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Some Problems in the Postwar Labor Movement of Japan
——Especially with Reference to its Structure——

by Kanae Iida

The critical situation of the Japanese labor movement at present is most marked in its structure. This essay discusses the two questions centering around that phase of Japanese labor movement. (1) What is the weakness of Japanese labor movement, exerting a baneful influence in the last two decades since the end of war; (2) Why is it that it remained unrectified? And what is the best possible way, if any, to eradicate it?

In Section I of this work is indicated the fact that the "enterprise union" should be promptly reorganized into "industrial union" at the present moment when large scale combination, that is, a monopolistic consolidation of enterprises is going on as was the recently executed case combining the Yahata Iron Manufacturing Corporation with the Fuji Iron Manufacturing Corporation, but so far practically no preparation is made to effect such a reorganization, and that "enterprise unions" look like turning into "company servitor unions."

In Section II: "The Question Where to Mark Off Epochs in the Postwar Labor Movement of Japan, and the problem of their Corresponding Structures of Union" are considered some possible turning points in the labor movement of Japan during the period from 1945 to 1960. For example, the 2:1 Strike of 1947, the establishment of the General Council of Japanese Labor Unions in 1950 and Mitsui-Miike Dispute of 1960 could have been the opportunities where the structural problem of labor union might be seriously considered so as to reorganize some "enterprise unions" into "industrial unions".

In Section III: "The Importance of the Law-making Activity by Labor Union Movement" is indicated the nearly total disregard of legislation by workers in their union movement, as the greatest of all the weaknesses of Japanese labor union movement.

In conclusion, the author strongly calls the attention of the reader to the crisis of the enterprise union, that had played a revolutionary role right after World War II as the "shop steward committee", now degrading itself into a "company servitor union", and emphasizes the urgent need of reforming "trade union laws."

A Study of the Economic Tools of the New Economics

by Yoshitaka Fujita

Records of the United States economy since 1961 under the Kennedy-Johnson Administration have been historical in many aspects.

Even though the U.S. economy presently faces the serious dilemmas of balance of payments deficits and inflationary price behavior, it has achieved an unprecedented sustained expansion with relative price stability, if taken these seven year period as a whole.

According to the CEA'S Annual Report 1968, real GNP increased 41 percent, an average of 5.2 percent a year, during 1st quarter 1961—4th quarter 1967. Civilian employment increased by 9.4 million jobs, reducing unemployment rate from 6.8 percent in 1961 to 3.8 percent since 1966 on. On the other hand, the overall GNP price deflator rose 2.0 percent a year, CPI increased at an average yearly rate of 1.9 percent, and WPI rose at an annual rate of 0.8 percent during the above mentioned seven year period. This price stability is noticeable, when we look back the fact that the Eisenhower Administration's eight year period saw the annual rate of price level increase of 2.2 percent for the GNP deflator, 1.5 percent for CPI, and 1.2 percent for WPI, respectively, under the annual economic growth rate of only 2.5 percent.

It is the consensus that the innovation in ways of thinking, value judgment, measures and tools in economic policy have contributed much to the above performance of the U.S. economy since 1961. And the name of "new economics" is given to that innovation.

We might know the features of the new economics by the two representative "new economists" as well as influential advisers to the Government. Walter, W. Heller notes: "Economics has come of age in the 1960's. Two Presidents have recognized and drawn on modern economics as a source of national strength and Presidential power. Their willingness to use, for the first time, the full range of modern economic tools underlies the unbroken U.S. expansion since early 1961……". (Heller, New Dimensions of Political Economy, 1966, p. 1.) Also, he says, "The distinguishing features of the 'new economics' is not that it is new but that it has newly pressed into the public service the lessons of modern economics—of Keynes and the Classics—to help make good this promise". (ibid., p. 59) Paul A. Samuelson sees the new economics as follows: "'The new economics' that people are currently talking about—and which connoisseurs know is not all that new or different—represents in a sense a vindication of the macroeconomics approach my generation has been trying to develop and teach, 'Nature imitates art'. The world is catching up at long last with the scholar's workshop." (Paul A. Samuelson, Economics An Introductory Analysis, the seventh edition, p. vi, 1967.)

As Heller as well as Samuelson say, the newness of the "new economics" does not lie in theory, but in measures and tools to seek four dimensional economic objectives of full employment, high growth, price stability, and balance of payments equilibrium.

The paper briefly takes up the representative economic measures of the new economics, such as fiscal dividends, full-employment surplus, monetary twist, and incentives to investment.

The main purpose of the paper is to follow the theory and problems of the wage-price guideposts policy. As I wrote on the theory of the guideposts in the preceding issue of this Magazine, I dealt with mostly the problems of the guideposts in this issue, which will involve some lessons for Japan in future.

Methodology and effectiveness of productivity measurement in national economy and private industry or collective bargaining unit, problems and influence on productivity of changes in product mix, operation rate, and problem of selection between hours worked and hours paid are dealt in detail.

There are not a few problems in applying the guidepost principles to actual price and wage determination, but it seems true that it served for the shift down or betterment of Phillips curve, as George L. Perry analyzes, (George L. Perry, Unemployment, Money Wage Rates, and Inflation, 1966, p. 122–123.)