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Changing Length of the Work Week Within the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago, Illinois

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CHANGING LENGTH OF THE WORK WEEK WITHIN
THE CLEARING INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

by
ROBERT SHUST

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Social and Industrial Relations

June
1956

LIFE

Robert Shust was born in Chicago, Illinois, March 30, 1925.

He was graduated from Harrison Technical High School, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1943, and from Loyola University, June, 1950, with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Commerce.

During World War II, from June, 1943, through April, 1946, the author served in the United States Army. One and one half years of this time was served in the European Theater of Operations.

From June, 1950, through August, 1952, the author was employed by Sears Roebuck & Company as a Division Manager in charge of retail selling of men's clothing at the Cicero, Illinois store. In September, 1952, the author accepted the position of Assistant Personnel Manager at the Erie Manufacturing Company, Division of U. S. Industries, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. In January, 1953, the author was transferred to the Chicago Steel Tank Company, Division of U. S. Industries, Inc., as Personnel Manager, where he remained until March 15, 1956. On March 19, 1956, he began work as an Assistant Industrial Relations Manager of the Kellogg Switchboard and Supply Company a Division of International Telephone and Telegraph, located in Chicago. He began his graduate studies at Loyola University in September, 1953.

PREFACE

The author wishes to express his appreciation to all the companies within the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago, Illinois, who were thoughtful enough to fill out and return the questionnaire pertaining to the thesis subject. The author also wishes to express his appreciation to his wife for her patience, understanding, and help in finalizing his graduate work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the problem--Importance--Issues-- Limits of study--Previous investigations-- Hypothesis--Sources used--Methods.	
II. SHORTER HOUR MOVEMENT	13
Sun-up to sun-down--First attempts--Reductions-- Twelve hour day--Ten hour day--Eight hour day.	
III. HOW ABOUT MANAGEMENT?	21
Shop employees hours of work--Office employees-- Shortening the work week--Thirty five hour week --Four day-eight hour day-thirty two hour week-- Four day-nine hour day-thirty six hour week--Six day-six hour day-thirty six hour week--Other combinations--Expected time of decreased hours-- Personal comments.	
IV. HOW ABOUT UNIONS?	38
Reasons for decreased hours--Leisure time-- Health--Increased demand--Unemployment--AFL in- dicator--Fewer hours--Wages--Unions.	
V. CONCLUSIONS	46
BIBLIOGRAPHY	56

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. ESTIMATED AVERAGE WEEKLY WORKING HOURS, 1850-1960	4
II. NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES	7
III. AVERAGE HOURS OF PRODUCTIONWORKERS IN MANUFACTURING, 1923-1954	20
IV. SCHEDULED HOURS OF SHOP EMPLOYEES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY	21
V. SCHEDULED HOURS OF OFFICE EMPLOYEES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY	22
VI. DEMAND FOR THIRTY FIVE HOUR WORK WEEK, AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY	25
VII. PROPOSALS FOR FOUR-DAY, EIGHT-HOUR-DAY, THIRTY- TWO-HOUR WORK WEEK AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PAR- TICIPATING IN SURVEY	26
VIII. REQUESTS FOR FOUR-DAY, NINE-HOUR-DAY, THIRTY-SIX -HOUR WORK WEEK AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PARTICI- PATING IN SURVEY	27
IX. PROPOSALS FOR SIX-DAY, SIX-HOUR-DAY, THIRTY-SIX- HOUR WORK WEEK AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY	28
X. TIME OF EXPECTED DECREASE IN WORKING HOURS AS REPORTED BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY . .	30
XI. UNIONS NEGOTIATING WITH COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY	42

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit	Page
1. BODY OF REQUEST LETTER I	51
2. QUESTIONNAIRE. "SURVEY ON CHANGING LENGTH OF WORK WEEK WITHIN THE CLEARING INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT OF CHICAGO"	52
3. BODY OF REQUEST LETTER II	55

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The number of hours worked by employees has always been of concern to employees, the general public, and the government. During the previous one hundred years the number of hours worked per week has steadily declined. In February of this year the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported an average of forty and seven tenths hours worked per week.¹

Members of unions and management have within recent years indicated that with the ever increasing automation trend the number of scheduled working hours may very well be further decreased. Scheduled working hours is the length of time that an employee is expected to work under normal operating conditions.

Importance

Any reduction in the scheduled number of hours worked has a direct bearing on every member of our labor force and on all future members of our labor force. Unions and manage-

¹United States Department of Labor, "Hours And Earnings", Employment And Earnings, II (February 1956), 1.

ment may one day be engrossed in the battle for a shorter work week; the government may have to make changes in existing laws concerning wages and hours if a shorter work week becomes a national highlight and our entire working economy could be changed depending upon whether or not the number of scheduled working hours were to be decreased and by how many hours.

Issues

Many issues come to mind whenever shorter working hours are contemplated. How many hours less per week? How many hours less per day? Will production decrease? Will costs increase? Will employment increase? Will wages remain the same? When will overtime begin? What happens to multiple shift operations? Will there be further reductions of work hours? All of these issues must be considered when thinking of reducing the scheduled number of hours worked but they will not be the problems discussed within this paper.

Limits of Study

This study is limited to whether or not there is a trend toward a changing length of the work week. The study is further limited to the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago, Illinois. This District has as its boundaries; Harlem Avenue on the west to Cicero Avenue on the east, and extends from 6500 South to 7900 South. Also within the District is the area from Harlem Avenue on the west to Central Avenue on the

east, and from approximately 4700 South to 5100 South.

Previous Investigations

Previous investigations of the causes for a changing work week have been made and modern day thinking would still agree as to the reasons given for reducing the scheduled number of hours worked. Numerous books and articles have recorded the trend of previous years by indicating average scheduled hours and average actual hours as shown in Table I.

TABLE I
ESTIMATED AVERAGE WEEKLY WORKING
HOURS, 1850-1960²

Year	Average scheduled hours	Average actual hours		
		Total economy	Non- agricultural	Agri- culture
1850	70.9	70.6	68.0	72.0
1860	69.5	68.7	64.0	72.0
1870	67.2	66.3	61.0	71.0
1880	66.3	65.4	60.0	71.0
1890	63.7	63.2	58.0	70.0
1900	61.7	60.0	56.0	69.0
1910	58.6	57.5	53.0	68.0
1920	53.7	51.9	48.0	63.0
1930	51.3	47.2	44.0	59.0
1940	45.4	43.0	41.7	52.3
1950	42.5	40.8	39.0	50.0
1960	39.7	37.7	35.6	48.0

²Dewhurst, Frederic, J. and Associates. Americas Needs And Resources. New York, 1947, p. 695.

This table is different from any other the writer came across as it was published in 1947 and was projecting to 1950 and 1960. The estimate of average scheduled hours of forty two and five tenths in 1950 did not prove to be correct, since forty and five tenths was the average.³ Since we are now experiencing forty and seven tenths, the 1960 estimate of thirty nine and seven tenths will probably be untrue.

Hypothesis

It is the intent of this study to prove that management is expecting a reduction in the scheduled hours of work. The study will also indicate that unions are thinking seriously of bargaining for a reduction in the scheduled hours of work.

Sources Used

The background sources used for this study were published books which contained information on hours of work and published articles from contemporary periodicals pertaining to hours of work. A survey questionnaire was employed to determine whether the hours of work were changing or were expected to be changed.

³See Table III.

Methods

On October 28, 1955, the questionnaire⁴ and a letter of explanation⁵ were mailed to one hundred and nine companies in the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago, Illinois. Sixty three questionnaires were returned, or fifty seven and seven tenths per cent.

On November 25, 1955 a follow up letter⁶ and another copy of the questionnaire was mailed to the forty six companies who had not returned their original questionnaire. Eighteen more questionnaires were then returned, or thirty nine and one tenth per cent. The combined response to the two letters consisted of eighty one returned questionnaires, or seventy four and three tenths per cent.

The names of the companies participating in the survey and their respective industry are shown in Table II.

⁴See Exhibit II.

⁵See Exhibit I.

⁶See Exhibit III.

TABLE II

NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY
AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES

Name of Company	Type of Industry
1. Champion Textile Finishing Company	Processors of cotton fabric
2. United Air Lines	Air transportation
3. Klemp Metal Grating Corporation	Steel fabricators
4. The C. P. Hall Company of Illinois	Chemical manufacturer
5. Townsend Company	Manufacturer of rivets, screws and nails
6. Fasano Pie Company	Wholesale bakery
7. National Aluminate Corporation	Manufacturer of water treating chemicals
8. B. T. Babbitt, Inc.	Manufacturer of cleansers and household lye
9. Silbrico Corporation	Brick manufacturer
10. General Scientific Corporation	Precision lenses manufacturer
11. National Bearing Division American Brakeshoe	Non-ferrous foundry
12. Serviced Products Corporation	Construction materials manufacturer
13. The S. O. S. Company	Cleanser manufacturer
14. Personal Products Corporation	Sanitary napkins, tampons, facial tissue, cotton squares

TABLE II (Continued)

NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY
AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES

Name of Company	Type of Industry
15. Apollo Metal Works	Pre-finished metal polisher
16. Cornell Forge Company	Steel drop forger
17. National Steel Container Corporation	Steel and fibre drum and container manufacturer
18. Pepsodent Company Division of Lever Bros. Company	Dentifrice and antiseptic manufacturer
19. Lake Shore Oil	Wholesale petroleum
20. Sciaky Brothers Inc.	Manufacturer of electric resistance welding equipment
21. Bethlehem Steel Company	Steel fabrication
22. Barquin Corporation	Sales organization of water proofing equipment
23. Allen B. Wrisley	Manufacturer of soaps and toiletries
24. Inland Steel Container Company	Steel fabricator
25. Corn Products Refining Company	Wet milling
26. Continental Can Company Inc. #5	Tin can manufacturer
27. Delco Radio Division of General Motors Corporation	Electronic-manufacturer of auto radios
28. Atlas-Boxmakers, Inc.	Manufacturer of corrugated and fibre shipping containers and folding cartons

TABLE II (Continued)

NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY
AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES

Name of Company	Type of Industry
29. Swan Finch Oil Corporation	Petroleum blenders
30. American Box Board Company	Corrugated shipping container manufacturer
31. International Paper Company	Corrugated shipping container manufacturer
32. Curtiss Lighting, Inc.	Lighting fixture manufacturer
33. Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company	Pressure sensitive tape manufacturer
34. Frank Paxton Lumber Company	Hardwood lumber distributor
35. Arkell Safety Bag Company	Paper bag manufacturer
36. The John Puhl Products Company	Sodium Hypochlorite processor
37. Chipman Chemical Company Inc.	Weed killer manufacturer
38. Clearing Machine Corporation Division U.S. Industries	Heavy machinery manufacturer
39. Hamler Industries, Inc.	Steel plate fabricator
40. Ace Carton Corporation	Paper carton manufacturer
41. Western Electric, Inc.	Communication equipment manufacturer
42. Ethicon Suture Laboratory Inc.	Surgical suture manufacturer

TABLE II (Continued)

NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY
AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES

Name of Company	Type of Industry
43. United Flat Roller Products Company	Steel warehouse
44. Carson Pirie Scott and Company	Mercantile warehouse
45. Commercial Shearing and Stamping, Inc.	Forging, stamping and metal fabricator
46. W. H. Schenk Lumber Company	Distributors of lumber
47. The Visking Corporation	Cellulose and plastic casings manufacturer
48. Amgears, Inc.	Aircraft gear manufacturer
49. National Can Corporation	Tin can manufacturer
50. Chicago Electric Division of The Silex Company	Electrical household appliance manufacturer
51. Amalgamated Roofing Mills	Asphalt roofing manufacturer
52. Athey Products Corporation	Heavy earth moving equipment manufacturer
53. Bussey Products Company	Bird and animal equipment manufacturer
54. Boyle-Midway, Inc.	Household specialties manufacturer
55. Century Vitreous Enamel Company	Ceramic manufacturer

TABLE II (Continued)

NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY
AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES

Name of Company	Type of Industry .
56. Borg and Beck Division of Borg-Warner Corp.	Auto part manufacturer
57. Rapinwax Paper Company	Paper convertor manufacturer
58. Dewy and Almy Chemical Company Division W. R. Grace and Company	Chemical, rubber and plastic product manufacturer
59. Crescent Engineering Company	Electrical contractor
60. Emulsified Asphalt Inc.	Asphalt manufacturer
61. Met-L-Wood Corporation	Laminated composite material manufacturer
62. Continental Can Company Inc. #46	Metal container manufacturer
63. Witco Chemical Company	Chemical manufacturer
64. H. P. Smith Paper Company	Paper convertor
65. McGraw Electric Company Clark Division	Gas and electric water heater manufacturer
66. H. Kohnstaum Company, Inc.	Chemical manufacturer
67. Ohmlac Paint and Refining Company	Refiner
68. Whitaker Manufacturing Company	Agricultural cutting parts manufacturing
69. Holland Furnace Company	Furnace fittings manufacturer

TABLE II (Continued)

NAMES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY
AND TYPES OF INDUSTRIES

Name of Company	Type of Industry
70. Jensen Manufacturing Company	Radio and television component manufacturer
71. Cripps Engineering and Tool Company, Inc.	Tool and die and metal work
72. Kellogg Switchboard and Supply Company	Communications equipment manufacturer
73. Hankins Container Company Brunt Division	Corrugated paper box manufacturer
74. Interchemical Corporation Finishes Division	Paint, varnish and lacquer manufacturer
75. Universal Castings Corporation	Foundry
76. Sun Chemical Corporation	Commercial printing ink, varnishes and compounds manufacturer
77. The Waters Company	Folding paper box manufacturer
78. Crooks Terminal Warehouses, Inc.	Public merchandise warehouse
79. Inland Glass Works Division of Club Aluminum Products Company	Glass manufacturer
80. Lamsen and Sessions	Nut and bolt manufacturer
81. Chicago Steel Tank Company Division U. S. Industries	Steel plate fabricator

CHAPTER II

SHORTER HOUR MOVEMENT

Sun-up to Sun-down

One century ago it was considered normal for an employee to work twelve hours a day, six days a week. As well as being a virtue to work from morning until night, the long hours worked were considered natural within our earlier agricultural society. One's health was being sacrificed to work, and leisure time was considered the devil's opportunity to do his worst. The gradual reduction of hours of work from the old rule of sun-up to sun-down to the present eight-hour day and forty-hour week has been an important factor in our way of living.

First Attempts

Early attempts to shorten the length of the work day were met with unbelievable opposition and were stronger than any modern efforts to gain an eight hour day. If the farmer, shopkeeper or housewife had to work long hours public sentiment could appreciate no reason why an employer should not require his wage earners to work just as long.⁶

⁶John Rodgers Commons, History Of Labour In The United States, (New York, 1935), III, 174.

Arguments for shortening the work day in the United States at first were based on the grounds that children should have more opportunity for education and that adult workers should have more leisure in order that they might exercise more intelligently their rights as citizens.⁷

Reductions

The reduction of the number of hours worked per day in the United States appears to be the result of many factors. The workers themselves exerted collective action to help reduce the long work day and the voluntary action of some employers helped to snowball a trend toward lesser hours. Also legislation by the states and the Federal Government set legal restrictions on the hours worked. Then there were certain changing conditions which helped to affect a shorter week such as periods of business prosperity, continual machinery improvement, more efficient management, and a changing attitude toward leisure time.

⁷Ibid., p. 384.

Twelve Hour Day

The first recorded resolution on the length of the work-day was that of the Philadelphia carpenters. In 1791, they pressed for a workday extending from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening in place of a day lasting from sun-up to sun-down.⁹ Many other craftsmen tried to bring about shorter hours and among early organizations that tried were The Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers, Journeymen Cabinet Makers, and The New York Typographical Society. These early attempts were met by bitter opposition from employers and were generally unsuccessful especially whenever a depression occurred as it did in 1819.

As prosperity returned after 1822 trade organizations became active again. In 1822 the Philadelphia mill-wrights and machinists tried to have the work day begin at six in the morning and end at six in the evening with an hour off for breakfast and one for dinner.¹⁰ The Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations was one of the early powerful organizations which tried also to obtain shorter hours.

⁹Harry A. Millis and Royal E. Montgomery, Labor's Progress And Some Basic Labor Problems (New York, 1938), p. 465.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 465

Ten Hour Day

The movement for shorter hours continued to grow with each new year and within every new labor organization. It spread to various parts of the country and in many instances was successful. Soon the ten hour day had widely replaced, for artisans and mechanics, the former sun-up to sun-set.¹¹ In the factories established for the New England textile industry, and in many other manufacturing industries, the work day long remained twelve hours and more and in some trades the gains of the 1830's were lost.¹² But a very real victory had been won for the workers by their concerted stand in the strikes in Philadelphia and other cities. Moreover the Federal Government was soon induced to establish a ten-hour day for all public works. Congress had refused to take notice of the frequent requests addressed to it on the subject, but when striking shipwrights directly appealed to President Jackson in 1836, the system was installed at the Philadelphia navy yard. Four years later, Van Buren directly admitted his debt to the workingmen for their political support by an executive order which established ten hours as the work day on all government projects.

¹¹Ibid., p. 467

¹²Ibid., p. 467

The Building Trades unions were the most aggressive in their drive for the ten hour day; most of industrial labor lagged behind. A decrease in hours did not really begin until approximately the middle of the 1850's as can be seen in Table I. However, the ten hour day was well established by 1890 in the majority of occupations and industries with the exception of the cotton textile factories, the sawmills, the iron and steel plants, and the railroads.¹³

Eight Hour Day

The movement for an eight hour day did not have a real impetus until unions began to grow steadily after the turn of the century. During World War I unions had become very strong and because of a heavy demand for labor, the eight hour day was obtained by many unions. Not only were the labor organizations growing but they had the support of President Wilson. Because of the slight recession in 1921, labor lost some of its gained ground, and was deterred from striking for improvements in working conditions. In 1923 the steel industry finally abandoned the twelve hour day and the seven day week or thirteen-out-of-fourteen-day system.¹⁴

¹³Ibid., p. 467

¹⁴Ibid., p. 475

During the 1920's there was little other progress toward shorter hours.

Some of the real progress of that decade was the gaining of the Saturday half holiday. The spread of a five-and-one-half-day week during the twenties was fairly general, but, as had been true in the past, the building trades were somewhat ahead of other groups and were beginning to obtain basic five day weeks.¹⁵

During the 1929 depression, and the years closely following, the reduction in hours worked were the result of bad economic conditions and cannot be considered as any gain for labor.

Prior to 1933, federal laws regulating hours of work were applicable only to (1) employees of the government itself, (2) work performed for the government by private contractors, and (3) private employment in special occupations and industries. The National Industrial Recovery Act was passed in 1933 and provided that each industry should establish specific codes concerning wages, hours and conditions of labor. Many of the codes established included an eight hour day and a forty or forty four hour week as a maximum. The act was soon declared unconstitutional and many of the labor standards fell with the codes.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 475

The Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act of 1936 established the forty hour week and minimum wages for all employees of contractors making supplies for the government. Since this was so limited in the number of workers covered a broader application for improving working conditions was urged.

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 provided for a reduction of the hours worked. The hours provision of the Act was gradually imposed during a two year transition period. Effective October 24, 1938, a forty-four hour maximum work-week was prescribed. This was reduced to forty two hours in October, 1939, and forty hours in October, 1940. Time worked above the maximum was to be paid at time and one half the regular rate of pay. Other provisions of the Act established a minimum wage and other standards for working conditions. Amendments to the act were made in 1949 but did not change the rules involving hours of work.

Table III indicates the short term fluctuations in hours of work which have occurred in recent decades for manufacturing industries.

TABLE III
AVERAGE HOURS OF PRODUCTION WORKERS IN
MANUFACTURING, 1923-1954⁸

Year	Average weekly hours	Year	Average weekly hours
1923	45.6	1939	37.7
1924	43.7	1940	38.1
1925	44.5	1941	40.6
1926	45.0	1942	42.9
1927	45.0	1943	44.9
1928	44.4	1944	45.2
1929	44.2	1945	43.4
1930	42.1	1946	40.4
1931	40.5	1947	40.3
1932	38.3	1948	40.1
1933	38.1	1949	39.2
1934	34.6	1950	40.5
1935	36.6	1951	40.7
1936	39.2	1952	40.7
1937	38.6	1953	40.5
1938	35.6	1954	39.7

⁸William Goldner, Hours Of Work, ed., Institute of Industrial Relations University of California, (California, 1952), p. 8. (Author used Bureau of Labor Statistics source)

CHAPTER III

HOW ABOUT MANAGEMENT?

Shop Employees Hours of Work

The majority of questions asked within the questionnaire that was sent to the companies within the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago were intended to obtain managements views concerning any expectation of a reduction in the number of hours worked per week.

TABLE IV
SCHEDULED HOURS OF SHOP EMPLOYEES
OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING
IN SURVEY

Hours Scheduled	Number of Companies (81)
37½	2
40	70
42	1
44	2
46	1
48	1
50	1
No answer given	3

Table IV, shown on previous page, indicates that at the present time the shop employees of the majority of the companies in this District are scheduled to work a forty hour work week.

Office Employees

Table V, shown below, indicates that at the present time the office employees of the majority of the companies in this District are scheduled to work a forty hour work week. It is interesting to note that twenty one companies have less than a forty hour work week scheduled for its office employees.

TABLE V

SCHEDULED HOURS OF OFFICE EMPLOYEES OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Hours scheduled	Number of Companies (81)
35	3
37½	14
38¾	3
39	1
40	53
44	1
45	1
46½	1
48	1
No answer given	3

Shortening the Work Week

A question asked in the survey was, "Has the management of your company ever considered shortening the existing regular work week for reasons other than slack business?". Six companies did not answer the question, seventy three answered no, and two answered yes.

One company answering yes is currently scheduled to work forty four hours a week. The management of this company has been thinking of cutting its scheduled work week by eight hours and thus having a thirty six hour week. The company indicated this is their own idea, not a result of any union pressure.

The other company answering yes has shortened the working hours of management employees from forty four to forty hours.

Twenty nine of the eighty one companies participating in the survey indicated that although their unions have not brought forth the idea of a shorter work week the managements of these companies are expecting such a request to be made.

There were six companies who believed that the same amount of work being done now could be accomplished in a shorter work week. One company is working a forty four hour week and said a four hour reduction in the work week should give the same production. The other five companies are working a forty hour week and four of the five said a five hour

reduction in the work week should still give the same production and one of the five said a two and one-half hour reduction in the work week should give the same production.

Two companies have indicated that their unions have actively pursued a shorter work week.

One company became unionized in 1954 and consequently had a reduction of seven and one-half hours, from forty seven and one-half hours to forty hours. The other company is currently working a scheduled forty hour week. Their union has been asking for a two and one-half hour reduction or a thirty seven and one-half hour week. The request has been made within the last two years.

Five other companies indicated that a shorter work week might possibly be a point for negotiation. Only one union has given a company any reasons for possibly wanting a shorter work week. The reason given was that the workers desired a shorter work week and that there is a trend in the industry for a shorter work week.

Thirty Five Hour Week

In reply to the question, "Do you think the union will ever ask for a thirty five hour week?", eleven companies answered no, twenty two companies answered yes, seven companies registered a question mark (?) on the answer line, twenty eight companies did not answer the question, seven answered "possibly"

three companies answered "don't know", one answered "if any", one answered "unknown", and one answered "anything can be expected in union demands". Table VI portrays these answers.

TABLE VI

DEMAND FOR THIRTY FIVE HOUR WORK WEEK, AS SEEN
BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Answers given by Companies	Number of Companies (81)
No	11
Yes	22
?	7
No answer	28
Possibly	7
Don't know	3
If any	1
Unknown	1
Anything can be expected in union demands	1

Four Day--Eight Hour Day--Thirty Two Hour Week

Question number seventeen of the survey questionnaire asked: "Do you think the union will ever ask for a four day--eight hour day--thirty two hour week?". In reply fifteen companies answered no, twenty companies answered yes, five companies registered a question mark (?), thirty companies did

not answer the question, eight companies answered "possible", one company answered "unknown", and two companies answered "don't know". Table VII portrays these answers.

TABLE VII

PROPOSALS FOR FOUR-DAY, EIGHT-HOUR DAY, THIRTY-TWO-HOUR WORK
WEEK AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Answers given by Companies	Number of Companies (81)
No	15
Yes	20
?	5
No answer	30
Possibly	8
Don't know	2
Unknown	1

Four Day--Nine Hour Day--Thirty Six Hour Week

Question number eighteen of the survey questionnaire asked: "Do you think the union will ever ask for a four day--nine hour day--thirty six hour week?". In reply thirty three companies answered no, six companies answered yes, four companies registered a question mark (?), thirty three companies did not answer the question, four companies answered "possible", and one company answered "don't know". One of the companies answering "no", explained that his answer was such "since more

than an eight hour day would be involved". Table VIII portrays these answers.

TABLE VIII

REQUESTS FOR FOUR DAY, NINE-HOUR DAY, THIRTY-SIX-HOUR WORK WEEK AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Answers given by Companies	Number of Companies (81)
No	33
Yes	6
?	4
No answer	33
Possibly	4
Don't know	1

Six Day--Six Hour Day--Thirty Six Hour Week

Question number nineteen of the survey questionnaire asked: "Do you think the union will ever ask for a six day--six hour day--thirty six hour week?". In reply thirty eight companies answered no, three companies answered yes, five companies registered a question mark (?), thirty three companies did not answer the question, one company answered "possibly", and one company answered "don't know". One of the companies answering no explained that his answer was such "since more than a five day week would be involved". Table

IX portrays these answers.

TABLE IX

PROPOSALS FOR SIX DAY, SIX-HOUR-DAY, THIRTY-SIX-HOUR WORK
WEEK AS SEEN BY COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Answers given by Companies	Number of Companies (81)
No	38
Yes	3
?	5
No answer	33
Possibly	1
Don't know	1

Other Combinations

Question number twenty of the survey asked: "What other combinations of days and hours do you think may be asked for?".

These answers were given in reply:

6 companies registered a questionmark (?)

56 companies did not answer the question

5 companies answered 5 days-7 hour day-35 hour week

4 companies answered 5 days-6 hour day-30 hour week

1 company answered 5 days-7½ hour day-37½ hour week

1 company answered 5 days-7 hour day or 5 days-6 hour day

2 companies answered "don't know"

1 company answered, "all of above have been talked about and labors objective will be shorter work week next year"

1 company answered "indeterminate"

1 company answered "the nature of our industry and our business in particular does not make this question a problem."

1 company answered "believe possible combinations are mentioned above"

1 company answered "not enough experience to judge"

1 company answered "none"

Expected Time of Decreased Hours

Question number twenty one of the survey questionnaire asked: "Do you think that if our country's productivity continues to increase with the use of automation, that the work week will decrease by 1960? 1970? 1980?". The answers given to this question can be seen in Table X. The company numbers have no correlation to the list of companies shown in Table II. The answers given indicate that the majority of the companies expect a decrease in working hours by 1970. Twenty two companies expect a decrease by 1960, forty three companies expect a decrease by 1970, and sixteen companies believe that the decreased work week will not come until 1980.

TABLE X

TIME OF EXPECTED DECREASE IN WORKING HOURS AS REPORTED BY
COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

	1960	1970	1980
1.	No	--	--
2.	--	Yes	
3.	No	Yes	--
4.	No	Yes	Yes
5.	No	Yes	--
6.	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.	--	Possibly 35 hour week	--
8.	--	X	--
9.	--	--	--
10.	--	Yes	--
11.	Yes	--	--
12.	No opinions		
13.	Not anticipated		
14.	Yes	--	--
15.	Yes	--	--
16.	Automation will not change things any more than technocracy did		
17.	Possibly 5 days 7 hours		
18.	32 hours maybe sooner		

TABLE X (Continued)

TIME OF EXPECTED DECREASE IN WORKING HOURS AS REPORTED BY
COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

	1960	1970	1980
19.	Yes	--	--
20.	No	Possibly	Yes
21.	--	--	--
22.	--	X	--
23.	Seems entirely likely		
24.	No	Yes	Yes
25.	No	Yes	Yes
26.	Possibly	Yes	
27.	No (Demand for products and population increase will prevent this. It has been estimated our population will be nearing 200 million by 1975)		
28.	No	Yes	--
29.	--	--	--
30.	Doubtful	Probable	--
31.	--	--	--
32.	--	X	--
33.	No	Probably	Yes
34.	Conjecture		
35.	--	--	--

TABLE X (Continued)

TIME OF EXPECTED DECREASE IN WORKING HOURS AS REPORTED BY
COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

	1960	1970	1980
36.	--	Yes	--
37.	Partially	More than half	Entirely
38.	40 hours possible	35-32 hours	too far to speculate
39.	--	--	--
40.	--	Possibly	--
41.	Difficult to make a prediction		
42.	--	Probably	Yes
43.	Don't know		
44.	Would hardly effect our work week		
45.	Perhaps in some cases	Yes	
46.	No	Yes	Yes
47.	Yes (1. automation 2. added longevity of older workers 3. new entrants into the labor market especially the 1960-70 period)	Yes	Yes
48.	No	Yes	
49.	No	Possibly	Possibly
50.	Don't know		
51.	Yes	Yes	Yes
52.	--	Yes	--

TABLE X (Continued)

TIME OF EXPECTED DECREASE IN WORKING HOURS AS REPORTED BY
COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

	1960	1970	1980
53.	Yes	--	--
54.	--	Yes	--
55.	Yes	--	--
56.	--	Yes	--
57.	Yes	--	--
58.	Yes	--	--
59.	No	No	No
60.	Yes	--	--
61.	Yes	--	--
62.	--	Yes	--
63.	--	Yes	--
64.	Yes	Yes	Yes
65.	No	Yes	--
66.	--	--	--
67.	No	?	?
68.	--	--	--
69.	--	Possibility	--
70.	--	X	--
71.	No	Yes	
72.	Yes	--	



TABLE X (Continued)

TIME OF EXPECTED DECREASE IN WORKING HOURS AS REPORTED BY
COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

	1960	1970	1980
73.	No	Yes	Yes
74.	--	--	--
75.	Yes	--	--
76.	No	Yes	--
77.	Yes	Further decrease	--
78.	--	--	--
79.	No	Yes	Yes
80.	--	Yes	--
81.	--	--	--

Personal Comments

Question number twenty two of the survey questionnaire asked: "Any personal comments concerning this question?".

An analysis of the twenty seven comments would point to some real reasons for the expectation of a shorter work week, e. g. normal social advancement, an increased population by the middle of the sixties, and increasing automation. One of the comments indicates a shorter work week proposal by unions will be a stick used actually for obtaining higher increases per hour. The draw back comments to less than forty hours per

week were the overtime pay factor, stability of employment and production capacity. The majority of the comments indicated that a shorter work week will become a reality.

The replies were as follows:

1. "Our industry has not had much experience with requests for the reduced work week in any of our classifications and therefore our comments on the subject would be merely conjectual."
2. "Reduction of work week demand will be used by union to bargain higher increases per hour."
3. "A practical view of our foreseeable future indicates full time operation on present satisfactory basis with normal growth of fifteen per cent annually obtainable through mechanical improvements with about present labor force."
4. "I didn't bother to answer your first request since, as you can see, we have no union and can not help you with our answers."
5. "The work week will decrease as years pass--not because of automation but for the same reasons it has changed in the last fifty years. It is the same trend that brought the automatic washer etc. into the home. Just a healthy social advance."
6. "Our industry being a service business and making nothing for stock is in no position to do other than meet the demands of our customers on a day to day basis."
7. "Trying to out guess the union in what and why it will ask for anything is almost impossible. My answers are based on continuing trends."
8. "The idea of a shorter work week with the same or better pay is attractive to the majority of people and they will endorse it. However production capacity will determine to some extent at least the length of work week. Believe a choice should be allowed for those desiring a full work week with commensurate earnings."

9. "The increase in birth rate in the early forties will hit the labor market in the middle sixties which could present a bad labor problem to which shorter hours may be the solution."
10. "Shorter work week is an eventual certainty. Number of days and hours will likely be established industry wide rather than locally."
11. "I think the forty hour week is acceptable to the worker and overtime is still very important. The Unions have found more profitable fields in fringes and rate increases and with the possibility of additional finds in automation that the union will return to their demands of a shorter work week for increase take home pay."
12. "Industries that manufacture for inventory will have best possible chances to reduce work week in foreseeable future. Service type business such as ours must depend on customer granting long delivery date before short work week can be realized."
13. "The answer to questions sixteen through twenty one can best be answered by the union."
14. "Not too much automation connected with our type of operation. Merchandise sold in all our stores six days a week. Therefore forty hours a week is sufficient and necessary to fill orders on a five day delivery schedule."
15. "Since we do not bargain with a union, quite a few of the foregoing are not applicable to our situation."
16. "A shorter work week probably on a four day basis will likely become a fact at some time in the future. When this will occur is difficult to estimate in view of the many factors which are involved."
17. "By 1960 dependent upon employment levels and stability of contractual employment."
18. "I believe that a period of relatively heavy unemployment will bring this question to the front and that industry, government and labor will cooperate in its solution, possibly with a selective application of the principle by industry and occupation."

19. "Our production is governed by heat cycles which cannot be varied--therefore shorter hours would mean less production. To maintain production more help would be required."
20. "We operate around the clock, three shifts of eight hours each and pay overtime of one-half on each shift as union hours or seven and one-half hours per shift, therefore a six hour shift with four shifts would make twenty four hours."
21. "The trend is to a shorter week. Some now have a thirty seven and one-half hour week but work forty and pay time and one-half for the last two and one-half hours."
22. "Our shop men seem to want to work over the forty hours for that extra time and one-half pay."
23. "The more the automation the less the hours and the more the shifts used--thereby spreading employment to produce more for the increasing public to buy and consume in their leisure hours."
24. "I heard W. Reuther say he is against a shorter work week until everyone has an adequate income."
25. "It seems to me that the request for a shorter work week is essentially based on disproved economic theories and unrealistic ideas of human needs to perfect itself. An expanding economy should absorb all employables and increased productivity should improve the general standard of living. The only justification for a shorter work week would be a change in our existence where greater time is required by the wage earner to care for his home than work and travel time permit."
26. "As we are a branch operation we have little information in this field but believe our union will follow pattern set in larger industries or operations."
27. "Believe four day--eight hour day--thirty two hour week would be most feasible. People don't want to work nine hours per day nor do they want to come to work six days at six hours."

CHAPTER IV

HOW ABOUT UNIONS?

Reasons For Decreased Hours

As can be seen from some of the results of the survey questionnaire which was answered by eighty one companies, the management of many of these companies are apprehensive of a shorter work week. Very few unions have been actively engaged in pursuing a shorter work week but management is certainly expecting such a demand to be made in the future. Some of the reasons unions may use for requesting a shorter work week may concern leisure time, health, increased demand for goods and services, and reduction of unemployment.

Leisure Time

Unions in the past have fought for a shorter work week for many reasons and one was, and probably will be in the future, to give employees more leisure time. It is quite possible that the idea of leisure time for employees could have seemed a good idea to some employers in order to obtain a higher rate of efficiency from their employees by decreasing the work week from six or five and one-half days to a five day week. It is quite probable that some employers were aware of the nervous strain and tedious pace their employees

were keeping and this could have prompted some employers to reduce their work weeks in order to obtain a higher degree of efficiency rather than purely humanitarian reasons. Early union motives for wanting workers to have more leisure time was to promote good citizenship. With additional time for leisure the employee could educate himself and possibly participate in politics and be able to decide what is good for public policies.

Health

Another reason unions have used for arguing the shorter work week is the protection of the workers health. It is true that long working hours can lead to conditions harmful to the health of individuals. Most states now have health and safety codes to protect the worker from dangerously long working hours. Some early employers probably realized this condition and also anticipated that if the health and vigor of their employees was hampered by long working hours the productivity of their employees was being hampered. This realization may have been a prompter for some employers to allow shorter work weeks.

Increased Demand

Another argument by unions for a shorter work week is that increased leisure time would increase the demand for goods and services. This argument has certainly proved true. The income of workers has remained the same, or has been increased, even though the work week decreased.

Unemployment

Unions are always fearful of unemployment and strive to increase employment. One of the ways they see to increase employment is to shorten hours and thereby create more jobs and expand the total number of workers employed.

Probably one of the best arguments the unions could use for a reduction in the work week in this day of full employment, high wages, and a slight tapering in the cost of living, is the fear of unemployment from the increasing use of automation. With the introduction of giant machines to take over not just a single job but the whole assembly line, less and less human labor would be needed for a given amount of production. Any industry resorting to automation may be forced to lay off some individuals. This does not necessarily mean wide spread unemployment, since new employers would be created who would have to hire employees to manufacture automatic machinery.

AFL Indicator

There are definite indications that unions are today thinking about a shorter work week. A thirty hour work week was the goal of a resolution adopted by the American Federation of Labor at its Seventy-Third Annual Convention in Los Angeles before the merger of the AFL and the CIO. The AFL called on the 1954 Congress to enact a thirty five hour week within two

years as the first step in the plan.¹⁸

Fewer Hours

Certainly a shorter work week doesn't mean that all those working under it put in fewer hours. A thirty-five hour job leaves people free to take other jobs, full time or part time. In Akron, where 35,000 rubber workers have a thirty-six hour week, ten per cent have two full time jobs, and thirty per cent have a second part time job.¹⁹

Wages

If shorter working hours are to be a realization today a good question would be where is the money to come from to pay workers their present wages while working less hours? The answer some unions have given is from increased productivity. Output per man hour has increased two or three per cent each year for more than half a century, and increased mechanization means that the trend will continue.²⁰

¹⁸American Management Association, "AFL Asks Shorter Workweek", Labor Law Journal, V (November 1954), 790-791.

¹⁹Senser, Robert, "Thirty Hour Week May Be Next Goal Of Labor", Work, XII (July 1954), 8.

²⁰Ibid., p. 1

Increased productivity with lower costs and continued rapid consumption of manufactured goods is certainly a good enough argument for allowing a reduction in the work week if these steps actually were to occur. It is very possible though that shorter hours could be the cause of increased per unit costs of production. If per unit costs of production increased with shortened hours consumption of manufactured goods could decrease because of higher prices.

Unions

Some of the companies participating in the survey questionnaire did not have any union but the majority or fifty one companies were unionized. Within these fifty one companies there were twenty four different unions as can be seen in Table XI.

TABLE XI
UNIONS NEGOTIATING WITH COMPANIES
PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Name of Union	Companies Covered (51)
Inter national Association of Machinists	6
International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers.	1
International Molders and Foundry Workers Union of North America	2
United Mine Workers of America	1

TABLE XI (Continued)
UNIONS NEGOTIATING WITH COMPANIES
PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Name of Union	Companies Covered (51)
United Textile Workers of America	2
International Union of United Automobile Workers of America	3
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers of America	6
United Steelworkers of America	6
International Union of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers	5
International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers	1
International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers	1
United Paperworkers of America	2
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	4
American Federation of Grain Millers	1
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers of America	1
Independent Union of Plant Protection Employees in the Electrical and Machine Industry	1
District 50, United Mine Workers of America	1
Independent Union of Petroleum Workers	1

TABLE XI (Continued)

UNIONS NEGOTIATING WITH COMPANIES
PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Name of Union	Companies Covered (51)
United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America	1
Amalgamated Lithographers of America	1
International Association of Sheet Metal Workers	1
United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America	1
Pattern Makers League of North America	1
American Flint Glass Workers' Union	1

Within recent months there have been many articles in newspapers and periodicals pertaining to a possible reduction in the number of hours worked per week and the possibility of forthcoming requests for shorter working hours is in the minds of many management men. The Industrial Relations Vice President of the Ford Motor Company, John Bugas, recently told a meeting of the American Management Association in Chicago that real effort will be made by unions to shorten the work week to less than forty hours by 1958. Mr. Bugas indicated that Ford would fight such a demand from the auto makers' union. He declared the United States is "still a long, long way from that time when, if ever, technological progress and the resultant

productivity will be so great that we have to worry seriously about dividing up the available working hours."²¹

While Mr. Bugas was expressing his stand against a shorter work week, a drive was in progress within aircraft plants for a thirty-five hour week. The International Association of Machinists dropped the demand during the course of negotiations with Douglas and Lockheed in the Los Angeles area. Union sources say plenty of overtime (many workers make \$120 or more a week) overcame union resistance to the present forty hour week.²²

Walter P. Reuther, one of the nations leading unionist, stated "the pace of technological advance promises us that it will not be long before we can satisfy our needs with a shorter week that will provide Americans with more time for the cultural, educational, and recreational activities that make for a fuller, richer life."²³

From the few examples of union public proposals and the answers given by management people to the questionnaire concerning a shorter work week, it is quite evident that both sides are thinking of a shorter work week.

²¹Wall Street Journal, February 16, 1956, p. 1.

²²Wall Street Journal, February 23, 1956, p. 1.

²³Reuther, Walter P., "What Labor Wants Next", The American Magazine, CIXI (January 1956), 107.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters we have seen the struggle over the years on the part of organized labor to secure shorter hours for its members. From the very inception of early labor organizations there has been some type of program for a shorter work week. It was not, however, until the American Federation of Labor secured status in the labor movement that any degree of success was reached in securing shorter hours.

Labor has been constantly pressing for shorter hours with the tremendous growth of technological improvements. The accelerating tempo of progress in production has probably made labor conscious of the hours problem today. Actually there are no statistics available on the number of working hours which might indicate what hours are most productive of profits. It might be the forty hour week, the thirty hour week and it might be even less. There may someday be scientific data on this point which would be a wonderful approach to a satisfactory solution of the problem.

Employers have vigorously opposed the reduction of hours for fear of decreased profits. They believed that reducing hours meant a decreased output per worker and their increasing cost. Since there is no available means of determining what hours are most productive of profits, employers have generally held fast to existing standards and in some instances have lengthened the hours especially during periods of prosperity. Employers have generally held that the increased burden of cost would rest on the consumer and the worker would necessarily suffer a decrease in real wages.

Unions on the other hand have put forth arguments of their own. They have fostered the idea that employees need more leisure and that long hours of work generally fostered unemployment. Labor has argued that employees need more leisure to become better citizens; for better health, to remove the nervous strain of mechanization of industry, and finally, for self-improvement. Labor has always feared unemployment. Shorter hours, labor has held, would spread the work among a larger number, and thereby lessen the number of unemployed. Today, organized labor argues that technological unemployment can be solved only by a decrease in hours. Employers argue that machinery increases productivity, decreases price and therefore creates a demand for goods which will gradually absorb the unemployed.

An analysis of the answers given by management of the eighty one companies participating in the survey questionnaire within the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago indicates that seventy two of the companies have their shop employees scheduled to work forty or less than forty hours per week. Only two of these companies have their shop employees on a scheduled thirty seven and one-half hour work week and seventy companies are scheduled to work a forty hour week.

An analysis of the answers given by management of the eighty one companies participating in the survey questionnaire indicates that seventy four of the companies have their office employees scheduled to work forty or less than forty hours per week. Twenty one of these companies have their office employees scheduled to work less than a forty hour week.

The majority, or seventy three, of the companies participating in the survey have definitely not considered shortening their existing scheduled work weeks, although twenty nine of the companies that have unions are expecting their unions to bring up the question of a shorter work week. Two unions have actively pursued a shorter work week. A small group, six companies, believe that they could accomplish the same amount of work within a shorter work week.

With regard to what type of a shorter work week the unions might request, if they ever do, an analysis of the companies answers indicates that twenty two companies expect unions to ask for a thirty five hour week, twenty companies expect unions to ask for a four day--eight hour day--thirty two hour week, six companies expect unions to ask for a four day--nine hour day--thirty six hour week, three companies expect unions to ask for a six day--six hour day--thirty six hour week, four companies expect unions to ask for a five day--six hour day--thirty hour week, and one company expects unions to ask for a five day--seven and one-half hour day--thirty seven and one-half hour week. These answers are indicative that management of the majority of the companies participating in this survey expect unions to ask for a shorter work week.

Since the majority of the companies participating in the survey are expecting unions to ask for a shorter work week the next big question was, when will this occur. Twenty companies indicated that the work week might be decreased by 1960, forty three of the companies indicated a decrease by 1970, and sixteen companies believe that the decreased work week will not come until 1980.

The writer realizes that a further survey of the unions within the companies who participated in this survey would probably render a fuller picture of shortening the work week within the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago. Possibly some graduate student working in this area of Chicago will one day survey these unions to determine their plans for a shorter work week.

EXHIBIT 1.

CHICAGO STEEL TANK COMPANY
U. S. INDUSTRIES, INC.
6400 W. 66th Street
Chicago 38, Illinois

Dear Sir:

Would you please help me?

I am attending the Institute of Social and Industrial Relations at Loyola University, Chicago, and I am working to towards a Master's Degree in Industrial Relations.

In order to obtain the degree, I must take a certain number of required subjects, write a thesis on a subject that has not been explored in every respect and take an oral examination. At the present time, I am in the process of writing my thesis.

The thesis will cover the topic of shorter working hours in general, but more specifically the trend as it has or has not developed since 1950 within the Clearing Industrial District of Chicago.

In order to get the specific information that I will need, I am sending the enclosed questionnaire to each of the 109 commercial and industrial concerns in the district and asking them to please fill out same and return it to me by November 9, 1955.

The thesis will not relate answers as given by each company but will appear as a total in the narration and upon various charts and graphs within the paper.

If you desire a copy of the finished paper in order to know of the development, if any, within the Clearing District, I shall be happy to send you one.

Hoping that you will try to help me with this project, I am

Sincerely yours,

Robert Shust
Personnel Manager

P.S. If I can be of any assistance to you in the future, please feel free to call on me.

EXHIBIT 2.

"SURVEY ON CHANGING LENGTH OF WORK WEEK WITHIN
THE CLEARING INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT OF CHICAGO"

1. Name of Company _____
2. Industry _____
3. How many people do you employ? _____
4. Does your company have a union? _____
5. What Union? _____
6. What is the regular scheduled number of hours worked by your shop employees per week? _____
7. What is the regular scheduled number of hours worked by your office employees? _____
8. Has the management of your company ever considered shortening the existing regular work week for reasons other than slack business? _____
 - A. If yes, by how many hours _____
 - B. If yes, has this policy been put into effect since 1950? _____
9. Since 1950, has there been any movement for a shorter working week with the same pay? _____
10. If yes, how many hours less per week were indicated? _____
11. Has there been any indication that in the near future a shorter work week would be a point for negotiation? _____

12. Have there been any reasons put forth for wanting a shorter work week? _____
13. What were the reasons? _____

14. Does management believe that a shorter work week will be asked for by the union although it has never been brought forth as yet? _____
15. Does management believe that the same amount of work being done now could be accomplished in a shorter work week? _____
- A. If yes, how much shorter? _____
16. Do you think the union will ever ask for a thirty five hour week? _____
17. Do you think the union will ever ask for a four day--eight hour day--thirty two hour week? _____
18. Do you think the union will ever ask for a four day--nine hour day--thirty six hour week? _____
19. Do you think the union will ever ask for a six day--six hour day--thirty six hour week? _____
20. What other combination of days and hours do you think may be asked for? _____

21. Do you think that if our country's productivity continues to increase, especially with the use of automation, that the work week will decrease by 1960? _____
by 1970? _____
by 1980? _____

22. Any personal comments concerning this subject _____

Compiled by _____

Title _____

EXHIBIT 3

CHICAGO STEEL TANK COMPANY
U. S. INDUSTRIES, INC.
6400 W. 66th Street
Chicago 38, Illinois

November 22, 1955

Dear Sir:

The enclosed questionnaire was mailed to all of the companies in the Clearing Industrial District on October 28, 1955. A majority of completed copies have been received by myself, but I have not received your copy.

As stated in my original letter of explanation the answered questionnaires will be used anonymously in the writing of my Master's Thesis at Loyola University.

I sincerely hope you will answer the enclosed copy and return it to me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Shust
Personnel Manager

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