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Arthur F.P. Wassenberg

Social Change and "Neo"-Corporatism: Notes on the Growing Contradictions between Logistics (Unterbau) and Logics (Überbau)

1. The ambiguity between the two "grand" concepts may be either of a theoretical or of an empirical nature. In the theoretical sense "social change and "neo"-corporatism may suffer from conceptual underdevelopment and/or operational undermeasurement: it will not be easy then to spell out the theoretical connections. On the other hand, the empirical "traces" of something like "neo"corporatism may appear to have such a gradually or incrementalistically operating "face" that it is not a simple affair to trace convincingly its macro impact, i.e. to trace the changing properties of societal decision making associated with the revival of some (modern) form of corporatism. Then, moreover, remains the puzzle which emergent properties are considered "reasonably" structural enough to be honoured with the qualification "real" social change.

Several contradictions or countervailing tendencies may be observed in the articulation of interests that underlie the authoritative allocation of societal values in modern western society. One of the more conspicuous trends - to be worked out further - seems to be the relative decline of the "authoritative" component in the allocation of societal values. Instead, a relative (re-?)emergence of a strong pragmatic-improvisatory component seems on its way ahead. But - as we hope to make clear - the change to observe processes of decline-and-emergence depends on the unit of analysis one chooses, i.e. on the level of organizational-institutional aggregation one takes into account.

Admitting for several levels of aggregation opens the possibility of observing conflicting logics of interest articulation. We prefer a theoretical framework in which this possibility is not ruled out a priori, i.e. a framework as sensitive as possible for detecting and understanding the lack or non-selfevidence of congruence between the logics of interest representation as they "hold" on different levels of interest-related decision making and conflict management. With the logics of interest representation we mean the principles of subjective rationality and legitimacy that give meaning and structure to the strategies of conflict for the protagonists involved in the

societal allocation game. As we will see below, the subjective principles of rationality and legitimacy should be distinguished clearly from the objective logistics based on interorganizational resource-dependence.

In our view, it makes only sense to speculate about such a pretentious affair like "social change" after having made some preparatory exercises in the study of sub-societal contradictions on different levels of aggregation.

The latter refers to two kinds of contradiction. Different levels of organizational-institutional aggregation allow - not as a temporary or random phenomenon - for, first, contradictions among the level-specific symbolic logics of interest articulation and, secondly: for persistent, and we think growing contradictions between the material logistics of resource interdependence (the objective Unterbau) on the one hand and the symbolic logics of interest representation (the subjective Uberbau) on the other hand.

Herewith we have paraphrased the essential structure of this essay. First, a relative decline of the authoritative component and the rise of a pragmatic-improvisatory component may be observed in the allocation of social values. Secondly and related to the first point: contradictions between the symbolic logics of interest representation on different levels of aggregation become institutionalized. Third, - and following from our second point - contradictions between the material logistics of resource interdependence (Unterbau) vis à vis the symbolic logics of interest representation (Uberbau) will be one of the more intriguing consequences for the political-economic order as a whole. These consequences are serious enough to qualify them as social change of the existing order.

One, admittedly too rudimentary normative remark on a democratically inspired countermove, rounds off the essay.

2. Social change may be conceived of as a change in the structure of "authority" defining the parameters for the (re-)production and allocation of values in society. But even then it remains an open question whether this change in authority-structure will result in a changing value-structure. Logically there are symmetrical and assymetrical possibilities: either power and value structures change (or remain unchanged) in a mutually supportive way or changes occur in one dimension without necessary or sufficient changes in the other. Moreover, things are complicated by the possibility of time lags in the adaptation - if at all - between the cultural dimension and the

dimension of the division of effective power and authority.

However, as proposed before, a more relevant distinction seems to us the one that differentiates between different levels of aggregation of organized interests (e.g. the level of individual firms, industries or subsectors of the economy, and the economy as a whole) or between different policy sectors in society (e.g. the socio-economic arena versus the public health, education or abortion-legislation arena). It should be clear that as far and as long as different logics-of-action hold on different levels of aggregation or for different policy-arenas, it is not an easy task to formulate generalizations on the correlation between and the cumulative effects of changes in the cultural and power dimensions for society as a whole.

Due to a phenomenon that will be elaborated below as the "eclipse of accountability", and due to a certain institutionalization of the deliberate avoidance of accountability in the modern, democratic welfare state, something results that may be called mutual immunization or "balkanization" of societal decision-making related to the production and allocation of values. One may call this phenomenon horizontal balkanization as far as one has comparisons in mind between policy-sectors or "specialized" arenas, whereas relative immunization between different levels of policy making within one policy sector consequently have to be called vertical balkanization.

One caveat should be mentioned before proceeding on the topic of balkanization: we definitely do not pretend that balkanization is a "new" phenomenon; what we want to say is that balkanization should be considered a phenomenon becoming more visible and spectacular the more a complex and differentiated society becomes trapped in interorganizational Verflechtungen. Interorganizational linkages produce an impressive arsenal of negative and positive externalities that happened not to exist before. What lends a certain urgency to the study of interorganizational externalities, is the lack of correspondence between - at one side - the largely unplanned, "blind" proliferation of interorganizational linkages and - at the other side - the (accepted?, trained?) incapacity to take these linkage-induced externalities serious in overall decision-making. One may reformulate this as a cultural lag as far as the "subjective" rationalization and legitimation or: logics of the interorganizational game lag behind the "objective" logistics of resource interdependence between organized interests. The phenomenon of balkanization seems to lend support to the thesis that we have to do here - for society as a whole - with a trained or institutionalized incapacity, to translate logist-

ics into logics, i.e. a certain underdevelopment of managerial-political tools to match the organization of societal demands to the organization of commensurate supports.

3. We will mention, first, some of the underlying forces that tend to produce and to reinforce this gap, in the hope to be able to identify a blind spot in the "orthodoxy" around the Unterbau-Uberbau explanation of social change. As we substitute the concept of expectations, shared by interdependent actors in their mutual strategies of conflict (e.g. interest groups, bureaucracy, members of parliament) for the notion of shared values, the "idealist-ic" dichotomy of Unterbau and Uberbau can be replaced by the twin concept of structure-and-strategy. This twin concept takes as a point of departure the existence of a structure-of-opportunities, i.e. a parametric setting leading to strategies-of-actors from which values may be derived, eventually in a very loose sense, or for which values are used as ideological rationalization ex post rather than as a rational or ideological ex ante state-of-readiness. If the notion of a brittle negotiated order of converging and sharing expectations, rather than "conflict", "harmony" or "consensus" between interdependent actors appears to have heuristic and explanatory value, important consequences follow for the identification and assessment of neo-corporatist tendencies in some sectors and on some levels of policy aggregation in modern society. But we will return to this question later on.

We would like to say something first about the increasing mismatch between the "objective" logistics of interorganizational dependence versus the "subjective" rationality or logics of interorganizational decision-making. The epitheta subjective versus objective are used in Mancur Olson's sense (M. Olson - The Logic of Collective Action - Cambridge, London 1975), i.e. rationality as an attribute experienced and practised by individual but interdependent actors as against the rationality on a supra-actor, not necessarily consciously intended or coordinated level - a sort of network - rationality putting a set of objective behavioral constraints on the participants in that network.

4. We may summarize the section that follows in one adagium: the modern democratic welfare state is increasingly characterized by the coincidence of the aggregation of organized demands and a virtually steady disaggregation of organized supports. Disaggregation of supports can be seen as the combined

result of such heterogeneous processes as: the emancipation of the citizen; the proliferation of sectional interests; centrifugal tendencies triggered by the inertia of private and public bureaucracies not able to cope with an increasingly differentiated environment and prone to react to signs of loss of external as well as internal control and credibility by over-bureaucratization; growing opportunities for, and attractiveness of, free rider behavior in decentralized but interdependent systems; attitudinal changes such as what Erwin Scheuch (E.K. Scheuch - Wird die Bundesrepublik unregierbar? Köln 1976, p. 21) calls "Misstrauensvorschuss gegenüber abstrakten Instanzen", and a more instrumental or utilitarian attitude among the membership of all kinds of organizations, in a society leaving practically nothing outside its organizational grasp; and finally embarrassing loyalty-conflicts associated with incongruencies between micro, meso and macro representation of the "same" interest groups or the "same" values. The disaggregation that results from the combination of these forces may be called the functional fragmentation of societal supports.

Secondly, fragmentation of societal support leads to the following "paradox-of-participation": the more organizations become decentralized and divisionalized - be this either for democratic or for purely managerial reasons of efficiency - the more cumbersome becomes interorganizational decision-making caused by a decreasing "Kompromisfähigkeit" and shrinking managerial discretion of the (former) organizational elites or dominant coalitions within organizations, associations and so on. The paradox of participation - a paradox because it implies, in extremo, participation in non-decision-making brought about by interorganizational avoidance - combined with the above mentioned tendencies (like free rider behavior, low trust vis à vis abstract "authorities", utilitarian attitudes and cross-loyalties between micro, meso and macro forms of interest-representation) tend to reinforce the kind of institutional distance and separatism that we baptized before institutional "balkanization".

As suggested, the overall effect is disaggregation of support. In an admittedly perverse sense disaggregation-of-support may be seen as the consequence of a particular system property that Herbert Simon - in a rather optimistic mood - some time ago suggested (H.A. Simon - The Architecture of Complexity - General Systems Yearbook 10 (1965) 69-70) namely: the more tightly complex an organization, the closer it moves toward becoming a disaggregative system. Our interpretation, however, may be called a perverse

interpretation indeed of this phenomenon, because we would like to ask the reader's attention for a counter-intuitive consequence of Simon's therapy for the problems of too closely coupled social systems or organizations. In Simon's view, social systems are able to escape from the survival risks inherent to tight interdependence by deliberately designing, or by making use of, the existing "near-decomposability" of social systems. The survival risk is described as follows: if interdependence between component subsystems increases, the system becomes less decomposable; becoming less decomposable means that should one component fail, the whole system either collapses or becomes inoperative. Judged from our perspective of the participation-paradox, Simon's "solution" (namely: increasing or making optimal use of the near-decomposability of the system) contains a strong invitation for free rider behavior, i.e. an ideal breeding ground for the institutional balkanization of commitments and strategies, ultimately leading to non-decision-making. To make our point clear, let us consider what Simon understands by nearly decomposable systems:

- × In nearly-decomposable systems the short-run behavior of each component subsystem is approximately independent of the short-run behavior of every other component subsystem, whereas
- × in the long run the behavior of anyone component subsystem is dependent in only an aggregate way on the behavior of the other component subsystems.

It is exactly this configuration of short term independence or perhaps more precisely: the lack of accountability of interdependence (given a long time span of feedback) and the anonymity of aggregate interdependencies that is apt to lead to selfish, micro-rational behavior; and micro-rational behavior in turn may lead to "Olsonian" prisoners' dilemmas blocking the realization of a match between interorganizational or supra-actor logistics and logics. The underlying mechanism of the systemic disaggregation of supports results in a "trained" mismatch between logistics and logics. This mismatch is a cause and a consequence of institutional balkanization and non-decision-making.

On the other hand there are stimuli enough to reinforce a steady aggregation of demands put forward to centralized welfare state government. The only (in the malthusian sense) "positive" check on the procreation and aggregation of organized demands one may think of - given the increasing complexities of interorganizational Verflechtung - is the fact that in the modern welfare state the growth of legal equality seems to be inversely

related to the growth of legal certainty. Interorganizational complexity increases normative uncertainties. Complexity-induced uncertainty tends to produce, not to say: tends to rationalize and legitimize a gradual eclipse of accountability. And decreasing accountability reinforces selfish, low-trust and low respectability behavior vis à vis centralized authorities (of all kinds).

Summarizing the preceding, a truly ambiguous image emerges - ambiguous while it seems highly uncertain whether this generalized scepticism will "positively" check and discourage the aggregation of organized demands or not: independent organizations form complex combinations; the complex combinations start in turn to negotiate; the resulting, brittle, negotiated order is comprised of a collection of conglomerates, interconnected by a network of unclear commitments and ongoing negotiations. In the sense of Thomas Schelling (Th.C. Schelling - The Strategy of Conflict - London/Oxford/New York 1969) commitments and negotiations among and between the conglomerates can be seen as a specimen of "precarious partnership" or "incomplete antagonism". No unitary hierarchical relationships nor clear-cut principles of accountability or value-based rules of the interorganizational games are available. What merely seems available is a possibly converging set of shared strategical expectations interorganizationally, given the "objective" mutual resources dependence.

The fringe of free rider opportunities, given by short-term independence cum long term interdependence in an only aggregate form, can be profitably exploited in a satisficing mode. Given- in addition - the paradox-of-participation, predicting interorganizational stalemate or non-decision-making, government more frequently is called upon to serve as an arbiter. Partly by forced decentralization - in itself a consequence of the requirement to cope with an increasingly differentiated and participative task environment - partly by substantive involvement in "mixed market" policy affairs, government willy-nilly is enticed away from a position of neutral but abstract authority into the role of partisan and concrete participant in the emergent negotiated order. Shifts in role together with scepticism about the problem-solving capacity of central government tempt the legitimacy of government intervention while simultaneously public interventions increase in volume as well as in kind. But what counts is that the "authoritative" component in the production and allocation of societal values unmistakably wanes.

5. Now these observations are not at all new or strikingly original. Moreover, much of what is said before is highly speculative and clearly deserves more thorough analysis and specification than would be realistically feasible in the confines of this short essay. What nevertheless should at least be considered more closely - in explanatory theory as in political practice - is the embarrassing fuzziness of the role of "macro" ideas and ideology in changing modern society, i.e. the Unterbau-Uberbau discussion. Translating the Unterbau-Uberbau dichotomy into an analysis in terms of strategy-and-structure of interdependent "composite" actors (public authorities, interest groups, in short the "organizers" of demands and supports, i.e. the "rationalizers" of values and norms on different levels of aggregation) seems to make the Unterbau-Uberbau discussion certainly less heroic but perhaps more manageable, while more operational.

The debate on the (re-)emergence of corporatism may serve as an illustrative example of the complexities and possibilities involved. Let us focus the example more specifically on problems of socio-economic change versus policy making. Or even more narrowly: let us look at the dynamics of the power-and-rules-of-the-game setting of industrial policy making, considered from the perspective developed in the preceding sections.

We say change versus policy-making, because change is conceptualized as the "objective" transformation of the industrial structures of modern society, including the power structure implied by the structure of the economy, whereas policy-making refers to the strategies followed by subjectively rational but "objectively" interdependent actors. Adding that the actors themselves are composite actors introduces the problem of the complexities of internal decision-making, - a problem of strategy-and-structure in itself. As exemplified by our participation-paradox, the internal decision-making complexities have obviously consequences for the inter-actor relationships, and from there for the resulting negotiated order. The resulting negotiated order tells us something about the precarious or antagonistic mix of decision-making and non-decision-making in industrial policy affairs.

The paradox-of-participation states: the more truly decentralized an organization becomes and, a fortiori, the more heterogeneous the constituency that an organization tries to organize and to mobilize, the more competitive the "representative" regime of internal participation will be; and secondly: the more competitive internal participation is, the more cumbersome inter-organizational decision-making will be, in extremo leading to institutional

distance, i.e. to "protectionistic" balkanization. Separatist and protectionist tendencies have a retaliatory capacity. Retaliation can only be checked by consciousness of the strategic risks involved. The notion of inherent risks - as perceived and experienced by the relevant stake-holders themselves, based on the perception of resource interdependence - gives birth to what Schelling labelled precarious partnership or incomplete antagonism.

What consequences does this mixed-motive game have for the "chances" or neo-corporatism? The ingredients of the overall setting of the industrial policy game seem more or less clear: crisis-like problems of industrial excess capacity and international cut-throat competition; strong but "anonymous" (near-decomposable?) interdependencies but at the same time no availability of clear-cut, normatively sanctioned rules of the game, let alone "authoritative" hierarchies or undisputed arbiters. The prevailing climate seems to be one of elite-nervosity caused by the obvious discomfort of the combination of, on the one hand, inter-actor non-decision-making, following from the "paradox-of-participation" and, on the other hand, crisis-like sentiments - a feeling of urgency and a need to react promptly and fundamentally - because the problems are obvious and real (although some distrust - among the actors - can be observed concerning the question who exactly does define, monitor and/or does deliberately undermanage the "real" crises).

6. One of the more promising approaches to the "problem" of corporatism is the one proposed by Gerhard Lehbruch, - "promising" while principally oriented on policy-making and policy-outputs (G. Lehbruch, several publications, among them a recent paper presented at the World Congress of Sociology at Uppsala Augustus 1979, and one presented at the Congress of the German Sociological Association, Berlin, April 1979). There are two essential characteristics in Lehbruch's approach:

First, the interaction between interest groups and the state can be seen as governed by a sort of exchange-relationship: the democratic requirements of consensus and legitimation of public policy, hence its effectiveness, are possibly fulfilled by the willingness of trade unions to accept wage restraints or other concessions like the rationalization of industries, included their preparedness to defend and implement those policies vis à vis their constituencies in exchange for the willingness of government to follow union's policy preferences on other issues, like certain training, housing and public health policies or even more important: government accepts union's

decision-making "executive privilege" in certain policy-areas from which government promises to abstain and to recognize in this respect the unions as a sole representative. The exchange-setting may be enriched by introducing tripartite exchange-relationships, still deserving the label corporatist.

Secondly, the exchange between the promises of governmental non-interference versus unions' self-discipline presupposes some rationale for a specific division of labour in policy-making, differentiating and demarcating the two arenas (i.e. the corporatist versus the parliamentary or party political arena). This rationale has to be sought in the distinction between respectively those policies requiring a high degree of consensus, being more or less irrevocable, and involving externalities, as against those policies that are less outspoken in this sense, showing a more symbolic or ethical salience. In the latter areas the party-political or parliamentary channel is still able to handle the affairs whereas in the former corporatist solutions seem more or less unavoidable. Corporatist activism means then even more than what Böckenförde (E.W. Böckenförde - Die politische Funktion wirtschaftlich-sozialer Verbände und Interessenträger in der sozialstaatlichen Demokratie - in: Die Staat, 15, Band 1976, Heft 4, pp. 457-484) just called "Teilnahme an der politischen Entscheidungsgewalt".

The exchange-hypothesis is stimulating because it inspires a whole series of problems and complications - in the understanding of corporatism - that otherwise would not become so easily visible. Before summing up some of the more pertinent complications, more has to be said on the general attitudes and the ideological undertone in the public debate on corporatism, included the question whether corporatism "really" exists or tends to reemergence "again".

7. In the public debate the distinctive boundary between pressure group politics called "interest group liberalism" - stressing pluralistic and centrifugal tendencies - and "neo"-corporatism - stressing cartel-like and centripetal tendencies - is confusingly vague. Yet logically they seem mutual opposites: they are opposed in terms of structural composition and process (functional fragmentation versus cartellization) as well as in terms of the rules-of-the-game (the separatist politics of avoidance or non-commitment versus the collusive politics of accommodation) and in terms of net policy-outcomes (pluralist ignorance and non-decision-making versus parliament as a hostage, merely echoing corporatist preferences and irrevocable decisions).

Part of the contradiction can be solved by specifying the pertinent arena, i.e. by discriminating between the relevant policy-areas and the relevant levels of institutional aggregation: in some "cases" corporatist momentum prevails, whereas in some others bureaucratic activism reigns, and again in other areas parliament, i.e. a pluralistic configuration of, primarily, political parties (with "generalist" pretensions, though possibly but not necessarily affiliated with specific client-groups), is predominant.

Calculating the "net" effect of these different regimes and arenas for the more or less "authoritative allocation of values" for society as a whole or for social change resulting from the interplay of corporatist, bureaucratic and parliamentary strategies-and-structures would be a heroic task indeed. A more modest ambition is to study the workings of corporatism where it demonstrably works - preferably, in Lehbruch's vein, indicating the bureaucratic-and-parliamentary context-of-exchange in which the granting of corporatist discretion may be expected. The area of industrial politics - besides the more classical examples of incomes, wage and labour market policies, seems a good candidate for studying the politics and non-politics of corporatism. In that sense we agree with those scholars who prefer to reserve the label corporatist for those types of conflict management and decision-making that lie in the socio-economic realm of the (re)production of class and state relationships rather than stretching the concept to "welfare state" policies in general. In other words, issues related to the division of power in the so-called "mixed market"-economy, should be our focus.

Yet this restriction sounds easier than it is in practice for two reasons. First, unions, employers' associations, industry organizations and financial institutions extend their policy-scope and strategies beyond production-related matters like investment, employment, industrial reorganization, etcetera, to ever wider policy areas, partly in reaction to the above-mentioned expansion of welfare state intervention and the disputes associated with state intervention in general. This may be called politicization and political professionalization of private actors in their dealings with the state, blurring the boundary between "strictly" socio-economic and welfare state policies in general. This precisely lends additional plausibility and relevance to the "macro"-emphasis in Lehbruch's exchange-hypothesis, though complicating the analysis enormously.

A second factor complicating the demarcation between "strictly" production-related policy areas and policy making in general, stems from the

macro-ideological connotations of corporatism and the historical ambitions of corporatist thinkers, politicians, etcetera. In a straightforward doctrinary sense "pure" corporatism assumes or represents, at least, three dogmas:

- neither class conflict nor competitive behavior are accepted as organizing principles of social order; social order - instead - has to be seen as the harmonious outcome of the "laws" of organic solidarity reflecting complementarity and symmetry ranging from micro institutions like the family and the enterprise to macro institutions like the economy and the state;
- state and society are intertwined or interpenetrated to such a high degree that practically no distinction between the body politic and the Gemeinschaft remains; and finally,
- by a deliberate act of state or by natural law it follows logically that complementary or parallel interest-groups are bestowed with public legal, exclusive rights in exchange for observing internal discipline of their memberships, clients or constituencies.

Now, on the one hand, - leaving nuances out - two politico-philosophical camps - quite dissimilar in other respects - share a common disliking of corporatism or, more cautiously - corporatist "tendencies". First, liberals - mainly from a public law background - warn against corporatist sapping of the sovereign state or the sovereign parliament. Implicitly or explicitly their sixth sense appears to be selectively sensitive for unions' strength as a factual or potential obstruction of parliamentary primacy. Secondly, we can mention marxist scholars who reject corporatism, old or new, while they consider the corporatist creed as an elite-strategy devoted to the cover up or outright suppression of class conflicts between labour and capital, - thus delaying the incidentally immanent break-down of capitalism.

On the other hand, outspokenly positive adherents of the corporatist legacy have to be sought in confessional economists' circles embracing corporatism as the bridge between or the panacea against the evils of socialist and capitalist extremity. While marxists and liberals see corporatism as a problem affecting democratic hygiene and affronting parliamentary supremacy, confessional theoreticians and to a lesser degree some socialist sub-doctrines see corporatism as a potential political problem-solving or societal tension-management device. At this place we can not refine these admittedly gross contrasts by stressing - for instance - the important distinction between those that see corporatism primarily as a form of state, supplying political order or control versus those that see corporatism primarily as an ideological-

annex-organizational device for managing the socio-economic division of labour, hence as a specimen of economic order or control.

Proponents as well as opponents, however, adhere strongly to a dichotomous approach in the analysis casu quo prescriptive representation of (anti-)corporatism - probably influenced by the supposed assumption or "law" of symmetrical or complementary attributes and interactions between micro organizations and macro institutions. If one uses the concepts of organization and institution - each indicating a specific level of aggregation - as the more or less stable concurrence of an Uberbau (the structure of understanding-and-values) and an Unterbau (the structure of interaction-and-power), a double dichotomy appears to govern the current discussion. First, the pros and cons of corporatism are discussed in terms of the (elective) correspondence between micro and macro principles or organization and, secondly, the focus is on the (elective) correspondence between Uberbau (values) and Unterbau (relations of production and reproduction, patterns of interaction, structure of power).

8. On both dimensions we propose to "break" the deterministic circle of symmetry, or correspondence. On the contrary, we propose to admit, first, for the possibility of at least three levels of aggregation (i.e. to include meso forms of institutionalization) and, secondly, to admit for the possibility of contrary logics on the three levels of aggregation, - leading to possible discrepancies in the principles-of-organization for each level and to possible discrepancies between logistics (resource interdependencies casu quo power-structure or Unterbau) and logics (Zweck- and Wertrationalität: value structure or Uberbau).

Admitting for discrepancies on both dimensions - i.e. for contradictory principles of organization and mobilization on three levels of interest aggregation and a possibly net and enduring "mismatch" between Uberbau-rationalizations and Unterbau-realities, relaxes the deterministic and dichotomous macro-micro bias in current analyses. But the price seems fairly high: admitting for contradictions between logistics and logics across the three levels, complicates the analysis of the politico-economic order seriously.

What, above, is called the principle of organization and mobilization, differing from level to level, underlies the phenomenon that we described earlier as the gradual eclips of accountability. Accountability tends to wane when to conditions coincide: increasing interorganizational dependence and a

lack of normatively shared and authoritatively sanctioned rules by which the interorganizational game will be played. This coincidence was said to be an ideal breeding ground for strategies and tactics of non-commitment, resulting in institutional balkanization and interorganizational hostage or non-decision-making. Non-decision-making was explained by introducing the paradox-of-participation, hypothesizing a negative correlation between internal and external participation, decentralization and the re-coordination of functionally decentralized structures and strategies.

On the micro (organizational) level a "zweckrational" regime of utilitarian exchanges between inter-related interest prevails. On this level of aggregation the sheer feasibility of quid-pro-quo accountability predicts a tough and operational confrontation between opposing interests. On the other hand, on the macro-societal level of interest articulation, - the pervasive lack of unambiguous quid-pro-quo accountability seems to create a "wertrational" battle-ground for mainly symbolic, i.e. less operational confrontations between opposing interests, stressing the moral legitimacy rather than the instrumental rationality dimension of accountability.

The level-specific emphasis either on symbolic legitimacy or on operational rationality and quid-pro-quo questions reminds us of Lehbruch's assessment of different policies handled in different arenas, i.e. some are "typically" manageable for the parliamentary arena whereas others "belong" to the corporatist channel, included his suggestion of possible trade-offs between the prerogatives or predilections of both worlds.

Our perspective, however, suggesting a macro bias towards legitimacy and a micro bias towards utilitarianistic strategies leaves open a large grey zone, i.e. the interorganizational meso-level where the mixed "blessings" of two conditions hold - making the exchange-hypothesis and the resulting type of negotiated order somewhat more complicated, while unstable. These two conditions are, not really surprisingly any more: no clear salience of conceptions of legitimacy, i.e. no shared values but rather shared expectations concerning strategic inter-actor behavior; and, secondly, a vaguely known but concretely felt mutual dependence between the protagonists. We say protagonists rather than antagonists or partners, because it is on this "grey" meso level that the basic ingredients of Schelling's mixed motive game become relevant, i.e. the level where "incomplete antagonism" or "precarious partnership" define the uncomfortable play.

Rather than a sort of exchange between the macro symbols of politiciz-

ation (die Moral) and the micro realities of class confrontation (das Fres-sen) we postulate, institutionally speaking, an "open" space between the micro and macro level that seems, - by the very ambiguity of the mix of legitimacy and rationality on this level -, "appropriate" for the convergence-of-expectations and the emergence-of-collusive behavior. In Schelling's approach this may be called "tacit coordination" - even without extensive communication between the interdependent actors, "merely" derived from a gradually evolving, mutual (rather than consensually shared) perception of the structure of opportunities and strategies-to-be-expected from the bargaining counterparts. From here, it is but one step to call these politics-of accommodation, - essentially the product of a set of mutually shared perceptions and strategic expectations - , the politics of incrementalistic corporatism.

9. The term "incrementalistic" is used because of the gradual, bounded rational and non-apriori planned form of the negotiated order, emerging from interorganizationally shared expectations and from strategies based on mutual expectations.

For reasons of brevity we may, of course, speak of "neo-"corporatism, provided we refer consistently and explicitly to five interrelated but distinguishable attributes differentiating "neo" from "old" corporatism:

First, the modern form of corporatism is incrementalistic and emerging rather than synoptically intended, wanted or expected as was principally the case with orthodox or classical corporatism.

Second, the modern variety tends to be non-conspicuous and pragmatically oriented, i.e. averse from the hegemonial aspirations and the solemn, ideological gospel of "pure" corporatism.

Third, in terms of aggregation, the expected "locus" of the neo-corporatist politics-of-accommodation will be the meso level rather than the purportedly interchangeable, while "symmetrical" micro-and-macro level on which "pure" corporatism was expected or implanted formerly. Rather than postulating symmetry and interchangeability between the respective levels, we hypothesize strong contradictions between the strategies-and-structure on each level of interest aggregation, i.e. we expect the "applicability" of neo-corporatism on the meso level only.

Fourth, because of the "total" ambitions (and sometimes practices) of old corporatism, the distinction between state-induced versus bourgeois- or private elite-induced corporatism may have been, historically, a relevant

distinction. However, under modern welfare state conditions, as we see it, this distinction ceases to be of any help because of the restrictedly meso, non-"exportable" character of neo-corporatism. On the meso level of the corporatist politics-of-accommodation, privately organized interests and the body politic or bureaucratic produce, so to say, each other's behavioral pre-conditions to such a degree that it is no longer feasible or helpful to try to distinguish between prime movers or instigators. To borrow once more Schelling's phrase: The tripartite "precarious partnership" - based on mutual hostage-by-vital-resource interdependence, guarantees a kind of collusive behavior or tacit coordination between the "incomplete antagonists" - without assuming extensive conspiratory moves. This tacit coordination blurs the very distinction between public (state) en private (society) initiative. The distinction itself has to become "incomplete" in order to stop short of complete, mutually destructive war. This, but only this constrained type of forced accommodation should be called "neo"-corporatist.

Finally, the prefix "neo" should be used in the sense of "pseudo" or "hybrid", while stressing the Janus-head of neo-corporatism: as a direct consequence of the precariousness and - politically speaking - the hauntingly cognitive dissonance of this negotiated order, there has to be a necessary difference between words-and-deeds. This difference makes for the stealthy, non-ideological, rather "disguised" character of the meso politics-of accommodation. That means that the symbols and paraphernalia of corporatism (as an institution or device for handling class conflicts and coordinating policies) have to be avoided at any price, while the factual accommodation strategies resemble the basic tenets and mixed motive game of corporatism. Partly for the historical, fascist and anti-parlementarian connotations of corporatism, partly for the "cognitive dissonance" caused by significant cross-loyalties for politicians, labour-representatives and "representatives" of financial and industrial capital on the different levels of interest representation - any public suggestion or open demonstration of corporatist sympathies and practices has to be avoided.

Especially the problem of intra-actor cross-loyalties on different levels of interest aggregation (i.e. firm, industry or region, and macro-economic policies) is worth mentioning in this context, because - as seen before - the "paradox-of-participation" states that internal differentiation and participative decentralization mortgage interorganizational accommodation across actors. The latter mechanism tends to be the more precarious and anta-

gonistic under conditions of economic contraction and forced structural reorganization of complete industrial sectors. The dilemmas - for the respective stake-holders - of "exit-voice-and-loyalty" are clear under these conditions, especially concerning the visible formation or avoidance of tripartite commitments and subsequent accountability. The case of the employers' associations provides a good illustration of the dilemmas involved. Essentially they have to make a choice from several, structurally opposed games, depending on their policy priorities, internal discipline, short- versus long-sightedness, etcetera, - in short depending on the chances of the emerging interfirm expectations shared on the basis of existing resource-interdependencies (i.e. the structure of the "relevant" industry determining the structure of strategical opportunities and risks).

Whether or not publicly or institutionally recognized as such, most industrial disputes and class conflicts are tripartite games, not in the sense of some harmonious kind of private-private-public consultation and coordination, but in the above suggested style of a strategic calculus in which each actor (e.g. capital) "invites" another actor (e.g. labour) to serve as a shield against a third actor (e.g. the treasury or a financial House Committee). The strongest player in this setting is the actor that can "commute" between several games or several (differently composed) arenas: for instance, the "employment game" (relevant for the labour-intensive but declining industries, or industries closely connected to governmental infrastructure-spending) versus the "advanced know-how" or "international competitive advantage"-game. For diversified and multi-divisional firms, political resourcefulness and hence manoeuvrability result from multiple arena-membership. But - and that is the exit-voice-loyalty dilemma in a capitalist economic order flanked by a welfare state antinomy of the aggregation-of-demands and the disaggregation of supports -, multiple arena-membership or multiple gamesmanship is not "synergetic" from itself. In "Olsonian" terms the dilemma remains whether the inclusive or the exclusive games will be chosen. Following Olson's usage (the Logic of Collective Action) the exclusive game refers to "market groups", like competitors, having an objective interest in minimizing the size of the group of participants on the market (theoretical optimum pure monopoly) whereas the inclusive game refers to "non-market groups", trying to maximize the group of participants in order to be effective, under relatively low or declining costs and increasing marginal returns, like in the case of merging trade-unions or entrepreneurs lobbying for government subsidies, protectionistic measures, or

tax reduction. The crux of the matter is that the same group of firms may have to make the strategic choice between the inclusive (e.g. employment-) game versus the exclusive (e.g. technological innovation-) game. This dilemma explains the prevalence of policy-paralysis or non-decision-making in quite a few cases of industrial reorganization, although theoretically - given multiple arena-membership - the former game can be used by sophisticated strategists to cross-subsidize the latter game. But the paradox-of-participation, associated with loyalty-conflicts, favouring short-term quid-pro-quo strategies and low-trust or scepticism about the feasibility of accountable "exchanges" - may frustrate the materialization of this theoretical option.

10. Considering these persistent ambiguities - leading to the above-mentioned summary of five attributes, deemed to differentiate "neo"-corporatism as precarious partnership and incomplete antagonism from "pure" corporatism - one starts to wonder whether the original "exchange" thesis can still be seen as a realistic paradigm. The thesis states in essence: public actors and organized private interests negotiate on formal prerogatives and substantive policies in exchange for observing - on the private side - internal discipline and - on the public side - non-interference and institutional-financial support. The complexity and ambiguities involved in multiple arena-membership cast some doubts on the applicability or manageability of such a rationalistic, quasi-synoptic paradigm as proposed by the exchange-theorists. Perhaps these doubts are a consequence of the example chosen, namely industrial policy and politics, as opposed to somewhat more "calculable" policies like wage, income, tax and perhaps even (re-)training policies. Sometimes even the very example of industrial politics is mentioned to show the limits of exchange: in such industries - suffering from excess-capacity, cyclical rigidities and pending mass lay-offs - like steel, synthetic fibres, textile, shipbuilding, etcetera, labour unions are said not to have any choice but accepting the unavoidable "laws" of the (inter-)national market. Consequently there is supposedly nothing to be "exchanged". The opposite, however, seems to be the case. First, in these examples the exchange-platform has to be extended to include the E.E.C.-authorities, i.e. cross-nation exchanges in the enactment of regional and sectoral policies on the european level assume a strategic potential. Or even stronger: the sheer international setting induces - on the national level - strong collusive tripartite propensities, i.e. favours the "inclusive" game vis à vis Brussels. Although there remain the sort of ambiguities associ-

ated with each exchange the principles of exchange, as well as the principles of the "precarious negotiated order" sketched before in a purely national context, keep their relevance. Also from the purely national perspective there are additional reasons - in the example of declining industries - to expect the take-off of elaborate exchanges. The example of the french steel industry shows that the shut-down of the steel factories is definitely not accepted but for the state-subsidized promise to take care of compensatory employment, while the exchange-setting is "doubled" by the fact that the state itself is involved in an elaborate exchange-and-poker game between the potential employers/investors/producers, namely Renault/Peugeot versus Ford, who have to fear each other's eligibility for the available public funds.

11. Let us summarize the discussion by a couple of conclusions. The exchange-perspective and from there the "face" of neo-corporatism should be refined by introducing several levels of interest aggregation. The differential applicability and possibility to monitor exchanges on different levels and in different policy-arenas tend to make the meso-level appropriate for the otherwise uncomfortable, ideologically sensitive politics-of-accommodation that may be called "neo"-corporatist, provided we emphasize the structural, processual and ideological (value)differences with orthodox corporatism. On the micro and the macro level of interest representation we expect - judged from the same criteria of accountability - patterns of interaction and conflict management between opposing interests that are more radical or anti-accommodation oriented. Institutional balkanization between the respective decision-making levels allows for ("neutralizes") the enduring coexistence of contrary logics of action and for enduring discrepancies between the logistics of objective resource interdependence (power structure) and the symbolic logics used to rationalize this interdependence (value structure).

Discrepancies between power structure (Unterbau) and value structure (Uberbau) are not just possible (for instance by assuming - in the case of social change - "merely" time lags in their mutual adaptation) but possibly a permanent feature of modern society as far as vertical immunization or balkanization of the different levels of interest aggregation disturbs or even blocks the selective correspondence between the two "faces" of social reality.

Neo-corporatism - the corporatist politics-of-accommodation-and exchange - seems to play an increasingly vital role indeed in the maintenance of this brittle negotiated order, provided we look for it on the most probable level of aggregation, i.e. from the most probable configuration of resource

dependencies and symbolic rules of the game. The impact, however, should be studied on the micro as well as macro level of the allocation of values.

One normative conclusion finally. Given the above-sketches conditions of the aggregation of demands and disaggregation of support, a democratically uncontrollable meso-zone of collusive, corporatist politics was said to emerge. The most realistic countermove seems to be the promotion of the management-of-devolution of interorganizational linkages - rather than trying to change the structure of values. As far as it is plausible that there may exist large discretionary margins between Uberbau and Unterbau, investing political energy in changing the structure of values approaches Don Quixote. In that case, rather the structural or resource-parameters of the mixed motive game, leading to tacit coordination and corporatist collusion, should be made more "precarious" indeed.