had been initiated since the 1983 survey, "many of these are probably just one committee, without much commitment" to substantial cooperation by labor or management. (1)
* Resource Guide to Labor-Management Cooperation, a survey of 36 local programs by the U.S. Department of Labor, October 1983. (2)

Table 8.1 lists all local government QWL cases reported in the three sources. The table shows 46 programs, eight of which were terminated prior to 1983.

(A) Background and Program Structure

Fifty-four percent of all programs are located in the top ten union states, ranked by percentage of unionized, non-agricultural workers: New York, Michigan, Washington, Ohio, Illinois. (Wallihan, 1985, pp. 49-50) Using the same ranking, only eleven percent of all programs are located in the bottom 25 states. This helps to confirm a statement made by an AFL-CIO official in September 1986, in regard to QWL in the public sector: 'The South and the Southwest are a wasteland, except for Florida,' as unions are relatively weak in those states. (5) These statistics also lend support to the view that formal worker representation and a certain
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</th>
<th>PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS</th>
<th>YEARS OF OPERATION KNOWN</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>EXTERNAL FUNDING</th>
<th>EXTERNAL ADVOCATE</th>
<th>IDEOLOGICAL OR PRAGMATIC STIMULUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARIZONA (Union Rank = 39)(1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pima County</td>
<td>567,862 (2)</td>
<td>5,253</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>77-85</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee &amp; Task Forces</td>
<td>PN/IPA</td>
<td>PN</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA (Union Rank = 15)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>103,479</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>Public Works; Hospital</td>
<td>80-85</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>NSDM</td>
<td>I/P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>3,022,247</td>
<td>42,393</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>691,637</td>
<td>24,007</td>
<td>Clerical, Blue Collar, Hospital</td>
<td>78-85</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>FMCS</td>
<td>NSDM</td>
<td>I/P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Transit Authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,500 (3)</td>
<td>Transit Workers</td>
<td>82-83</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAWAII (Union Rank = 13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honolulu</td>
<td>781,899</td>
<td>8,966</td>
<td>Public Works Parks &amp; Rec., Police</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLINOIS (Union Rank = 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixon Schools</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td>UI(3)</td>
<td>UI</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbana +</td>
<td>59,011 (4)</td>
<td>1,396</td>
<td></td>
<td>76-79</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td>UI/PA</td>
<td>UI/PA</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 8.1 (CONTINUED)

**GENERAL FEATURES OF MUNICIPAL QWL PROGRAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</th>
<th>PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS</th>
<th>YEARS OF OPERATION KNOWN</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>EXTERNAL FUNDING</th>
<th>EXTERNAL ADVOCATE</th>
<th>IDEOLOGICAL OR PRAGMATIC STIMULUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IOWA (Union Rank = 26)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper Hospital</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>79-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td>FMCS</td>
<td>FMCS(3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KANSAS (Union Rank = 42)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wichita</td>
<td>288,723</td>
<td>2,993</td>
<td></td>
<td>76-83</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td>PN</td>
<td>PW</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wichita Schools</td>
<td>288,723 (3)</td>
<td>5,500 (3)</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>77-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td>PN</td>
<td>PN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARYLAND (Union Rank = 25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>Public Works: Fire; Other</td>
<td>76-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td>PN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASSACHUSETTS (Union Rank = 20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlington +</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>74-76(3)</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Brower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>560,847</td>
<td>14,069</td>
<td>Clerical Workers</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>FMCS</td>
<td>Roberts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge +</td>
<td>93,841</td>
<td>2,590</td>
<td></td>
<td>74-76(3)</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Brower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danvers +</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Brower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haverhill +</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Brower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methuen +</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>75-76(3)</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Brower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton +</td>
<td>82,791</td>
<td>1,716</td>
<td></td>
<td>74-76(3)</td>
<td>3-TIER</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Brower</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>POPULATION</td>
<td>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</td>
<td>PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS</td>
<td>YEARS OF OPERATION KNOWN</td>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>EXTERNAL FUNDING</td>
<td>EXTERNAL ADVOCATE</td>
<td>IDEOLOGICAL OR PRAGMATIC STIMULUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MICHIGAN</strong>  (Union Rank = 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flint Transit Authority</td>
<td>154,019</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden City</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>135 (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Blanc Schools</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Department Committee &amp; Quality Circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansing Police</td>
<td>128,338</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>Police</td>
<td>82-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td>FMCS</td>
<td>FMCS</td>
<td>P/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansing Schools</td>
<td>128,338</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Department Committee &amp; Quality Circle</td>
<td>Yes(3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontiac</td>
<td>73,156</td>
<td>2,892</td>
<td></td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>LMC and Quality Circle</td>
<td>FMCS</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southfield</td>
<td>73,311</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>Police Firefighters</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy</td>
<td>67,031</td>
<td>489</td>
<td></td>
<td>77-83</td>
<td>LMC and Task Forces</td>
<td></td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEW JERSEY</strong>  (Union Rank = 18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td>91,381</td>
<td>1,749</td>
<td>Clerical &amp; Blue Collar</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>POPULATION</td>
<td>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</td>
<td>PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS</td>
<td>YEARS OF OPERATION KNOWN</td>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>EXTERNAL FUNDING</td>
<td>EXTERNAL ADVOCATE</td>
<td>IDEOLOGICAL OR PRAGMATIC STIMULUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW YORK (Union Rank = 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>Public Works; Hospitals</td>
<td>75-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown Schools</td>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>77-83</td>
<td>Department Committee &amp; Task Forces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onondaga Hospital</td>
<td>459,440</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>73-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Bronx Hospital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>76-79</td>
<td>LMC and Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Elmhurst Hospital</td>
<td>7,086,096</td>
<td>285,644</td>
<td>Clerical; Blue Collar</td>
<td>78-86</td>
<td>LMC; Department Committee &amp; Task Forces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City Transit Authority</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>74-83</td>
<td>Transit</td>
<td></td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 8.1 (CONTINUED)

**GENERAL FEATURES OF MUNICIPAL QWL PROGRAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</th>
<th>PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS</th>
<th>YEARS OF OPERATION KNOWN</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>EXTERNAL FUNDING</th>
<th>EXTERNAL ADVOCATE</th>
<th>IDEOLOGICAL OR PRAGMATIC STIMULUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OHIO (Union Rank = 7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinci Highway Maintenance</td>
<td>380,118</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>75-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>570,588</td>
<td>6,593</td>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>76-83</td>
<td>3-TIER; Task forces</td>
<td>FMCS(3)</td>
<td>OSU</td>
<td>P/I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood Public Works Department</td>
<td>61,453</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>79-83</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee &amp; Quality Circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FMCS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>71,344</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>74-79</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee &amp; Department Committee</td>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>OSU/IPA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHODE ISLAND (Union Rank = 12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>86,832</td>
<td>1,024</td>
<td></td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENNESSEE (Union Rank = 29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelby County</td>
<td>784,116</td>
<td>6,824</td>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 8.1 (CONTINUED)

GENERAL FEATURES OF MUNICIPAL QWL PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</th>
<th>PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS</th>
<th>YEARS OF OPERATION KNOWN</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>EXTERNAL FUNDING</th>
<th>EXTERNAL ADVOCATE</th>
<th>IDEOLOGICAL OR PRAGMATIC STIMULUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEXAS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Union Rank = 48)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via Metropolitan Transit Authority</td>
<td>819,021 *</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASHINGTON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Union Rank = 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett</td>
<td>56,586</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>Transit; Public Works</td>
<td>82-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle Transit Authority</td>
<td>490,077</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>75-83</td>
<td>Department Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma</td>
<td>161,351</td>
<td>2,936</td>
<td></td>
<td>77-83</td>
<td>Labor-Mgt. Committee</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
Trist, E., et. al.: Improving Productivity and the Quality of Working Life in the Public Sector;
TABLE 8.1 (CONTINUED)

GENERAL FEATURES OF MUNICIPAL QWL PROGRAMS

Key to Abbreviations:

Structure: 3-Tier = Program with citywide Labor-Management Committee; Mid-Level Committee(s), usually at the department or agency level; Bottom-Level Committees, usually Shopfloor Worksite Groups.

LMC = Labor-Management Committee (at citywide or jurisdiction-wide level)

External Funding = Funding obtained from external sources to start or rejuvenate program. PN = Project Network (Federal funding);
IPA = Intergovernmental Personnel Act (Federal); FMCS = Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (U.S. Department of Labor); UI = University of Illinois (consulting services); OSU = Ohio State University (consulting/facilitation services)

External Advocate = Program was started or rejuvenated largely through the efforts of an (ideologically motivated) advocate from outside the organization. NSDM = New School for Democratic Management, California; PN = Project Network; UI = University of Illinois; FMCS = Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; Brower = Michael Brower, of Northeast Labor-Management Center, reported in Herrick, ed., 1983; Roberts = Roberts (pseudonym, organizer and initial director of Boston Labor-Management Cooperation program); OSU = Ohio State University

Ideological or Pragmatic Stimulus = Program was started for primarily ideological reasons; or pragmatic, functional reasons.

NOTES:


(2) Population of the jurisdiction as of 1980, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: City Employment in 1984 and County Government in 1984, August, 1985. Figures in the Table do not include school system employees, unless the QWL program is housed in the school system.

(3) Indicates best estimates.

(4) Population for Champaign, which is assumed to include Urbana.

Key to Symbols:

+ = Program ceased to function sometime prior to 1983.
* = Population for San Antonio, which is assumed to include Via Metropolitan Transit.
< = "less than"
degree of worker power vis-a-vis management is a prerequisite to labor-management cooperation or stable QWL programs.

The size of most local governments in this list is rather small. The median population size is 86,832 and the median jurisdiction employment size is 950. Only eight major cities had initiated programs as of 1983 and many of these were modest in scope or size. The absence of large cities in the list, especially those in strong union states, such as Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Buffalo and Cleveland indicates that there has been little or no 'felt hurt' or stimulus to induce labor and management leaders in most large cities to initiate joint searches for mechanisms such as QWL.

Fifty-two percent of all programs in Table 8.1 consist of only a department committee or a jurisdiction-wide labor-management committee. Based upon the program participation rates of employees in Boston, Pima County, Columbus and New York City, one can therefore assume that in the majority of jurisdictions, at most 100 persons participate directly in the program. (6) Hence, one can infer that public sector QWL generally does not entail, for the most part, substantial direct worker participation or organizational restructuring.

The Boston program deviates from the majority of programs on all of these features, except for program participation. Massachusetts ranks 20th in percentage of non-agricultural workers who are union members; neither a strong nor a weak
union state, by national standards. Moreover, Boston's program has an elaborate, three-tier structure, which is true of only a small number of the programs which lasted through 1983. Boston is also a large city and thus deviates from the majority on this feature also.

(B) Initiation

In at least* fifty percent of the cases listed in Table 8.1, the initial stimulus to consider a QWL program came from an external advocate, often one who was associated with a nearby academic institution. Moreover, external funding, usually from Federal sources, played a significant and sometimes primary role in the decision to initiate a program in at least* fifty percent of the cases.

At least* 41 percent of all programs listed in Table 8.1 began with strong ideological overtones, or for explicitly ideological reasons, i.e., with vague notions that QWL would improve labor-management trust, communications and worker morale, or fulfill ideals of worker participation and shopfloor autonomy, rather than simply solve specific, functional problems. Of these 19 programs, seven had ceased operations by 1979.

*Additional data might show that the number is even higher. In any event, it is not lower than the number stated.
Eighty-three percent of all programs were initiated in a top ten union state and/or through the efforts of an external advocate and/or with funds from external sources. Of the remaining eight programs, seven consist of only one committee (usually a department committee), whereas less than one-half of the other programs consist of only one committee. From this it can be inferred that launching a QWL effort in the public sector, especially one that entails an elaborate committee structure, requires either strong external support or a strong union presence.

The Boston case fits well within these patterns, as its program was initiated largely through the efforts of an ideologically motivated outsider, using Federal funds to support the program for the first 18 months.

(C) Program Accomplishments

Table 8.2 lists the accomplishments reported for the 37 QWL programs listed in Table 8.1. Although program self-reports such as these should be used with considerable caution, an analysis of the data in Table 8.2 does show some informative patterns.

First, of the 37 jurisdictions which claimed to have made accomplishments as of 1983, 32 (87 percent) cited improvements in communications, employee recognition, employee morale and/or the establishment of an employee newsletter; all of which may represent only superficial changes in the
## TABLE 8.2
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MUNICIPAL-LEVEL QWL PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Pay, Etc.</th>
<th>Hours, Rules</th>
<th>Staffing, Tasks, Procedures</th>
<th>Maint'nce, Physical Conditions</th>
<th>Train'g, Careers</th>
<th>Morale, Comm'nicatns</th>
<th>Org'tn Policy, Budget</th>
<th>Point of Service Delivery</th>
<th>Productivity in General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pima County</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF Transit Authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honolulu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixon Schools</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper Hospital</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wichita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wichita Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlington</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>x(14)</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danvers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haverhill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Pay, Etc.</td>
<td>Hours, Tasks, Procedrs</td>
<td>Maintenance, Physical Conditions</td>
<td>Training, Careers</td>
<td>Morale, Communication</td>
<td>Org'tn Policy, Budget</td>
<td>Point of Service Delivery</td>
<td>Productivity in General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methuen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHIGAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flint Transit Author.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Blanc Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansing Police</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansing Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontiac</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW JERSEY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW YORK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamestown Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onondaga Hospital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY Bronx Hospital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY Elmhurst Hospital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY Transit Authority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHIO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati-Hwy Mntne</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood Public Wrks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Pay, Etc.</td>
<td>Hours, Tasks, Procedures</td>
<td>Staffing, Training</td>
<td>Maintenance, Physical Conditions</td>
<td>Morale, Communication</td>
<td>Org'tn Policy, Budget</td>
<td>Point of Service Delivery</td>
<td>Productivity in General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHODE ISLAND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENNESSEE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelby County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEXAS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via Metro Transit</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASHINGTON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle Transit Auth.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total # of jurisdictions in table = 46

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of jurisdictions claiming accomplishments</th>
<th>Pay, Etc.</th>
<th>Hours, Tasks, Procedures</th>
<th>Staffing, Training</th>
<th>Maintenance, Physical Conditions</th>
<th>Morale, Communication</th>
<th>Org'tn Policy, Budget</th>
<th>Point of Service Delivery</th>
<th>Productivity in General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total # of accomplishments cited in table = 402

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of times accomplishments cited as % of all accomplishments cited</th>
<th>Pay, Etc.</th>
<th>Hours, Tasks, Procedures</th>
<th>Staffing, Training</th>
<th>Maintenance, Physical Conditions</th>
<th>Morale, Communication</th>
<th>Org'tn Policy, Budget</th>
<th>Point of Service Delivery</th>
<th>Productivity in General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
organization. These items also accounted for 25 percent of all QWL accomplishments listed by the 37 programs, taken together.

Second, most of the more substantial accomplishments involve matters that are secondary to the primary activities of the organization. Twenty-two jurisdictions (60 percent of those claiming accomplishments) cited minor changes in staffing or work procedures, fifty-four percent cited improvements in housekeeping matters, forty-nine percent listed training programs, career ladders and related actions, and forty-three percent listed changes in hours of work and/or work rules. Only nine programs specifically mentioned improvements that could be assumed to directly involve the point of service delivery (although many improvements in work procedures can be assumed to affect service delivery in some way), only six programs mentioned worker pay issues, and only five mentioned activities specifically involving organizational policy or the budget.

Case Histories of QWL in Other Municipalities

This section presents brief case histories of QWL programs in four cities for which somewhat detailed data on program initiation, operations, accomplishments and contextual features are available. Using these data, more thorough comparisons of the Boston case with other cases, particularly on program operational dynamics and worker power can be
drawn. Note that these four cities -- San Francisco, Pima County, New York City and Columbus -- are much larger than the median-sized QWL city, their QWL programs are the most well-known and longlasting in the country, their three-tier and four-tier program structures are, like Boston's, more elaborate than those of the majority of municipal QWL programs, and they have, on the whole, made more substantive accomplishments than most other programs appear to have done. Hence they should not be considered a representative sampling of all programs.

(A) San Francisco

**Background:** The City of San Francisco is similar in some respects to Boston; its QUL program also shares features with Boston's. San Francisco's population of 691,637 is somewhat comparable to Boston's 560,847. San Francisco employs 24,007 persons; Boston employs 14,069 (employment figures exclude the school system). (See Table 8.2.)

San Francisco's governmental structure is a mixture of strong mayor and commission systems; the City's Board of Supervisors retains more authority in administrative matters than does Boston's City Council. San Francisco's collective bargaining institutions reflect this sharing of administrative power -- wage rates are set by the Board of Supervisors, not by the Mayor. (Katz, 1979, pp. 45-53).
The power of San Francisco’s municipal employee unions is similar to that of Boston’s, although the processes through which that power is exercised differ from Boston -- Police, fire and other craft union pay is set through formulas and through effective political pressure by these unions on the Board of Supervisors.

Since 1973, the miscellaneous employee unions have the right to negotiate with the Board of Supervisors over wages, but like their Boston counterparts, they are generally unable to secure sizable wage increases. (Katz, pp. 45-54) Like their Boston counterparts, San Francisco’s miscellaneous employee unions apparently lack internal cohesiveness. This is due, says Katz (p. 53), to the diversity of occupations represented by the miscellaneous employee unions and to traditional reluctance on the part of clerical workers to become active unionists. As described in Chapter 3 of this essay, similar causes contribute to Boston miscellaneous union weakness, especially in City Hall departments.

Program Initiation and Early Operations (1978-1980):
As in the Boston case, the primary stimulus for the San Francisco QWL program appears to have been an external advocate. In 1978, after the passage of Proposition 13 (a statewide property tax limitation referendum that forced many cities to make budget cuts), a faculty member at the nearby New School for Democratic Management approached the SEIU local #400 (San Francisco’s largest miscellaneous employee union).
The advocate suggested QWL as a way for the union to "take the initiative in improving service delivery and so avoid being caught in a reactive posture as budgets declined relative to inflation." (Olsen, 1983, p. 109) The SEIU immediately picked up on the idea and launched itself into an ad hoc QWL program in the Medical Records and Radiology departments of the General Hospital.

At first, these committees were successful in improving personnel policies, supervisor evaluation procedures, employee orientation practices, and in reducing grievances. Moreover, the committees developed initiatives which led to over $350,000 in annual savings. According to Olsen (1983), this success led to a dispute between labor and management over whose efforts were most responsible for the cost savings. By 1980, this dispute had brought the entire QWL effort to a halt. (A related event occurred in the San Francisco Housing Authority, where labor and management wrote QWL into a 1979 strike settlement at union insistence. Subsequent passive resistance to QWL meetings by managers undermined the effort by 1980).

Program_Rejuvenation_and_Occupations_(1980_-1983): These conflicts notwithstanding, the Feinstein administration became interested in the prospect of further cost savings through a QWL program. With design assistance from the New School for Democratic Management and grants from both the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and the U.S. Office of
Personnel Management, a formal QWL program was established with the SEIU and began operating late in 1980. The 'Work Improvement Program,' as it is called, was designed with a three-tier structure, which Boston later emulated.

By 1983, Olsen reported that 15 worksite groups had been established in eight departments. These departments had agreed to help support the program financially in FY84 and it appeared likely that the number of project committees would expand during 1984. The program was said to have:

'Greatly improved communications. Implemented lease-purchase policy for city vehicles; assessed Civil Service exam procedures and information provided to city employees; and implemented project with city gangs resulting in reduced vandalism.' (Department of Labor, 1983, p. 181)

Yet Olsen also complained that efforts to expand the program throughout the major departments had met with continuing management resistance and that only one department had made 'a substantial commitment to the...QWL system.' (Olsen, 1983, p. 116). Olsen attributed these problems to several causes: First and foremost, he accused the Mayor of providing no personal support or leadership for the program. Likewise, the SEIU, which was consumed by internal problems during much of the period from 1980 - 1982, provided inadequate leadership, in Olsen's view. The program staff provided program committees with inadequate training and
preparation for hurdles in the problem-solving process and failed to assess the readiness of sites prior to implementation of committees. As a result of all of these operational problems, wrote Olsen, worksite groups were typically active for no longer than six months.

As an example, Olsen described the streetcleaners worksite group in the Public Works Department. This group started meeting in 1982 and spent several months solving minor safety problems that could be handled without assistance from other committees. The worksite group then began to focus on the issue of equipment availability, but needed cooperation from the Purchasing Department to implement its recommendations. The worksite group’s recommendations were passed upward to the Public Works Department Committee and then to the Citywide Committee, but never implemented because of the conflictual relations between the Public Works Department and the Purchasing Department. By 1983, the worksite group was demoralized, its activity level declined and it considered formally dissolving.

Olsen concluded that since the City’s basic 'personnel and control' systems were not being redesigned, it was unlikely that QWL would become institutionalized throughout San Francisco City government.

Overall, the similarities between the San Francisco and Boston program initiation processes are striking. The
influential role of ideologically motivated outsiders from the New School for Democratic Management is similar to Roberts' role in Boston. The role of FMCS and IPA funds in starting a formal program is the same as the FMCS role in Boston. Indeed, as in Boston, Olsen claims that 'there is little chance San Francisco would have' begun QWL without external funding. (Olsen, 1983, p. 111) The debilitating labor-management conflicts which disrupted the San Francisco program after its first one-to-two years of operation are somewhat analogous to the union-management antagonism in Boston that transformed a staff conflict into a major labor-management dispute.

The operational features of the San Francisco program also bear a striking resemblance to those of the Boston QWL program. The lack of strong mayoral leadership in particular, and the apparent effect of this deficit on inter-departmental coordination and relations is a major feature in both programs. Likewise, lack of cohesiveness on the labor side, the failure of the program administration to conduct systematic analyses of departments prior to the establishment of worksite groups, as well as the lack of staying power of worksite groups, are features which are common to both programs. During a brief conversation which I had with Olsen in 1985, he claimed that little had changed in the San Francisco situation since 1983, although the program was still funded by the administration and still functioned in several departments.
(B) Pima County, Arizona

**Background:** In several important respects, Pima County is unlike the City of Boston. Although its population as of 1980 was comparable to Boston's, it employed only 5,253 persons in 1984, compared to Boston's 14,069 (schools excluded), as shown in Table 8.2. (This is accounted for, in part, by the fact that Tuscon, the largest city in Pima County with 352,455 persons in 1980, employs 4,360 persons. Tuscon provides its own police, fire, sanitation and parks services, but Pima County provides welfare and health services for Tuscon, as well as general services elsewhere in the County). (7)

Pima County's political structure differs greatly from that of the City of Boston. It is comprised of a five-member County Board which has substantial power and a County Administrator who has little power. Trist describes this system as politically fragmented, claiming that the power of the County Board members makes administrative coordination very difficult to achieve. (Trist, et.al., 1980, pp. 103-4)

Unlike Massachusetts, Arizona is a "right to work" state; public officials are not permitted to negotiate binding agreements with employee groups, nor can employee organizations become the sole and exclusive representatives of county employees. Unions therefore have a weak presence in Pima County. As of 1983, the County's three unions, the Fraternal Order of Police, the Pima County Nurses Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal
Employees (AFSCME) local #449, represented 20 percent of the County's 3,800 non-managerial employees. (Showalter and Yetman, 1983, p. 120) According to Showalter and Yetman, Arizona's legal constraints on unions discourage employees from joining them, and the unions' small sizes render them powerless to change the restrictive laws. Although provisions for a 'meet and confer' process between management and unions exist, from the mid-1970's through 1982, management reportedly refused to call meetings. (Showalter and Yetman, pp. 121-3; Trist, p. 104)

Program Initiation and Early Phase, 1977-1979: Pima County embarked on a QWL effort after receiving an invitation and offer of Federal funds from Project Network in 1977. (Trist, p. 105). Although the project was to include all three County unions, only AFSCME participated during the early years. By 1983, all three unions were regular participants.

The initial program structure consisted chiefly of a Central Countywide Committee, comprised of nine upper-level labor and management representatives. This Committee identified issues and delegated them to one of five sub-committees for consideration.

According to both Trist (1980) and Showalter and Yetman (1983), Pima County's QWL program did not perform well during its first three years of operation. The Central Committee did not promote the program within the organization at-large; as a result, QWL remained a low-level, almost invisible program.
Sub-committee members complained that the Central Committee was unresponsive to their recommendations. Workers complained that managers refused to allow them to attend sub-committee meetings; middle managers were accused in general of withholding resources and resisting the program. Additional tensions over postponed cost of living raises and representation in the program of non-employees soured the general labor-management climate. By 1979, according to Trist, there was 'growing dormancy' in the Pima County QWL committees. (Trist, 1980, pp. 108-111)

Program Rejuvenation and Operations, 1979-1983: Pima County's QWL program took a slight turn for the better in 1979. A 'highly motivated' person joined the staff, a QWL workshop was held in April and an arrangement for supervisor training was worked out with the Arizona State University. (Trist, 1980, pp. 112-115) In 1980, a significant structural innovation was adopted, apparently through the assistance of the Arizona State University: Shopfloor worker problem-solving groups and a departmentwide committee were established in the Department of Transportation, so the program structure began to resemble those of San Francisco and Boston. In the Fall of 1983, a similar system was developed in the County Health Care Center. (Showalter and Yetman, pp 119-120).

In November 1981, AFSCME succeeded in having the original Countywide Committee disbanded and replaced by a small Executive Board, which includes the County Manager and makes
major policy decisions. The sub-committees were reformed as a Labor-Management QWL Committee, comprised of six program development task forces with a total of 31 members: Ten managers are appointed to the task forces by the County Manager and 21 worker representatives are elected by each department or group of departments with 200 employees. Neal Herrick, a professor of Labor Relations at Arizona State University and a QWL advocate, was hired as a third party facilitator for the program. By the end of 1983, Pima County claimed that its program had:

'...reduced sick leave and turnover; improved efficiency and service; improved job satisfaction, participation and trust, and overall well-being...automatic payroll deposits for employees...seminars for employees during lunch break; two countywide blood drives and one food bank drive,' as well as a "QWL handbook." (Department of Labor, 1983, p. 179)

In 1983, the Labor-Management QWL Committee established a 'Quality of Work Incentives Program' to 'provide employees of Pima County a monetary incentive to increase productivity, cost savings and service.' By August 1984, the County claimed to have achieved "$591,832 in cost savings and revenues" through worker suggestions and to have awarded $9,550, or 1.8 percent of the gains to 162 workers whose suggestions had been accepted. (8)
Despite the fact that Pima County's QWL achievements seem to consist of primarily housekeeping, superficial human relations matters, or productivity increases in which only 1.8 percent of the gains are returned directly to workers, by 1983, QWL had reportedly won the support of many workers. In fact, worker satisfaction with QWL was so strong that it began to undermine worker support for and attraction to AFSCME and to other unions:

'The [non-union] committee members regarded the gains being achieved by the LMQWLC as clear evidence that no union was needed in Pima County. Their ability to achieve substantial gains in a pleasant, cooperative atmosphere without paying union dues presented a striking contrast to AFSCME's history of achieving few gains in an unpleasant, adversary atmosphere at a cost to members of 1 percent of their monthly salary. At an LMQWLC retreat held on September 17, 1982, the nonaffiliated employees openly raised the question: What do we need a union for now that we have QWL?' (Showalter and Yetman, 1983, p. 123)

Contributing to this development was the fact that management, which had resumed the meet and confer sessions with unions in 1982, had almost immediately afterward begun to request that certain labor-management issues be transferred from those sessions to QWL committees. The union leaders acquiesced to these requests at first, but later regretted doing so.
By 1983, AFSCME had begun to lose members and to suffer criticism from non-affiliated workers. Its leaders began to fear that the union would be turned into a company union and/or that it would lose its ability to enforce management adherence to the worker participation procedures that it deemed essential to QWL. One summed up the problem as follows:

"The Pima County experiment with QWL originated with AFSCME. Without union impetus, it would never have gotten off the ground; without continuing union pressure, it could not continue. Management would drop the uncomfortable parts of the system (such as having regular meetings, making up committees by election rather than appointment, genuinely sharing information, discussing problems on an equal footing with employees) and retain the comfortable ones (having employees develop suggestions and solutions for management problems). It has been our experience that even the most effective managers tend to violate policies and procedures developed under QWL if it becomes expedient -- until the union protests and sets things right. QWL situations have a number of dynamics that combine to make the union necessary." (Showalter and Yetman, p. 124)

QWL was still functioning in Pima County as of 1985. The status of AFSCME and the nature of the issues being addressed, however, are not clear, as of this writing.
Despite the differences between the Boston and Pima County contexts, particularly in the area of formal worker power, QWL had similar beginnings in both places. The programs were created through external, ideological stimuli and Federal funds. Both suffered from a lack of executive leadership, lack of cohesiveness among workers and to some extent, management resistance, especially during the first two years of operations.

Strong support for QWL by the union (as in Boston), as well as the timely intervention of labor relations experts at the Arizona State University and a change in program staff, helped to put the program on a firmer footing after 1979. Yet the weakness of AFSCME local #449 and its lack of internal cohesion threatened to undermine its efforts and possibly QWL in the longer-run. In Boston, by contrast, SEIU local #285 appears to have been strengthened, at least internally and in the short-run, by QWL.

Another feature which distinguishes the Pima County and Boston programs is the nature and extent of management involvement and the extent to which the Pima program appears to be attuned to management interests. Although the Pima County management’s stance of resistance or apathy prior to 1980 appeared similar to the position taken by administrators in Boston, Pima’s program reconstruction created a formal role for the County Manager. The establishment of a productivity suggestion program in Pima County, which returns only a very
small percentage of cost savings to workers who have no collective bargaining rights, indicates a very different climate from that of the Boston program, in which workers focused their QWL efforts on gaining wage increases over and above what they received through collective bargaining.

(C) New York City

**Background:** With a population of over seven million people and 373,682 municipal employees (see Table 8.2), the City of New York is difficult to compare with most other American cities on any dimension. Its strong mayor political structure, however, is similar to that of Boston.

New York City's labor unions are indisputably among the most powerful in the public sector. New York State ranks first in the country in number of union members as a percentage of the non-farm labor force (Wallihan, 1985, pp. 49-50) AFSCME District Council 37 -- the largest municipal union in the country with over 100,000 members -- is said to be one of the most powerful and innovative unions in the public or private sectors (Trist, 1980, p. 76) Its Executive Director, Victor Gotbaum, is widely respected, even by some advocates for privatization of public services, for his efforts to broaden the scope and responsibility of jobs. (Savas and Ginsberg, 1973; see also Billings and Greenya, 1974, and Spero and Capozzola, 1973.)
Program Stimuli and Early Efforts, 1975–1979: According to Trist (1980), the primary impetus for QWL in New York City was the fiscal crisis of 1975 and subsequent refusal by the Federal government to provide financial assistance to the City. An agreement between the City and its major unions in 1976 provided for wage, hiring and lay-off freezes for three years, and for all cost of living (COLA) increases to be funded by worker productivity improvements, over and above those outlined in the City’s financial plan. (See also Shefter, 1985.) To coordinate the raise/productivity aspect of the agreement, a Citywide Joint Labor-Management Productivity Program involving all City agencies was established. Each agency was to report productivity improvements, savings and revenue increases to the City’s Emergency Financial Control Board for review and authorization of COLA payments. Trist (1980) reported on this productivity program in the Bronx Municipal Hospital.

The Bronx Municipal Hospital is one of 17 hospitals under the City’s Health and Hospitals Corporation, which employed a total of 35,000 persons in 1980. (Trist, p. 76) The Productivity program was implemented in the Bronx Hospital and in three other hospitals in 1976. By 1978, it had been implemented in all 17 hospitals. (Trist, p. 76)

The structure of the Productivity Program consisted of three tiers:
* A Joint Labor-Management Committee of 24 elected labor and appointed management representatives in each hospital generated proposals;

* A Corporation-Wide Central Productivity Committee reviewed the proposals, established guidelines and provided technical assistance to each hospital committee. The Corporation-Wide Committee, like all other department-wide committees in the City, reported to the Emergency Financial Control Board (the third tier).

During the first two years of program operations, recommendations from the Bronx Municipal Hospital’s Joint Labor-Management Committee led to several productivity improvements: An improved outpatient fee collection system was developed, hospital employees began filling their personal prescriptions at the Bronx Hospital and a more efficient inventory supply system was developed. These projects generated an estimated $350,000 in additional yearly revenue, which was applied toward COLA payments.

In May 1978, a new City-Union agreement was reached, which broadened the purpose of the program to include QWL issues generally (in addition to productivity improvements) and which provided that future productivity improvements would be split 50-50 between the individual hospitals and the Hospital Corporation Committee.

The Bronx Hospital’s Labor-Management Committee went on to develop several new proposals, including rental of space to
other agencies, increasing the flexibility of clerical job descriptions, a new linen delivery system, employee newsletter, a public information campaign to control the spread of infections and additional training for employees. Yet by September 1979, morale on the Bronx Labor-Management Committee was reportedly quite low, due to a failure on the part of the Hospital Corporation Committee to respond to many of these proposals or to distribute any gainsharing funds. Trist attributed these problems to the fact that the fiscal crisis had passed and that COLA payments had been provided, thus reducing the incentives for change in the upper levels of the organization. (Trist, pp. 82-83; 89). Although the program continued within the Hospital Corporation at least through 1983, the level of program activity in the Bronx Hospital after 1979 is not clear.

Establishment and Operations of a Citywide OLM Program, 1981-1986: Although the original Productivity Cost of Living Allowance Program did not maintain a high level of activity beyond the first three or four years of operations, it stimulated the establishment of and provided a foundation for a Citywide Labor-Management program that was to arise later. (Powell, 1983, p. 137).

As part of the Federal Loan Guarantee Act of 1978, the City established a Productivity Council, independent from the aforementioned Cost of Living Allowance Program. The Productivity Council is comprised of four management
representatives and four union representatives; the latter are appointed by the Municipal Labor Committee, which is comprised of representatives of all unions in the City. According to Powell, the Productivity Council endorsed the concept of QWL as early as 1978. (Powell, 1983, p. 136)

In 1981, the Mayor’s Office of Operations, with the approval of the Productivity Council, the endorsement of AFSCME Council 37 and funding through the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), set up a pilot labor-management cooperation program. In 1982, the City assumed financial responsibility for the program, but received additional grants from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in 1984. The primary arenas of activity in the program are agency-wide QWL Committees, comprised of nine to twenty labor and management representatives. These committees have power to take action on affairs within their departments, but must report their activities to the Productivity Council.

The program began operations in 1981 with one QWL Committee in the Department of Sanitation. By 1984, eleven agencies had established QWL Committees, representing over 50,000 employees. In a conversation in September 1986, a New York City union official indicated that the program had continued to expand and now represented over 70,000 employees. (9)

Each agency QWL Committee also established sub-committees to address specific issues. Membership on these
sub-committees is comprised of interested volunteers from labor and management. By 1984, 121 sub-committees had been formed and program documents indicated plans to both continue building sub-committees and to establish formal, shopfloor problem-solving groups organized by area, rather than issue. (10)

Noteworthy achievements during the first three years of program operations included an Alternative Work Schedules Program (flextime) for over 4,000 persons in several agencies; a preventive maintenance inspection program in the Department of Parks and Recreation, which involved additional training for some workers; career development programs and various cost-saving programs.

Most significant, perhaps, from the standpoint of long-term program viability, is the establishment, by 1984, of an 'interagency labor-management committee,' to plan and coordinate improvement of services (specifically elevator repairs and other building maintenance services) by the Department of General Services, for the City Planning Commission, Department for the Aging and City Comptroller's Office. Recall that in Boston and in San Francisco, department needs and QWL proposals often went unattended because of a lack of interagency cooperation, specifically between line agencies and internal service agencies. Available evidence suggests that cooperation of this sort in New York may have been facilitated by the fact that the
General Services Department joined the QWL program prior to the establishment of the interagency committee. (11)

The interagency committee appears to be one of many features which distinguish the labor-management cooperation program in New York City from its Boston, San Francisco and Pima County counterparts. First, the stimulus for labor-management cooperation in New York was a pragmatic one -- the fiscal crisis of 1975. This stimulus arose from within the municipal context, rather than being imported via an ideologically-motivated outsider. Ideological elements may have been present, perhaps through the influence of Victor Gotbaum, but the primary goal of cooperation until 1978 was productivity improvements. This remained a leitmotif in the subsequent Citywide Labor-Management Cooperation Program and is reflected, to some extent, in the accomplishments of QWL Committees. To recall the Kochan and Dyer (1976) hypothesis of conditions leading labor and management to initiate a search for a more cooperative relationship, the New York case is perhaps the only one described here in which both labor and management experienced a 'felt hurt.' (See Chapter 3, above and Shefter, 1985.)

Second, the pragmatic nature of the program was reflected in the development of its structure. The initial COLA program was simple and streamlined; the focus on a single committee for each hospital was intended to surface and develop ideas for cost savings and work improvements, not to develop worker self-management on the shopfloor.
The Productivity Council, which was established in 1978 and was comprised of top-level labor and management representatives, functioned for three years before establishing lower-level committees. The agency-level committees in turn, developed lower-level sub-committees gradually, it seems, as needs arose to work out specific initiatives; lower-level worksite groups were not constituted as part of an ideologically-based program. Moreover, coordination of line agency needs and internal agency services was achieved through an interagency committee developed specifically for that purpose. This indicates the pre-existence of a certain amount of trust, organizational cohesiveness and cooperation in New York City that did not obtain in the other QWL programs.

Third, administration leadership of the New York City program appears to be somewhat stronger than leadership in Boston or San Francisco. Although data on this point are scanty, statements by a consultant with the New York program in March 1986 (who was also the sole consultant with the Boston program) indicated that the New York City Deputy Mayor for Operations, who chairs the Productivity Council, had publicly expressed a strong commitment to the QWL program from its inception onward and that this commitment had prevailed despite actions by the Mayor which contradicted this spirit of cooperation. A union official made similar statements to me in September, 1986.
Fourth, and possibly most important, union leadership is apparently very strong in the New York City program, owing in large part to the work of AFSCME Council 37 and its Executive Director, Victor Gotbaum. (Powell, 1983, pp. 136-140). As noted above, District Council 37 is the largest municipal union in the U.S. and reputedly one of the strongest. Whereas problems of union weakness and worker dissension plagued the Boston, San Francisco and Pima programs, such problems were not reported in accounts of New York City's program. On the contrary, Powell's essay points out how unique is the equal 'partnership' relationship between the administration and unions in the Labor-Management Cooperation Program. (Powell, 1983, pp. 136-140) Moreover, Trist's (1980) observation that workers in the Bronx Hospital who did not participate directly in the work of the Hospital Committee, nevertheless felt a sense of 'ownership' of the hospital's innovations, indicates worker cohesion and probably good worker - union leadership relations as well. (Trist, 1980, p. 89) Although union leadership and persistence is a common feature in all public sector programs, only in New York City, where unions apparently have considerable clout, does this leadership appear to have produced a strong program.

The only major point of similarity between the New York City program and the others mentioned thus far, is the use of Federal funds to support program administration. Yet here too, the New York situation appears to diverge from the
others, in that outside funding does not appear to have been a primary factor in program initiation, but simply a contributing one.

(D) Columbus, Ohio

Background: The City of Columbus and its QWL program appear to share fewer common features with Boston than San Francisco does, but more than Pima County and perhaps more than New York City. Columbus' population was 570,588 in 1980 and it employed 6,593 persons as of 1984 (see Table 8.2). This is far less than Boston's 14,069 employees. One reason for the difference is that Columbus does not maintain hospitals. (12)

Like Boston, Columbus is governed by a strong mayor system. Ohio has traditionally been a strong union state, both in the public and private sectors. The state ranks seventh nationally in number of union members as a percentage of the non-farm labor force, whereas Massachusetts' rank is 20. (Wallihan, 1985, pp. 49-50) Although agreements made by public administrators with unions in Ohio as of 1976 were not legally binding, they were reportedly treated as such by labor and management. (Trist, 1980) Trist also notes the existence of substantial internal cohesion on both the labor and management sides in Columbus, from 1976 through 1979. (p. 18)

Program Initiation 1976: The initial stimuli of the Columbus program were of both a pragmatic and an ideological
nature. Layoffs in 1975 and a brief strike in 1976, as well as 'excessive rates of grievances, disciplinary actions and leaves without pay,' gave evidence of tension in labor-management relations. (Trist, 1980, p. 18) A QWL program had been initiated in nearby Springfield in 1973, largely through the organizing efforts of Ohio State University's Center for Human Resource Research, which then acted as a third party facilitator. (This program ceased to function sometime before 1983.)

Since both Columbus and Springfield are in the same AFSCME district, the AFSCME District Director reportedly received exposure to and became impressed with QWL through the Springfield program. He suggested that a similar program might improve labor-management relations in Columbus. The Mayor of Columbus agreed and, with Ohio State University again filling a third-party facilitator role, a QWL program was initiated in July 1976. The program was initially funded by management, with a small contribution from AFSCME local 1632. Federal funding through Project Network began in 1977. (Trist, p. 19)

A four-tier structure was designed for the Columbus program:

* A City QWL Committee, whose members include the Mayor, his 'cabinet representatives,' the AFSCME local President and the AFSCME District Director. (Department of Labor, 1983, p. 154) This Committee began meeting in November 1976. It
provides overall program guidance, but it does not become involved in day-to-day affairs of the program.

* A Department Committee in the Public Service Department includes department-level labor and management representatives. This Committee began meeting in April 1977.

* A Labor-Management Division Committee in the Division of Sewers and Drainage began meeting in April 1977.

* Five grassroots working-level committees in the division of Sewers and Drainage, each comprised of a line supervisor, union steward and worker representatives. Four of these committees began meeting in July 1977.

In June 1978, the program was expanded into the Division of Water Treatment of the Public Service Department. By 1983, both this division and the Sewers and Drainage Division had five working-level committees.

Program Operations: 1977-1983: As in the Boston and San Francisco programs, the intended locus of initiation in the Columbus program is the working-level committee. Higher-level committees are supposed to facilitate the resolution of problems and the implementation of these initiatives. By 1983, the program's accomplishments included:

'Improved safety programs, flex time, tardiness, overtime and vacation policies, clarification of Civil Service rules, orientation program, employee newsletter, stockroom redesign, cross-training, equipment specifications to improve functioning, analysis of alternative sewage
treatment processes, blood pressure screening for employees, proper stocking of vehicles to meet field conditions, exploring use of computer for preventative maintenance scheduling, and compilation of all work rules affecting work locations.' (Department of Labor, 1983, p. 154)

Trist also noted a general improvement in labor-management relations and a reduction in tensions and grievances by 1979. (p. 35) Moreover, by 1979, a structure evolved to solve lateral coordination problems among departments. Two different QWL committees, representing two different water treatment plants in the Water Division, began meeting jointly to resolve joint issues. This is similar to, but apparently much more modest than the lateral committee arrangement which arose in New York City with the Department of General Services.

These accomplishments notwithstanding, by 1979 the program had apparently reached a plateau. Meetings were characterized as 'boring or unexciting.' (Trist, p. 25) More important, an effort to expand the program into the Sanitation Division from 1980 - 1982 foundered on manager reluctance and worker-manager disputes. (Morgan and Ronchi, 1983, pp. 72 - 78) As of 1983, the Columbus program had not, according to the Department of Labor survey, been expanded beyond the Sewers and Drainage and Water divisions. One of the Ohio State University consultant/practitioners associated with the program claimed
in 1985 that the program was 'doing just fine,' whereas another Ohio State University labor relations practitioner told me in 1986 that 'nothing's happening there.' (13)

On the surface at least, the Columbus program has little in common with the Boston QWL program, save perhaps its partly ideological beginnings and the role of a third party in facilitating the program. In Columbus, the AFSCME leadership apparently enjoyed the respect of and good relations with the administration. Both the union and administration provided strong leadership for the program, at least during the first couple of years.

Yet the failure to implement the program in the Sanitation Division shows that in Columbus, as in Boston, San Francisco and Pima County, middle management resistance, as well as a background of conflictual labor-management relations in certain departments, created an inhospitable environment for QWL. Moreover, the program's early plateau indicates that despite strong executive leadership, the overall context may not be conducive to the institutionalization of QWL at a sustained level of activity. Indeed, the Mayor himself acknowledged upon leaving office, that the QWL program was of little consequence in the eyes of the voters (Ronchi, 1983). Hence it seems unlikely that his successors will continue to provide strong support for the program.
Conclusion

This chapter has compared several salient features of the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation program with other municipal QWL programs. On the basis of limited data, it can be argued that these programs share several features with Boston's program:

* The importance of ideologically motivated outsiders in initiating QWL programs.
* The importance of Federal funding in supporting administrative and training costs for program start-ups and rejuvenations.
* The lack of support by chief executives and management generally for such programs.
* The existence of relatively strong union support for the initiation and rejuvenation of QWL programs (notwithstanding the resistance of AFSCME Council 93 in Boston).

* Union weakness. Most programs have been established within the top ten most unionized states and almost all programs have been established within the top 25 unionized states. Yet, union strength within this group appears to be lacking, especially among the non-craft unions. (14) Of the four cities studied in case histories above, union weakness undermined program stability and progress in San Francisco, Pima County and to some extent, in Columbus.

* The primary operational focus on 'human resources' issues, with only secondary emphasis on work processes, the
point of service delivery and productivity, and almost total absence of organizational policy or budget issues from lists of program achievements.

* The dynamics of QWL processes, in which efforts seem to start, stall out or run into overwhelming barriers and then be rejuvenated, or reach a plateau after solving problems for a couple of years.

Only on the feature of program structure does there appear to be much variation among programs. Over half of all programs consist of primarily one committee. Very few stable programs consist of three- or four-tier committee structures.

From this it can be inferred that the Boston municipal context, while certainly different from that of other cities, is sufficiently similar so that tentative general statements can be made about the conduciveness of the municipal context for the institutionalization of QWL as a more or less permanent feature of the workplace governance system.

It seems that the formal superstructures of QWL programs—the committees and program staffs—do tend to become more or less permanent features of local government organizations. Yet, this does not mean that QWL problem-solving activities become permanent or ongoing features of employment relationships. Indeed, in at least two out of the four most active QWL programs described in detail above—San Francisco and Columbus—activity tended to reach a plateau after a while.
This may be due to the fact that initiatives (or at least accomplishments) do not involve workplace governance or work process issues, but mostly housekeeping and personnel issues. (This is true even in the New York program, which appears to be thriving). Since these matters are not crucial to the day-day functioning of the organization, problem-solving activity can taper off or cease entirely for a time, without the program officially ending.

In short, municipal contexts do seem to support the establishment of QWL as more or less long-term programs at the citywide level. Municipal contexts do not, it would seem, support the institutionalization of QWL as new models of worker-manager collaboration on the shopfloor, at the department level, or even at the level of union-administration leadership. In other words, QWL is a modest and functionally peripheral innovation in what appear to be fairly stable bureaucratic contexts.
CHAPTER 8 - NOTES


2) This document presents results of a survey of labor-management cooperation efforts in the private and public sectors, conducted in 1983. It lists over 56 different public sector programs, of which 36 are local level programs (city, county, special district), five are state-level (mostly in New York State) and 15 are Federal level programs (five of which are housed in the Veterans' Administration). Only the local level programs will be analyzed here. (A Department of Labor official informed me in September, 1986 that an update survey was currently being designed, but that results of the survey would not be available until 1987.) For each program, a one-page report is provided, showing the program's initiation date, the departments and number of people covered in the program as of 1983, as well as the program's structure, scope and accomplishments, as provided to the Department of Labor by each program's staff or officials. The brevity and vagueness of these reports limit their usefulness for this analysis. Almost one-half of the accomplishments listed lack specific details and instead cite outcomes such as 'improved morale and communications.' Nevertheless, the survey is the only comprehensive published source of data available as of this writing, except for the aforementioned ICMA report.

3) A collection of five-to-ten-page case studies of QWL programs in U.S. and Canadian federal, state and local governments. Most of the studies were written by consultant-practitioners who were involved with the programs. Although the focal points and types of data differ from one case study to the next, the collection as a whole is informative. Of the seven accounts of municipal QWL efforts in the book, the five most famous (in academic and QWL consultant circles) and/or longlasting are included: San Francisco; Pima County, Arizona; New York City; Columbus; Springfield, Ohio.

4) 1980, by Eric Trist, et al. (The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania). This is a final evaluative report of 'Project Network,' a national QWL project funded by the Office of Personnel Management's IPA Program, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the National Center for Productivity and the Quality of Working Life. Project Network consisted of ten state and local government organizations that were invited to receive Federal funds for QWL efforts in 1977. Many of these sites had no previously functioning QWL programs or labor-management cooperation efforts, but established them through Project Network assistance. Federal funding and evaluation of the projects lasted through 1979.
The local government organizations participating in the program were Columbus, the Jamestown, N.Y. School District, the Bronx Municipal Hospital, Pima County, Tacoma, Troy, Urbana and Wichita. All but the Urbana project were recorded as still in existence in the 1983 Department of Labor survey described above.

5) Telephone conversation with AFL-CIO official who was formerly associated with the QWL program in New York City.

6) Boston, Columbus, Pima County and New York City are the largest jurisdictions and have the most structurally elaborate programs of any in the country. In Boston, roughly 85 persons participated in the QWL program Citywide during its first two years (not including participant turnover); in Columbus, roughly 150; in Pima County, an estimated 150 persons participated in the QWL program, plus 300 were reported to have made productivity suggestions during 1984. Since many of these suggestions reportedly came from departments with QWL committees, it is likely that there is considerable overlap between the two groups of participants. In New York City, 1,000 persons were reportedly participating directly as of September 1986 (AFL-CIO official, op. cit.), representing 70,000 employees.


8) Pima County 'Quality of Work Improvement Program' report, 1984.

9) See note #6, above.


11) Ibid.

12) See note #7, above.

13) The first remark was made in Spring of 1985; the latter in the Spring of 1986.

14) It should be noted, however, that in none of these five cases were craft unions, such as the police, firefighters or teachers involved. Since other municipal QWL programs have included these powerful employee groups (see Table 8.1), it would be wrong to conclude that city administrations only initiate QWL programs with weak employee groups.
Recap of the Study

This study addressed the question of whether Quality of Working Life structures are likely to become permanent features of municipal contexts, by studying an attempt to fit a QWL structure into the Boston municipal context. That context was found to be unconducive to sustained, high levels of cooperation among managers and workers within departments, among departments themselves and between the administration and miscellaneous employee unions.

This is partly because the Mayor's primary tasks, as determined by the task/electoral environment, are not to provide high-quality, basic services -- for which labor-management cooperation might be valuable -- but to provide neighborhood development projects and patronage employment, as well as to maintain a favorable citywide image. Hence, sustained attention to basic service delivery procedures and internal management processes, especially innovations or improvements in those procedures, is precluded. Such improvements are desirable, but the time and effort required to bring them about are not reimbursed at the polls. As the Mayor of Columbus put it, in speaking with pride of his support for QWL over several years:
"My greatest legacy to the city is one that is impossible to see and, for many people, impossible to believe."
(in Ronchi, 1983, p. 70)

Moreover, the City's political structure is not such as to induce the Mayor to cooperate closely with workers or unions, especially not miscellaneous employee unions, such as the SEIU, which have very little power. Rather, it is the State Legislature and State regulatory institutions with which the Mayor shares power in the administration and they are not concerned with labor-management cooperation or with the service delivery process, per se.

Given this context, it is understandable that the primary stimulus to initiate QWL should have come from outside the City, from an ideologically motivated advocate who secured Federal funding for the QWL effort. The administration accepted the Federal funds and the program, but as an optional tool for department heads, not as part of a new service delivery policy or new labor relations policy. Administration of the program was left in the hands of the self-proclaimed expert who had initiated it; it was referred to as his program. The administration's attitude toward QWL was so casual that the Mayor's top aides did not inform him of the program's existence.

Of the two unions whose participation in the program was solicited, only one, the SEIU agreed to participate. This union joined the program not so much in order to cooperate
more with the administration, however, but as a way to organize City Hall workers and combat the Mayor's political organization.

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that the program performed poorly during its first two years of operation. Conflictual relations among workers and between workers and managers undermined, or precluded the development of many QWL initiatives. Departments whose services were required to carry out QWL initiatives were unresponsive and top City administrators ignored the program. Conflicts among the staff eventually brought the program to a halt for over three months.

Largely through the persistence of the union, the program was gradually rejuvenated. The administration began to fund the program after the initial Federal grant expired, although it did not develop a clear agenda for the program and the Mayor did not infuse the program with his own personal leadership. Hence it appeared that QWL would continue to function in the City for the foreseeable future; plagued by lack of strong administration and management support, but enjoying enough union support to make modest improvements in working conditions and perhaps build a more cohesive union.

An analysis of the survey and case study literature of QWL in other cities indicated that the Boston experience may be common among municipalities, or at least large cities.
Implications for QWL Practice in Municipalities

Two implications emerge directly from this study. One is that one should not expect QWL to bring about a transformation of labor-management relations or service delivery systems in municipalities; particularly not where miscellaneous employee unions and line service agencies are concerned. Mayors simply have too little incentive to apply the sustained attention and leadership to these departments that would be required for substantial and lasting changes to take place. Moreover, given the nature of the tasks of line service agencies themselves, especially given the increasing automation of tasks, it is not clear that even a great deal of attention to these departments would alter much in the daily experience of semi-skilled workers there (although their working lives could certainly be improved). It does seem that QWL programs can survive in municipalities, but only if they receive strong and consistent support from unions.

The second implication of the study is that municipal QWL, despite its shortcomings, may well be worth the time that miscellaneous employee unions devote to it. Although further research on this point is needed, it seems that the SEIU in Boston was able to strengthen its union through QWL, at least in the short-term. AFSCME Local #449 in Pima County, however, may have become weaker because of QWL. It may be the case that a minimum level of legal protection and organizational
legitimacy is required before a union can become stronger through QWL.

Questions for Further Research

This study is only one step toward an assessment of the quality of the fit between QWL and municipal contexts. The results of the study point to three agendas for further research.

(A) The first agenda consists of efforts to build upon and refine the results of this thesis. More detailed, case study analyses by non-partisan researchers, such as that conducted here, would be useful, particularly since most of the literature on municipal QWL published to date was written by practitioners. On-site research of the four cases discussed in Chapter 8 should be conducted, if only to corroborate the information that I was able to glean from the literature.

In addition to exploratory case studies, the results of this study indicate that more specific questions about municipal QWL should be addressed. First, how do mayoral/administration task priorities differ across municipalities of different sizes and economic structures? Boston mayors must devote their primary energies to economic development and housing issues and must, it seems, provide patronage jobs for supporters. Do the citizens of more affluent or smaller cities have the luxury of requiring their officials to devote relatively more energy to providing high-quality services? Do QWL efforts thrive in these cities?
Second, are council-manager political structures more conducive settings for QWL than strong mayor structures? Do their executives devote more attention to provision of basic services than strong mayors do?

Third, does QWL fare better in cities without a tradition of political patronage in employment practices, as the analyses in this study would suggest?

Fourth, how does QWL affect internal union politics and cohesiveness over time? Does it generally strengthen unions, as it appears to be doing in Boston, or weaken them, as it appears to have done in Pima County?

Fifth, do craft unions have better experiences with QWL than miscellaneous employee unions, as the foregoing analysis would suggest?

Sixth, do municipal QWL efforts in fact go through recurring cycles of initiation, instability, decline and rejuvenation, as predicted in this study, or is a permanent plateau in activity reached at some point?

(B) A second and somewhat broader set of questions concerns the nature of QWL mythology and practice. It was mentioned many times in this thesis that QWL is driven, to a large extent, by ideology. I also pointed out that QWL may be embraced by persons espousing mutually incompatible ideological values and that the relationships between ideology and behavior, or intervention technique, often seem to be
tenuous. Beyond these passing remarks, however, I said little about QWL ideologies and practices.

This is an important issue, however, especially for those who believe that workplace democracy is worth supporting. More study of the relationship between the ideologies of QWL, its pre-packaged techniques and its actual performance in specific organizational contexts, might help to elucidate the contradictions between QWL myth and real world outcomes. Perhaps this would help to point the way toward the development of organizational change practices that are more firmly grounded in real organizational contexts.

(C) A third research program would utilize a more historically-based approach to understanding QWL in the municipal context. Such an approach would focus on the evolution of labor-management relations over a longer period of time, say, since the introduction of civil service systems 100 years ago. Such a perspective might reveal the conditions under which labor-management relations generally change in cities and how they tend to change. A comparison of these findings with current QWL efforts might reveal more about the meaning and significance of QWL and the plethora of 'human resource' initiatives currently being tried in municipalities, than this thesis has done. (International City Management Association, 1985)
This addendum provides a more detailed and personal account of certain aspects of the research design and process than is provided in Chapter 2.

**Development of the Research Questions, Strategy, and Tools**

I began this study with a belief in the goodness of workplace democracy and a desire to learn how to make it work in American organizations. I also came to the study with some knowledge of the history of failures to democratize workplaces. Despite the popularity of QWL in investor-owned firms, I was particularly skeptical of its potential for success, since it seemed to me that only public ownership and substantial worker control over major organizational decisions could lay a foundation for stable democracy in the workplace.

At the same time, I was influenced by writers who claimed that there was a potential for QWL to effect at least a new compromise between the interests of labor and management in the workplace that was more democratic than the traditional relations codified in the Wagner Act of 1935. I decided to study the mechanics of QWL programs first-hand and figure out how and why QWL does well where it does and why it breaks down when it does. These questions were not addressed in the QWL literature, so I thought that my research might both satisfy
my desire to understand QWL, as well as contribute to the
cause of workplace democracy. As the study progressed, these
questions -- and the research tools I used to address them --
evolved considerably.

I understood QWL programs as conflict-resolution devices
that fare better or worse, depending upon the adequacy of the
fit between the particular device and the nature of conflicts
in a particular type of organization. I had developed this
perspective through my work with several social psychologists
over the previous few years. We had constructed a research
instrument, the purpose of which was to describe the nature,
causes and extent of conflict in an organization. Data was
gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and
surveys.

Although we had initially developed this instrument for
use in small, worker-owned companies, we came to hope that it
would be used by consultants, managers and union officials,
prior to the design and introduction of organizational change
efforts such as QWL. The instrument was never used for this
ambitious purpose, but we did employ it a few times as a
diagnostic and evaluation tool after organizations had
implemented pre-packaged QWL structures. Ironically perhaps,
the instrument's tendency to capture mostly small group
relations and its blindness, for the most part, toward larger
contextual issues, made it suitable for this more modest
purpose.
This was the purpose to which the research instrument was put in the Boston LMC program and it was the primary means by which I gained entrance to the program. I used it to collect data for my analysis of routine workplace relations in the Assessing Department and Police Operations unit, which I reported in this thesis. (A copy of a survey that was developed from this instrument is included at the end of this Appendix).

I decided that I could address the broader questions about the mechanisms of QWL programs and the reasons for QWL success or failure, by watching the Boston QWL program closely -- observing program meetings and daily work routines and trying to relate what I saw and heard to the assessments of workplace relations that I had made through my research instrument.

By the time the program committees had been meeting for three months, however, I had become confused about the program and my research strategy. There seemed to be much less of a program than I had expected there would be. Senior managers and top administrators hardly showed up for scheduled meetings and most of the worksite groups were having substantial difficulty developing initiatives and pushing them through management layers in their own departments, not to mention through the departments whose actions were needed to respond to the initiatives. Much of the remaining program activity revolved around Roberts' conflicts with the staff and union president.
I had been prepared to find that QWL would not work in Boston because the program's structure and bottom-up process design were ill-suited to the routine workplace relations of the departments in which the program was implemented; which I do, in fact, believe was the case. Yet the program's primary operational problems seemed to be the fault of incompetent and insincere individuals, not an inappropriate QWL design. I felt that if only those responsible would do their jobs, I could get on with the business of studying QWL.

About this time -- April 1985, four months after the program committees had begun meeting regularly -- I began to discuss these details of the Boston program with my dissertation committee. These discussions eventually induced me to pay more attention to both the historical context of labor-management relations in the City and the question of why the City administration and unions would or would not want to become seriously involved in QWL to begin with. I had posed the latter question to both union and administration officials as early as the Spring of 1984 and devoted considerable time to discussing it with members of the Labor-Management Oversight Committee in my November, 1984 interviews. Now it dawned on me that in my own ideological zeal to get on with QWL and see how it functioned, I had accepted ideological or superficial answers to these questions, especially from administrators and senior department managers. Perhaps there was no place for any sort of QWL program in this organization.
During the Spring, Summer and Fall of 1985, I reviewed my initial interview protocols and conducted a thorough search in the press and other literature, for documentation of the historical development of labor-management relations in the City. I re-interviewed some of the current officials in the administration, as well as past officials of the union, administration and other informants, focusing on the labor-management balance of power and the ways in which the unions and administration pursue their interests. I also began to think more seriously about the nature of the City’s electoral and regulatory environments and the implications of these environments for mayoral action. In my research on the site, I began to focus more on understanding the tasks, technology and environments of the Assessing and Police departments, rather than following every nuance of the program. I did not discard or discontinue my assessments of workplace relations and observations of program meetings, but placed them within the much larger framework of the political and technological features of the organizational context.

As my study ended several months later, I found myself still preoccupied with the exotic behavior of Roberts and the apparent insincerity of other individuals, and prone to blame this behavior for the program’s problems. Yet, in the meantime, my study of the broader organizational context had gradually convinced me that there was little room for stable, lasting labor-management cooperation in the City, particularly
between the administration and the members of the miscellaneous employee unions. It was this distinctive context that had allowed or fostered the individual behavior that had undermined QWL in Boston. Put differently, it was just this sort of behavior that constituted the Boston context and which made it unconducive to successful and lasting QWL.

When I first began my research on the Boston program, I thought it would be useful to compare the Boston QWL experience with that of other cities. As it became clear that the Boston program was not doing very well, I thought that such a comparison would be the only way to say anything useful about QWL in municipalities. I made plans to visit three cities that had implemented QWL programs for a few days each.

After several more months of extensive research on the Boston case, however, I came to the conclusion that a few days each on these sites would only acquaint me with the outlines of each city's QWL mechanisms; not with the features of the organizational context, which I had come to see as the important issue. I therefore decided to forego the site visits and content myself with a thorough review of the case study literature on municipal QWL.

My Formal Role and Access to the Site

My formal role in the Boston QWL program was that of a research evaluator of the program. My involvement began when Roberts, the program organizer and director, approached my
colleague and me in March, 1984, to write a proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor to fund a pilot QWL program, using the design that he had copied from San Francisco's program.

Monetary compensation for our successful grant writing efforts was negligible, but the Department of Labor agreed to provide about $4,000 for research and evaluation of the program. At Roberts' recommendation, the Labor-Management Oversight Committee used the $4,000 to have me (with the assistance of my research colleagues) conduct a baseline analysis of workplace relations and attitudes about a QWL program in the Assessing Department and Police Operations unit. We conducted the study in November 1984, using the research instrument described above. We agreed to search for additional funds so that the City could have us conduct a follow-up study one year later, to assess the extent of changes in workplace relations due to the program and to make recommendations for improvements in the program.

Although most of my research work for the next year was not funded, the initial contract established my role as an outside program evaluator who was paid by the program or the federal government. During a training session for program participants in January, 1985, I explained that I would observe the program for about a year, conduct another round of surveys and interviews and then provide the City and the federal government with a report on the program's progress. I also made it known that I was writing my dissertation on QWL in municipalities.
In the meantime, I provided written reports and verbal presentations of the results of the baseline research to each committee in the program. At program staff meetings during the first few months of program operations, I occasionally commented on the implications of the research results for the conduct of the program.

As the researcher/evaluator, I had access to all regular program committee meetings. Throughout most of the study period, I spent the equivalent of at least two full days per week on site, attending at least three of the five weekly worksite group meetings and almost all of the monthly departmentwide committee meetings in the Assessing Department and Police Operations unit, as well as Oversight Committee meetings, monthly labor caucuses at the union hall and bi-weekly program staff meetings. I attended special meetings of managers or workers as well. My practice at these meetings was to take notes in the back of the room and ask questions for clarification purposes later.

I also had official permission to observe work routines in the departments participating in the program, at any reasonable time. I never needed to cite this official permission, however, to enter a site. Within a short time, I had become acquainted with everyone involved with the program and many of the non-participants in the Assesssing Department and Police Operations unit, all of whom readily granted me access to the worksites. I never took notes while observing
work routines or conducting informal interviews. I made occasional trips to the restroom to jot down ideas or key words to remember later and I ended each session -- indeed, each day on the site -- by writing out dialogues and reflections from the day, which usually took one to three hours.

**Challenges in Developing My On-Site Research Role**

Although certain aspects of my formal research role (e.g., conducting surveys and interviews) were mostly cut and dried, I found other aspects, such as the conduct of observation of work routines and informal interviews, as well as the overall management of my relationships with some principal actors, rather challenging.

Working with Roberts, the program director, proved to be particularly difficult. In addition to my baseline analyses of workplace relations in Assessing and Police Operations, he wanted me to provide him with raw data from my interviews and surveys for his own dissertation and to add his dissertation questions to my surveys and interviews. He also wanted me to provide him with personal notes from meeting observation, with information on the content of confidential interviews I conducted and with reports on the actions of the program facilitators. He wanted me to write a positive and uplifting account of the program and of his actions to the City and the U.S. Department of Labor and he tried to induce me to
structure both the timing and content of the follow-up research, so that the results would show him in the best possible light. Roberts also tried, on a few occasions, to use me in his efforts to manipulate the perceptions of other actors; at one point claiming (falsely) to a room full of outraged worksite group representatives, that he had summarily fired a program facilitator after consulting with me about the matter. Roberts made these and many other, less important demands, from week to week, with little or no warning and with the expectation of immediate compliance. I often felt that I could not appear on the site or answer the phone without being asked or told to do something by Roberts.

Throughout the entire study period, I was often unsure of how to respond to these demands and develop my relationship with Roberts. It was Roberts who had first introduced me to the site and my continued presence there depended to a large extent upon his support. No one else saw any great value in my research (until I submitted my report in March 1986) and a few managers, workers and administrators told me that they found the research a waste of time and federal money. Moreover, I wanted access to Roberts and his interpretation of events, especially after it became clear to me that his perceptions of reality differed from those of other program participants. I therefore tried to stay on good terms with Roberts throughout the entire study period, by discussing the program with him at regular intervals and acceding to some of
his requests for information and input into the research instrument, while maintaining the confidentiality of the interview and survey data and avoiding involvement in his conflicts with other individuals.

I also found it challenging to develop a relationship with the two program committee facilitators that I felt was both productive and appropriate for my role as a non-participant researcher. Throughout most of the study period, I discussed the departments and committee meeting dynamics with them each week, immediately following meetings, during lunch and sometimes on the phone at night. As a non-participant researcher of the program, I felt that my role in these discussions should be limited to helping the facilitators understand my baseline analysis of workplace relations and asking them questions about their actions and interpretations of events. Although I made a conscious effort to stay within these somewhat vague boundaries, they told me that my comments in these discussions affected their thoughts about their work and helped them formulate strategies for action. When I first heard this (about four months after the program began), I considered abbreviating the discussions, since I thought it would be ludicrous to claim that I had no stake in the outcome of the program if I were involved in running it. I decided, however, that my influence on events through these discussions was negligible and that it would be foolish to deny myself such a valuable source of data.
My relationships with the facilitators provided something far more valuable than simply raw data, however. By the time the program was three months old, I had developed great respect and affection for both facilitators. Their backgrounds and political values were similar to mine and I felt more comfortable with them than with anyone else in the program. Most importantly, they were new to the practice of QWL and wanted, like me, to figure out how it worked, or could work in the City. Our discussions were a chance for all of us to puzzle through QWL and the City bureaucracy. Without these discussions, my study of QWL in Boston would have been a somewhat lonely and boring experience, as well as a less fruitful one.

By the third month of the program, however, I began to worry that I was spending too much time with the facilitators and not nearly enough with the program participants. I worried that participants would see me as so closely tied to the program administration that they would not be candid with me about it. To calm my fears, I began to make a point of arriving at meetings after or before the facilitators did and to linger after they left the meetings, talking to participants and asking questions. I also started spending more time in the worksites between meetings and establishing closer relationships with the participants. I became convinced that this strategy was working when, during the Fall
of 1985, some Police Operations workers complained to me about the quality of the facilitation and some Assessing workers asked my opinion of one of the facilitators. I maintained my good relationship with the facilitators, however, by spending more time discussing the program on the phone. I continued these phone discussions into the Summer of 1986, long after I had completed my field research.

My greatest challenge was deciding how much time to spend with program participants and what kind of a relationship to pursue with them. The baseline assessment of routine workplace relations, which consisted of interviews, surveys and some observation of work routines, as well as the observation of program committee meetings and questioning of participants afterward, were highly productive research activities that were easy to do; they had clearly defined and easily explainable purposes and they had clear temporal boundaries.

Yet I was convinced, to some extent at least, that if I spent as much additional time as possible with program participants in their workplaces, in the snack bars and at parties, I would be rewarded with valuable knowledge of the organizational context and a solid understanding of the fit between context and QWL program. The problem lay in figuring out how to structure these interactions with participants. For the first few months of the program, I felt stiff and uncomfortable if I stayed in a worksite longer than to pass
the time of day. I could ask only so many questions about the work; most of it was just not that complicated and people were busy doing it. Moreover, since it was I who was asking the questions, these sessions almost always turned into interviews. Although I usually learned something when I spent time like this in a worksite, I did not feel that I was developing rapport with program participants. Since I did not know exactly what I needed to know about the organizational context, I assumed that, at a bare minimum, I needed to establish and maintain a good rapport with participants.

As the months went by, however, workers, supervisors and managers began to ask me about the latest developments in the program when I showed up in the workplace. Since I knew much more about the program and about the actions of committees at other levels than they did, I would answer their questions. In doing so, I slipped, somewhat inadvertently, into the role of program newscaster in the worksites, which lent more structure and a back-and-forth quality to my interactions with participants that gradually put me at ease. By the Fall of 1985, I was able to spend entire days in the worksites and to return day after day, feeling comfortable with a low level of verbal interaction with workers, supervisors and middle managers.

More importantly, by taking on the program newscaster role, while taking care not to speak for the program and assuring each person that certain information was confidential, I think I put them more at ease, which built a
foundation for deeper and more meaningful dialogue. As time went on, they began to tell me many things about their work and about their relations with their superiors, subordinates, peers and union officials that I am sure they did not say to those persons directly. For example, by the Fall of 1985, workers and managers in both of the departments I studied began explaining to me how they attempted to manipulate and deceive each other.

Although I found it personally stressful to know and have the opportunity to divulge such important workplace secrets, I considered them a flattering reward for my long hours on the site. I also considered them to be excellent data that spoke volumes about workplace politics in the City.

Not all relationships were challenging to manage, however. My relationship with the SEIU President was productive of good data, as well as edifying and enjoyable for me. She understood my research, she took time from her busy schedule to talk with me whenever I asked and she provided me with a lot of useful data on the history of the union. I felt comfortable both asking questions and occasionally giving an opinion in the course of discussions about the program. Like the facilitators, she was also trying to understand how QWL might work in the City and I learned much by discussing the program's problems with her.
I also developed relatively smooth and uncomplicated relationships with two administrators who were members of the Citywide Labor-Management Oversight Committee. I approached them only a few times during the study period, but managed to have informative, informal interviews when I did.

I did not develop any sort of informal relationship with the other administrators on the Oversight Committee and I did not attempt to do so, mostly because the official focus of the program was the workgroup and departmental level. I interviewed these administrators at length, both at the beginning and end of the study period, I attended almost every program meeting which they were scheduled to attend and I cultivated contacts with a few persons who spoke with them regularly. According to their own words and actions and every secondary source I could find, these administrators knew little about the QWL program and had no desire to become more deeply involved in it.

Conclusion

Over the course of my study of the Boston Labor-Management Cooperation Program, my motives and research questions evolved from trying to understand how to make QWL work, to trying just to understand how an organization works. I learned a great deal about organizations through this process and I developed a sincere appreciation for the difficulty of resolving human conflict.
In the course of this research odyssey, I employed virtually every type of standard organizational research tool -- surveys, formal and informal interviews, personal observation of meetings and work routines and library research. The use of so many tools enabled me to paint as rich and thick a description of QWL in the Boston context as I think can be painted.

In retrospect, I can see only one major shortcoming of this evolutionary and multi-method research approach, and particularly of its less structured components. While I was collecting the data, I never felt that I had enough, but when I was done, I realized that I had collected far more than I needed to tell the story. Moreover, I had to write the story, or parts of it, a few times before I became more or less certain as to which story I was telling.

This aspect of my research experience is due, in part, no doubt, to my lack of experience as a researcher and writer. Yet the reflections of Whyte (1981) and Bogdan (1972) have convinced me that this is also, in part, in the nature of qualitative research. Given the nature of QWL and the questions with which I approached it, I believe that this research approach served me well.
INSTRUCTIONS

For each question on this survey, you are asked to respond either by placing a check (✓) next to the answer that best describes your views or by writing a number (1,2). Please read each question carefully before responding. If none of the answers listed applies to your situation, check "Other" and write in your answer.

1) Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with your job here? (Check one):
   ■ Very Satisfied  ■ Somewhat Satisfied  ■ Not Satisfied at All

2) How satisfied are you with the amount you are paid here? (Check one):
   ■ Very Satisfied  ■ Somewhat Satisfied  ■ Not Satisfied at All

3) How satisfied are you with the opportunities for promotion or career advancement here? (Check one):
   ■ Very Satisfied  ■ Somewhat Satisfied  ■ Not Satisfied at All

4) How satisfied are you with your employment security here? (Check one):
   ■ Very Satisfied  ■ Somewhat Satisfied  ■ Not Satisfied at All

Please Note: Questions 5 and 6 ask about your specific job tasks and questions 7 and 8 ask about your work area or unit in general.

5) What do you like most about the specific job tasks you do here? (Write "1" next to the thing you like most and "2" next to the thing you like second-most):
   ■ My tasks are challenging and interesting
   ■ My work load is good - I'm not expected to do more than I can handle
   ■ I like serving the public - helping people
   ■ I can organize and do the work the way I think is best
   ■ Nothing - I really don't like anything about my job tasks
   ■ Other (specify) ____________________________

6) What do you like least about your job tasks? (Write "1" next to the thing you like least and "2" next to the thing you like second-least):
   ■ My work tasks are boring
   ■ My work load is bad - I'm expected to do more than I can handle
   ■ I do not like dealing with the public
   ■ I cannot organize and do the work the way I think is best
   ■ Nothing - I like everything about my tasks
   ■ Other (specify) ____________________________
7) What do you like most about your work area or unit in general? (Write "1" next to the thing you like most and "2" next to the thing you like second-most):

- My co-workers respect and appreciate me
- Supervisors and managers respect and appreciate me
- People cooperate and share the load
- I get to talk with other workers and make friends
- The work environment is clean and safe
- Nothing - I really don't like this area or unit
- Other (specify) ______________________________________________________________________

8) What do you like least about your work area or unit in general? (Write "1" next to the thing you like least and "2" next to the thing you like second-least):

- My co-workers do not respect or appreciate me
- Supervisors and managers do not respect or appreciate me
- I am isolated - I never get to talk with anyone on the job
- The work environment is dirty and unsafe
- Nothing - I like everything about this place
- Other (specify) ______________________________________________________________________

9) What kind of work would you most like to be doing five years from now? (Check one):

- Same thing I'm doing now
- Other (specify) ______________________________________________________________________

If you checked "Other," please answer the following question:

What would this other job give you that you don't have now? (Write "1" next to the most important thing and "2" next to the second-most important thing):

- More authority and responsibility
- More respect from friends and relatives
- More money or job security
- More interesting and challenging work
- A cleaner, safer work environment
- Better treatment from people on the job
- Other (specify) ______________________________________________________________________
10) If you could change **anything** about your job, the people here or the way this department or work unit is run, what is the thing you would most like to change? Please write: ________________________________

How strongly do you feel that this change should be made? (Check one):

__ Very strongly
__ Somewhat strongly
__ Not strongly at all

What, if anything, have you done so far to change this? (Check all that apply):

__ Nothing at all
__ Spoken with workers about it
__ Spoken with a supervisor or manager about it
__ Spoken with a union representative about it
__ Filed a grievance
__ Other (specify) ________________________________

11) On which of the following types of decisions would you like to have more input than you do now? (Check each decision on which you want more input. You may check more than one):

__ Deciding who does what tasks in my work area
__ Deciding how the work should get done
__ Deciding what the goals or functions of this department or work unit should be
__ Deciding which people should be hired, fired or promoted
__ Deciding what equipment and supplies are needed for my work area or unit

12) What does your supervisor or the person you report to generally expect of you? Write "1" next to the thing he or she expects most and "2" next to the thing he or she expects second-most:

__ Very little - he or she does not care what I do
__ Do my job as it is defined in my written job description
__ Do anything he or she asks, even if it's not in my job description
__ Figure things out on my own and not bother him or her
__ Do the best and most professional job I can for the City
__ Make the supervisor look good to his or her superiors
__ Cooperate with everyone to help get the work done
__ Other (specify) ________________________________

13) What things does your supervisor generally expect of other workers? (Check one):

__ Basically the same things he or she expects of me
__ Different things, because all of the jobs are different
__ Other (specify) ________________________________
14) Do most people in your work area or unit usually follow the supervisor's expectations? (Check one): Note that this question has two parts.

- Yes, usually
- About half of the time
- No, usually not

If you checked "Yes, usually" please answer the following question:

Why do people follow the supervisor's expectations? (Write "1" next to the primary reason and "2" next to the secondary reason):

- Supervisors are paid to make decisions and give orders - workers are paid to follow
- Supervisors know the job best and know what should be done
- Supervisors will get you fired or make your life miserable if you don't follow them
- Supervisors treat workers OK, so workers should do what the supervisors want
- Other (specify) __________________________

If you checked "About half of the time" or "No, usually not," please answer the following question:

Why don't people follow the supervisor's expectations? (Write "1" next to the primary reason and "2" next to the secondary reason):

- Supervisors don't know what they're doing
- Supervisors really don't care if you do what they say or not
- Supervisors can't force people to obey because they can't discipline people
- Supervisors' expectations are unfair
- Other (specify) __________________________

15) What do people do most often when they disagree with what the supervisor wants? (Check one):

- They discuss it with him or her and work it out
- They tell the supervisor but get no response
- They just refuse to do what the supervisor wants
- They do what the supervisor wants just enough to get by
- They do exactly what the supervisor wants as best they can

16) What happens when someone doesn't do what the supervisor expects of him or her? (Check the one thing that happens most often):

- The supervisor tries to have the person fired
- The supervisor writes the person up or gives them a formal reprimand
- The supervisor yells at the person
- The supervisor discusses it with the person and they work it out together
- The supervisor discusses it with the whole work group and everyone helps to straighten things out
- Other (specify) __________________________
17) Generally speaking, do most supervisors treat workers fairly in your work area or unit?
(Check all that apply):

___ Yes
___ No, they play favorites
___ No, they discriminate on the basis of race
___ No, they discriminate on the basis of sex
___ No, they discriminate on the basis of political connections
___ No, they don't pay much attention to what's going on
___ Other (specify) ____________________________________________

18) Generally speaking, do workers treat supervisors fairly in your work area or unit?
(Check all that apply):

___ Yes
___ No, many try to get away without doing much work
___ No, many embarrass the supervisor by going around them to the higher-up's
___ No, they openly refuse to do what the supervisor says
___ Other (specify) ____________________________________________

19) What do the workers in your work area or unit generally expect of each other? (Write "1" next to the thing they expect the most, "2" next to the thing they expect second-most and "3" next to the thing they expect third-most):

___ Very little - they don't care what people do
___ Do your job as it's defined in the written job description
___ Figure things out on your own and don't bother people
___ Do the best and most professional job you can for the City
___ Cover them so they won't get into trouble with the supervisor
___ Cooperate with everyone to help get the work done
___ Be friendly and sociable
___ Other (specify) ____________________________________________

20) Why do people follow their co-workers' expectations? (Write "1" next to the primary reason and "2" next to the secondary reason):

___ They will be harrassed or "stabbed in the back" if they don't
___ It makes the work atmosphere more pleasant
___ It gets the work done more quickly and efficiently
___ It would be unfair not to since everyone agrees these are good expectations
___ Other (specify) ____________________________________________
21) What happens when people don't follow their co-workers' expectations? (Check the thing that happens most often):

- They are yelled at by their co-workers
- They are excluded socially - they become "outsiders"
- They are harassed or stabbed in the back
- A co-worker discusses it with the person and they work it out together
- A group of workers gets together and they all work it out
- Other (specify)

22) Do workers generally treat each other fairly in your work area or unit? (Check all that apply):

- Yes, usually
- No, they only treat their personal friends fairly
- No, they discriminate on the basis of race
- No, they discriminate on the basis of sex
- No, they discriminate on the basis of political connections
- No, they look down on people with different training or educational backgrounds
- No, they look down on people in certain jobs
- Other (specify)

23) Are job hirings and promotions in your unit or department generally done fairly? (Check all that apply):

- Yes, usually
- No, you have to have political connections
- No, there is racial discrimination
- No, there is sexual discrimination
- No, but there is no single type of discrimination involved
- Other (specify)

24) Are lay-off's done fairly in your department or work unit? (Check all that apply):

- Yes, usually
- No, it's based on political connections
- No, it's based on racial discrimination
- No, it's based on sexual discrimination
- No, but there's no single type of discrimination involved
- Other (specify)

25) Do you think that the Flynn Administration and the Service Employees International Union made the right decision by getting involved in the Labor-Management Program? (Check)

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
26) Is it a good idea to have the Labor-Management Program in your work area or unit? (Check one):
   ____ Yes  ____ No  ____ Do not know

27) Do you think you would like to participate in this program by being on one of the work site committees? (Check one):
   ____ Yes  ____ No  ____ Do not know

28) Have programs like this ever been tried here in the past that you can remember? (Check one):
   ____ No, I've never seen anything like this before
   ____ Yes, I've seen similar types of programs here before

29) What is the most important thing that you would like to see happen as a result of this program? Please state briefly:

________________________________________________________________________________

Demographic Information
Please provide the following information:

Your Age (Check one):  ____ Under 25
                     ____ 25 - 35
                     ____ 35 - 55
                     ____ 55 or over

Your Race (write): ____________________

Your sex (Check):  ____ Female
                   ____ Male

How long you have been working in this department (Check one):
   ____ Less than two years
   ____ Between two years and ten years
   ____ More than ten years

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this survey.
APPENDIX B

BOSTON EMPLOYEE WORK STOPPAGES (1967-1985)
(relations incidents in parentheses)

(1) **September 12, 1975** - Boston Teachers' Union

(2) **September 14, 1975** - Boston Police Patrolmen's Association
over lay-offs.

(September 25, 1976 - AESCME Council 45 and SEIU 285
threaten to strike over lay-offs but do not -- Agreement had
been reached with administration on 5/12/76 to forego 10% COLA
in exchange for no lay-offs until 1977)

(3) **March 31, 1978** - AESCME_Local_244 (car towing unit) refuses
to work due to blizzard.

(4) **April 20, 1978** - AESCME_Local_1892 (Traffic & Parking Dept)
and local 804 (meter maids) over lay-offs.

(5) **May 16, 1979** - AESCME_Council_23 (especially motor equipment
repairmen) over no job upgrade.

(May 18, 1979 - AESCME local 1489 (Emergency Medical
Technicians at Boston City Hospital) engage in informational
picketing to publicize their desire for a job upgrade from R-10
to R-14 and their disagreement with an arbitrator's
recommendation that they be granted R-11 status. Boston Globe).

(6) **May 18, 1979** - AESCME_Council_23 (specifically Traffic
Signal Repairmen) over no job upgrade.

(June 7, 1980 - AESCME local 1526 (library non-
professionals) and other library workers stop work because
paychecks not received. Boston Globe).

(7) **June 25, 1980** - House Officers Association (Boston City
Hospital doctors) strike for six days over pay and scheduling.
They demand for 10% pay increase.

(June 27, 1980 - SEIU Local 285 nurses threaten to strike
over pay and shift scheduling; but win 10% increase without

(8) **July 22, 1980** - SEIU_Local_285 Citywide bargaining unit
(specifically clerical and technical workers at Boston City
Hospital) strike for five days for a 10% pay increase and a
seniority provision for provisional and temporary workers to
prevent political manipulation. They win the latter demand, but
settle for a 7% wage increase.
APPENDIX B, Continued

(July 23, 1980 - AESCME local 1489 (City Hospital workers) stage sick-out in sympathy with local 285 strike. Boston Globe)

(July 24, 1980 - House Officers Association and SEIU Local 285 nurses vote support for clerical & technical workers strike. Boston Globe)

(9) August 8, 1980 - AESCME Council 93 (specifically locals 445 - laborers and clericals in Public Works; local 296 - Parks Dept maintenance persons; local 1198 - engineers in Public Works) strike for six days, claiming Mayor White created high-paying supervisor positions in Public Works and Parks for political campaign workers who had held managerial/supervisory positions in the Youth Activities Commission (dismantled 7/30/80), but who had no experience in Public Works or Parks.

Strike ends on 8/14/80 after City and union agree to binding arbitration and the Civil Service Commission agrees to hear charges of improper appointing procedures.

(August 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 1980 - SEIU 285 bridgetenders and lifeguards, as well as most other Boston AESCME locals and the Eedication of Superior Officers, vote to support the aforementioned Council 93 strike (#9 above) and threaten to join it. Boston Globe and Boston Herald)

(10) March 21, 1981 - AESCME Local 412 (Deer Island correctional officers) strike for seven days for a seven percent pay increase. (Boston Globe: March 21,23,28, 1981)

(April 27, 1981 - AESCME Local 1489 pickets Boston City Hospital to protest lay-off of 50 laundry workers and contracting out of laundry services to a non-union firm. Boston Globe).

(11) January 25, 1985 - AESCME Local 783 (heavy motor equipment operators and laborers in the Tow and Hold Unit). Issue not recorded.

Sources: All actions numbered 1 - 11 were taken from the City of Boston Office of Labor Relations records of requests filed with the Massachusetts Labor Relations Commission for a "strike investigation," in June, 1985. Item #10 was not recorded in the Office of Labor Relations records, but is clearly a work stoppage.

Actions in parentheses are not work stoppages, but are related incidents that are recorded in the Boston Globe and Boston Herald.
APPENDIX C

PROBLEMS OF THE STATE-CITY CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

This appendix describes the role and functions of the Massachusetts civil service system, which regulates all public employment in the State, including the City of Boston. The system's many problems have profound effects on worker-manager relations in the City, which are described in the body of this essay. Hence a more detailed description of the system itself and its shortcomings is warranted.

The State-City civil service system, which was established in 1884, consists of an extremely elaborate set of rules designed to ensure that employees are hired, promoted, demoted, transferred, terminated and given raises on the bases of technical/functional need by the department and of individuals' technical qualifications. Its purpose is also to ensure that jobs are evaluated and classified for compensation purposes on the basis of the technical skills they require.

The City hiring process, for example, consists of 27 steps involving both the department doing the hiring and the State Department of Personnel, all of which is coordinated by the City's Personnel Division. (Boston_in_Transition, 1984)

The State Department of Personnel is mandated to administer open competitive and promotional examinations for
all civil service positions on a regular basis. After grading exams, the Department establishes an eligibility list of candidates, which is valid for two years. When a City department head wishes to hire someone, s/he contacts the relevant appointing authority (in Boston City Hall, the Personnel Director), who contacts the State to determine if a valid eligibility list exists. If it does, candidates for the position must be chosen from among the top five on the list. Even when the system works according to plan, its cumbersomeness retards the hiring process and prompts many department heads to search for loopholes or other ways to circumvent it. Especially where promotional appointments are involved, this behavior provokes suspicion by employees who believe that they are being passed over by others who have fewer technical qualifications.

Since the rules are complex and the paper flow labyrinthine, however, neither employees nor union representatives have the time or access to ascertain whether most apparent irregularities are actually violations of the rules. Appeals to the Civil Service Commission typically take up to nine months to be heard and require that a grievant speak out against his or her department head, which few in City Hall are willing to do, according to workers, union officials and some administrators. (1)
Far greater abuses allegedly occur, however, when the system does not operate according to plan, which has often been the norm. Since over 1,800 job titles exist in the system statewide (Boston Municipal Manual, 1974), the State often administers exams only after it is requested to do so by an appointing authority. Hence there are far fewer valid eligibility lists than there are positions requiring appointments. (2)

If a department head wishes to make an appointment and no eligibility list exists, s/he may make an appointment on a provisional basis and request that an exam be administered. Yet City of Boston appointing authorities have allegedly been far less than diligent in requesting exams and/or the State has been less than diligent in responding to their requests. As of May 1985, approximately 50 percent of all City employees were serving in positions for which they had only provisional or temporary status. ('City of Boston Personnel Statistics, Management Information Systems Department.'

The use of provisional and temporary appointments allegedly serves the needs of the patronage employment system and undermines civil service principles. If eligibility lists are not required, then appointees can be drawn from a pool of the authority's choosing, i.e., from targeted neighborhoods and/or campaign workers. Most important, provisional appointees do not have permanent civil service status for their positions, so they can be terminated or demoted to their
permanent positions without cause. Such employees are vulnerable to pressures from the Mayor's political organization to do organizing or other political work as a way of keeping their jobs, or to be promoted into jobs they desire. (3)

These and related alleged practices were the proximate cause of work stoppages, as well as dozens of grievances filed by the SEIU and AFSCME between 1978 and 1983. (See Table 3.2 and Appendix B.) These actions, as well as years of criticism by the City Council, State Legislature and media, led to the Civil Service Reform Act of 1981, which required that current provisional employees be given the opportunity to take exams certifying them for permanent status in their positions. The Act also required State and municipal authorities to establish objective 'performance appraisal' systems, which are to take the place of subjective criteria in promotional appointments. As of Spring 1986, Boston did not yet have a performance appraisal system in place. Some provisional employees had taken exams, however.
APPENDIX C -- NOTES


3) Over the course of the study period, several workers and managers in the Assessing Department told me that they did such with the hope of advancing.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


____. Reasoning, Learning and Action. 1981


Boston, City Code, Charter, etc.


Boston, City of. Assessing Department Employee Guide.

Boston, City of. 'Human Resources Program/Assessing Department, City of Boston,' September 1985.


Cooley, Mike. Architect_or_Bee?_The_Human/Technology Relationship. Slough, England: Langley Technical Services [no date].


Dickson, John W. "Beliefs About Work and Rationales for Participation." *Human Relations* 36 (October 1983) 911-932.


Greenberg, Edward S. 'The Consequences of Worker Participation: A Clarification of the Theoretical Literature.' *Social Science Quarterly* 56 (September 1975) 191-209.


Jick, Todd D. "Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (December 1979).


_____. 'Determinants of the Power of Boundary Units in an Interorganizational Bargaining Relation.' Administrative Science_Quarterly 20 (September 1975) 434-452.


Mazany, Terry, ed. 'Making QWL Make Sense: A Log From the Sea of Cortez.' Proceedings from an Informal Conference on QWL Held in San Carlos, Sonora, Mexico, February 1985.


Nickelhoff, Andrew, ed. 'Extending Workplace Democracy: An Overview of Participatory Decisionmaking Plans for Unionists.' Labor Studies Center, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Michigan-Wayne State University, 1981.


Passmore, W. 'Model for Socio-Technical Intervention.' Case Western Reserve University, Department of Organizational Behavior, 1980.


Szymanski, Al. 'Braverman as a Neo-Luddite?' Insurgent Sociologist, 1980.


Trist, Eric L.; Susman, Gerald I.; and Brown, Grant R. 'An Experiment in Autonomous Working in and American Underground Coal Mine.' Human Relations 30 (No. 3, 1977) 201-236.


