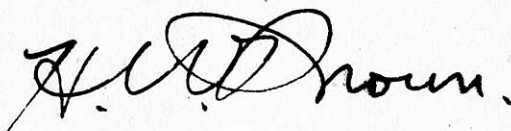


## FOREWORD

Opinions differ concerning the effectiveness and the desirability of works councils which may be found in almost all public and private establishments in Western Germany and Western Berlin. The works council, an institution established under law, is not an arm of the trade union but represents both union and non-union employees. It performs in the industrial plant, the commercial establishment, and public undertakings many services which, in the United States, would be prerogatives of the trade union alone. In Germany, however, the works council has had its own history, and its own traditions based on experience. In the same way, the German trade union movement has its own history and traditions. Although the functions of these two institutions do overlap, most German trade unionists accept the works council as a proper local representative body for all employees in individual establishments.

Professor Fisher, who is well-informed concerning the history of both works councils and trade unions in Germany, was invited to undertake the survey from which the present report emerged. This report is descriptive of conditions as he observed them regarding the present activities of works councils and their relationship to other institutions. It should be recognized, however, that in these changing times the works councils, too, are in process of adaptation. Although they have been changing and may be further modified in their form and functions, there seems little likelihood that works councils will be eliminated or become any less the legally authorized bodies they now are.



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