Government wage policy

The Danish Federation of Labor is closely, if informally, allied to the Social Democratic Party, which has been in power (either alone or in coalition) almost continuously since the thirties. Through informal influence, as well as the machinery outlined above, the Government has kept man-hours lost in industrial disputes extremely low since 1947. Also, since 1950, it has exercised its influence to induce the federation to follow a policy of wage restraint. Government wage policy thus expresses itself mainly in an informal manner. There is no legal minimum wage.

Price control

Extensive price control followed the war and was gradually being eased when the rise of external prices in 1949–50 brought new problems and the reintroduction of some price controls (an extreme example was the imposition of price controls on grain, coupled with compulsory deliveries). In 1952, external prices fell and output increased; both the old price controls and the newly imposed ones were then largely removed. Rents, however, continued to be controlled.

Import and exchange controls

The Korean inflation blocked extensive trade liberalization in Denmark, which was hit particularly hard, having no raw materials to export. In 1951 the level of liberalization was well below the OEEC-prescribed level of 60 percent and Denmark was given a period of grace. The country complained that its low tariffs gave it a weak bargaining position in regard to the removal of quantitative restrictions. Further liberalization has proceeded slowly. In 1952 the Government tried to stimulate dollar exports by allowing 10 percent of the proceeds of such sales to be used for purchases of goods subject to import licensing. In 1951 a "deposit" system was briefly in effect whereby imports of textiles and clothing were freed from quantitative restrictions on the condition of substantial cash deposits by the importers and this greatly aided credit tightening.

Monopoly regulation

Before the war Danish industry was heavily cartelized (cartels and monopolies accounted for 50 percent of industrial output in 1937) and there was no significant feeling that monopoly should be openly opposed. Since the war there has been more interest in regulation. In 1955 a law to regulate monopoly and anticompetitive practices was passed giving the Government the power to prevent "price gouging."

Price supports and subsidies

Housing construction is subsidized and the degree of subsidization is tightened and loosened according to the severity of inflationary pressure on the economy. Railway rates are another subsidized item; when they were allowed to rise in 1953, a rise in the cost of living was prevented by reducing the income tax in the lower brackets.

Nationalization

The Government has practically no interests in industry or commerce. It operates the usual services and public utilities, as well as the naval dockyards and all armament plants. In 1953, 6.6 percent of all workers employed in Denmark were employed in public administration and another 2.2 percent worked in industrial and commercial undertakings in the public sector.

FRANCE

Unions

The French labor movement is badly factionalized. Though no membership statistics are available, it is evident that by far the largest federation is the Confederation Generale du Travail (CGT), which is Communist oriented. The other two major labor centers are the Catholic Confederation Francais des Travailleurs Chretiens (CFTC) and the Confederation Generale de Travail-Force Ouvriere (CGT–FO). The bulk of unionists belong to these three federations, but there are also a number of independent federations and unions; among the former are the Confederation des Syndicats Independents (CGSI), the anarchist Confederation Nationale de Travail, and others; among the latter is the powerful Teachers' Union, which has been unaffiliated since leaving the CGT. There is also the Confederation Generale des Cadres (CGC), which commands some support among supervisors.