

The New Role of Trade Unionism in the 21st Century: Lessons from Singapore

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Abstract

This paper examines the different types of ideological positions (welfarist, realist, and socialist) and, by extension, the roles that trade unions may adopt in the future. It suggests that a distinction can be made between what trade unions should be, by definition, and what they can be as we move into the 21st Century. It argues that the optimum role that trade unions can assume is one in which they are autonomous, yet choose to work in close partnership with a state which is dedicated to improving the welfare of the citizenry. The rationale for this argument is that a strong state is in a position to garner support for beneficial development programs, while autonomous trade unions can ensure that the interest of members are factored into state policies, even as they seek to enhance their voice and ownership at workplace level. The Singapore case is used as a template to support the arguments generated in this paper.

1. Introduction: Setting the Stage

By the end of the 20th Century, the world capitalist system will have expanded to cover almost the entire globe. However, that does not spell the

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end of socialist ideals, even if communism as we know it in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, is in retreat.

Indeed, if anything, socialist ideals as manifested in the welfare-state concept are very much alive, though, admittedly, state welfarism faces enormous problems (Ferner and Hyman, 1992: xix). More importantly, for our purposes in this paper, it should also be recognised that, by definition, trade unionism as an institution within capitalism operates on the basis of socialist principles which are explicitly geared towards buffering members of the working class from the vicissitudes of market forces.

How successful has unionism been in achieving the above objective? The fact that unionism is a much taken-for-granted facet of employment suggests that it can play, if it has not already done so, an important role in improving working conditions and the quality of work life. Unfortunately, unionism has not quite lived up to its full potential particularly in the last two decades (cf. Kochan, Katz, and McKersie, 1986: 3; Lansbury and Verevis, 1994: 3). But what of the future?

Given that the business environment of the future is likely to be more competitive and turbulent than ever before, workers, management, and production and inventory systems will be expected to exhibit a high degree of flexibility. In all probability, trade unions will have to make the necessary adaptations if they hope to stay afloat (Kochan, Katz, and McKersie, 1986: 227-230). A key question we pose in this paper is whether trade unions can survive, even thrive, in the face of an increasingly crowded, complex, global market characterised by uncertainty and change. At the same time, unions also have to maintain their relevance to a labour force that is likely to possess a more balanced sex ratio and be more skewed towards the higher end of the age and education dimensions.

In this paper, we will argue that, much as the world is becoming an increasingly borderless one (Ohmae, 1990), the issue of whether trade unions could survive and define new roles for themselves in the 21st Century will inevitably be tied to the question of the relevance of the nation-state. While it is true that the nation-state will find it increasingly difficult to inculcate, let alone preserve, the loyalty of its citizens, we doubt if trade unions and workers will operate from a global perspective and, as international labour organizations, unite to confront transnational corporations (TNCs). Hence, for better or for worse, the fate of trade unionism will be closely coupled with that of the nation-state.

If we take this position as our starting point, then it makes sense to conceive of trade unions as citizen organizations responsible for the welfare of working class members of a particular nation-state. An important implication derived from this conceptualisation is that instead of focusing on the

conflict between capital and labour, there is the potential for cooperation and mutual benefits between capital and the citizenry acting through their representatives in the unions and the state (Tan, 1993: 198).

Whether we are comfortable with the above notion or not, the fact remains that, in an era of strong competition for capital and markets, the tangible, if not necessarily objective, conflict of economic interest is between nation-states and not between an international working class and global capital. If we accept this as a given, though not inevitable, condition that workers have to confront in the 21st Century, we could then begin to explore the new roles that trade unionism should and can adopt to remain relevant.

For our analysis in this paper, we will use the Singapore case as a template for examining the conditions that unions are likely to encounter and the strategies they may utilise to fulfil their role as organizations committed to meeting the needs of workers in the 21st Century. In taking this approach, we are not suggesting that the Singapore case supplies most of the answers, only that it can serve as a good critical case on methodological grounds. Among the characteristics that make Singapore a desirable case for comparative analysis are that it is to a high degree plugged into the global market, having benefitted from export-led industrialization and becoming one of the highly successful East Asian 'dragons' (Rodan, 1989: 6; Vogel, 1991: 103; Ho, 1995: 116).

In this section, we have outlined the issues and conditions confronting trade unions at the turn of the 21st Century. The next section will discuss the different types of ideological positions and, by extension, the roles that trade unions can adopt. It will then examine the conditions that trade unions are likely to confront, before arguing for the adoption of a feasible role that attempts to reconcile the objective of improving the 'human condition' of the working class with the reality of production and market relations in the 21st Century.

2. Ideological Positions and Roles of Trade Unions: A Three-Dimensional Typology

At the surface level, it is commonly understood that the role of trade unions is to protect the livelihood of the workers who are their members. Trade unions typically seek to safeguard job and social security and ensure that their members enjoy not only a stable income, but also built-in wage increases corresponding to seniority and upward trends in inflation rates (cf. Poole, 1986: 68).

During periods of economic prosperity, it is fairly easy for unions to play this role and deliver what their members expect of them. At the same time, employers are able and likely to be generous as such a policy can buy them the goodwill and cooperation they need during lean years. However, a long-drawn economic downturn can erode the goodwill accumulated during the years of abundance particularly if the trade unions involved possess sufficient strength that can be harnessed whenever the need arises. In general, trade unions are reluctant to support employer policies which threaten worker welfare, job security and built-in wage increases, unless the survival of employing organizations involved is at stake.

The propensity to resist wage cuts or even to insist on 'hefty' wage increases depends on the role that trade unions adopt as well as the relative power they possess vis-a-vis employers. If a trade union sees its role as being to fight for job and social security and higher wages and benefits even at immense costs to, but short of bankrupting, the employing organization, then it can be characterised as adopting a welfarist position. In other words, it is oriented towards buffering members from the vicissitudes of market forces, thereby weakening the connection between organizational performance and wages and other forms of employment benefits. Unfortunately, a welfarist position is not always a viable one, though it certainly appears to be so in periods of sustained economic growth.

With the advanced countries in Western Europe and the United States experiencing economic decline in the last two decades, trade unions increasingly come under pressure from governments and employers to steer away from the welfarist position and move towards adopting a realist one. The realist position is characterised by a productionist orientation and a tolerance for justifiable wage restraint. It may in fact also be understood as a subset of the by-now popular notion of flexible organization, which covers all aspects of business and production operations, be it inventory control, product design, or marketing (Ferner and Hyman, 1992: xx).

An important feature of the realist role is the acceptance of a flexible approach towards wage bargaining and determination, one which ties wage changes to some agreed upon measure of performance, usually profit margin or productivity. For business organizations, a flexible wage system can help sharpen their competitive edge in product markets as well as enhance their capacity to adapt to environmental fluctuations. More importantly, it replaces the zero-sum approach of the welfarist position with the positive-sum approach of the realist position. This is not to suggest that the latter is necessarily superior to the former insofar as we adopt the view that while the market ala capitalism can stimulate economic growth, it is not designed to promote individual welfare ala socialism. From the realist

position, individual welfare is maintained and enhanced through skills training and upgrading translated into higher productivity and quality work, not through trade unions flexing their muscles amidst decline in productivity and product competitiveness. Indeed, from the realist perspective, trade unions are expected to facilitate skills training and promote productivity, the twin-pillars of productionism that legitimize wage increases.

Somewhat different from the productionist orientation of the realist position and the redistributionist orientation of the welfarist position is a third position which we shall label the socialist position. The socialist position centres on production relations or, more specifically, the ownership and control of the means of production.

Whereas the realist and welfarist positions are compatible with capitalism, the same cannot be said of the socialist position, which, in the extreme, would argue that the negative consequences of capitalist production relations – that of exploitation and alienation – can only be overcome with the transcendence or total transformation of capitalism. Another way to understand the difference between the realist and welfarist positions and the socialist position is that while the former deal with ‘surface phenomena’, such as jobs and wages, the latter seeks to transform or at least reform the ‘underlying structure’ that produces and reproduces exploitation and alienation (Giddens, 1973: 135).

Without canvassing arguments about whether trade unions can realistically adopt a socialist position under capitalism, one may suggest that the strategies springing from the socialist position are by now quite well-known in human resource management theory and practice. For instance, the use of profit-sharing schemes, such as employee stock ownership, and measures to promote worker participation, whether through works councils or quality circles, could be understood as partial solutions to the problems of exploitation and alienation respectively, though one may also argue that human resource management has trivialised the socialist position, diluting the latter’s core concern into something compatible with capitalism (cf. Nichols, 1980: 300).

Thus far, we have described three possible types of trade union positions: welfarist, realist, and socialist. To some extent, these positions do overlap with one another. Hence, for instance, the socialist position is welfarist insofar as it seeks to decouple the satisfaction of human needs from market relations. Moreover, the socialist position is necessarily realist as long as it operates within the confine of capitalism. On balance, the three positions are distinct, yet not mutually exclusive. They also constitute a three-dimensional typology of pure types. The implication here is that trade unions are

unlikely to adopt only one position to the exclusion of others, though a particular position may predominate at a certain point in time.

The next section will examine the Singapore case with the objective of delineating the conditions likely to confront trade unions in the 21st Century. Using the case study as a template, it will argue for an optimising position which (1) recognises the constraints capitalism pose to unionism, (2) combines the three positions discussed earlier, and (3) possesses sufficient autonomy and power to render trade unions a strong actor in the industrial relations system, and not a mere 'rubber stamp' for the flexible organization and production of the late 20th Century and perhaps beyond (Reed, 1992: 231-232).

3. The Singapore Case: A New Industrial Order¹

If we accept that trade and investment constitute the life-blood of present-day economies, then there is a case for supporting the creation of a stable business and industrial relations climate involving some costs to unions and workers. This argument is valid so long as benefits outweigh costs. However, in practice, it is not a straightforward matter to assign weights to costs and benefits, let alone identify what constitute costs and what constitute benefits. Hence, we will not attempt to derive the optimum position for unionism by calculating costs and benefits.

For our purposes in this paper, we will begin by accepting as given the conditions that (1) capitalism requires a conducive climate for generating profits, and (2) nation-states are likely to have to compete with one another for capital and markets. From this starting point, we can argue that while unions probably need to cooperate with the state and employers, they must remain autonomous to ensure that the interests of members¹ are always factored into state and employer policies.

As alluded to above, a key aspect to be considered in arriving at the optimum role for trade unions is to delineate the conditions wherein they operate. In this regard, Singapore provides an ideal critical case for such an analysis in that it has since the 1960s been organized by the People's Action Party (PAP) government explicitly for supporting trade and investment and, thereby, profit generation and employment creation.

The rest of this section presents the development, in a somewhat chronological order, of an industrial relations system and trade unionism aimed at enhancing productivity and profits. The emerging new industrial order, with its emphasis on inculcating a skillful, disciplined, and cooperative workforce, not only constitutes the end-product of the eradication of militant unionism in Singapore, but also facilitates the creation of a viable economy

characterised by high growth rates and full-employment. Its key features are highlighted below.

Compulsory Arbitration 1960

After its first election into office in 1959, the PAP government almost immediately replaced the previous voluntary arbitration system with one geared towards compulsory arbitration (Pang, 1981: 485-486). The major legislative instrument introduced was the 1960 Industrial Relations Ordinance.

According to Pang (1981: 485), this law prescribed a more interventionist and proactive role for the state, 'specified the rules for collective negotiations between employers and unions, and replaced the voluntary arbitration system by setting up an Industrial Arbitration Court (IAC)' (Pang, 1981: 485). The latter institution provided a machinery for facilitating negotiations and collective agreements (CAs), resolving trade disputes arising from the implementation of CAs, certifying CAs and rendering them legally binding, and even for enforcing some restrictions, though not banning, the use of strike actions. Nevertheless, the ordinance placed no restriction on the scope of collective bargaining, but 'simply introduced new procedures for the peaceful and swift settlement of industrial conflicts' (Pang, 1981: 485).

Control over Unions 1959-1966

Even as it moved in to regulate the industrial relations system, the PAP government spared no time in reinforcing the legislative framework for controlling union structure and operations. Once in power, the PAP government introduced the 1959 Amendment to the Trade Unions Ordinance. This amendment was designed to prevent the emergence of multiple or splinter unions and to ensure that unions could not be used for 'unlawful purposes or against the interests of the workmen' (Anantaraman, 1990: 107). It also bestowed the Registrar of Trade Unions with wide discretionary power in decisions relating to the registration and deregistration of unions. On the basis of this and subsequent amendments to the Trade Union Ordinance, 14 unions were refused registration and a further 138 unions were deregistered during the period from 1959 to 1966 (Anantaraman, 1990: 108).

Besides determining the trade union structure in Singapore, the PAP government also prescribed rules relating to the qualifications of union office-bearers. The 1966 Amendment, while ensuring that the majority of officers in a union are people employed in the industry connected to the

union involved, allows for outsiders to bolster its usually less educated leaders elected from among the rank-and-file members. It is also adamant that only Singapore citizens could hold office in the unions. Furthermore, the 1966 Amendment not only contains a highly restrictive definition of industrial action, but also rules that the legality of a strike action hinges on whether it enjoys the backing of at least a two-thirds majority of its members as determined through a secret ballot.

The Global Connection since 1968

It is highly significant that, by 1968, just as the PAP became the sole political party in parliament, it had already taken steps to lay the foundation for a single, overarching union federation, the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC).² Equally significant is the fact that, by 1968, the need to effect a major re-orientation of the Singapore economy was rendered more urgent by the prospect of severe job loss – amounting to about 40,000 jobs – that would result from the impending withdrawal of the British Military, then a major employer, from its bases in Singapore (Cheng, 1991: 196).

Correspondingly, the end of the sixties signaled the beginning of Singapore's transformation into a 'global city' and, eventually, one of the four East Asian 'tigers' characterised by their successful export-oriented industrialization strategy. It also marked the end of the militant chapter in Singapore's industrial relations history. Subsequent developments in Singapore's industrial relations system can be seen as responses to the international economic environment, rather than the domestic political environment.

Landmark Labour Laws 1968

The strategy of integrating Singapore into the world capitalist system entailed the creation of a new industrial order upheld by a highly disciplined, cooperative, industrious, productive, and well-trained workforce (Tan, 1993: 190). With the PAP government and the NTUC entrenched as the key actors in the industrial relations system by 1968, Singapore was well-positioned to bring about just such an order and workforce.

The year 1968, hailed as a watershed by Pang (1981), saw the smooth passage of two landmark labour legislations – the Employment Act and the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act – in parliament. The former replaced three labour ordinances enacted in the 1950s, standardising the employment conditions of different classes of bargainable employees, in particular white-collar clerical workers and blue-collar workers (Josey, 1976: 3).

More importantly, it addressed the 'commonly recognised problem of steadily rising labour costs based on collective bargaining' by setting ceilings and restrictions on overtime payments, retrenchment benefits, bonuses, maternity and holiday leave, and fringe benefits (Deyo, 1981: 47; Pang, 1981: 489). The second piece of legislation was seen as somewhat drastic even by some PAP Members of Parliament. It restored the so-called managerial prerogatives in regard to staff hiring, firing, reinstatement, promotion, internal job transfer, and job reassignment. These areas were rendered non-negotiable, and, thereby, taken out of the jurisdiction of the Industrial Arbitration Court (IAC), though victims of wrongful dismissal could always appeal to the Minister of Labour for assistance (Anantaraman, 1990: 127).

The New Unionism 1969

To Deyo (1981: 47), the above measures had led, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to a 'downgrading of collective bargaining in favour of legislative and managerial determination of employment relations.' The more significant effect of the 1968 legislations was a drastic decline in trade disputes, work stoppages, as well as membership in the NTUC (Leggett, 1994: 118). The latter indicator reflects the fact that, by 1968, a major erosion of the 'traditional' functions of unionism had already taken place in Singapore's industrial relations system.

In response, the PAP-NTUC partnership sought a fundamental re-orientation for unionism in Singapore. Following a 'Modernisation' seminar in 1969, the NTUC adopted 'the role of a national institution representing workers rather than as a pressure group representing sectional interest' (Tan, 1993: 207n). Operating under the banner of the new unionism, the NTUC not only assumed a 'productionist role in national development, a role which has emphasized the needs for stabilization of labour costs, increased productivity, and industrial peace' (Deyo, 1981: 44), but also went into the consumer cooperatives business and the provision of welfare benefits for members (Leggett, 1994: 118).

Tripartism and Wage Policies 1972

Not long after the advent of the new unionism, another industrial relations institution was brought into existence in the form of a wages committee known as the National Wages Council (NWC). While it initially bolstered the trend towards reducing the scope of collective bargaining, it also reinforced the concept of 'tripartism' in Singapore industrial relations.

The NWC has, since its inception as a tripartite body in 1972, been chaired by a prominent economics professor. It comprises representatives from the government, labour (NTUC), and employers (Singapore National Employers' Federation (SNEF), foreign business councils and the joint chambers of commerce (Leggett, 1994: 121). Its terms of reference are as follows:

- (1) to formulate general guidelines on wages;
- (2) to recommend necessary adjustments in wage structure, with a view to developing a coherent wage system consistent with long-term economic and social development; and
- (3) to help devise incentive schemes to improve operational efficiency and productivity (Pang and Kay, 1974: 19).

Since its formation, the NWC has been instrumental in setting national guidelines on wages, bonuses, and other forms of monetary incentives. Although its guidelines are not mandatory, they certainly appear to have such an effect in practice: collective negotiations and agreements as well as the government conciliation and arbitration machinery under the Ministry of Labour and the Industrial Arbitration Court take their cues from the NWC guidelines. Moreover, because the government, as a major employer, adopts the NWC's wage recommendations, and the NWC is generally perceived as a credible tripartite committee, its role as a major institution in Singapore's industrial relations system has clearly become entrenched over the years.

As can be observed from its terms of reference, the NWC's key task is to help develop income policies which will contribute towards maintaining the continued vitality of the Singapore economy. In this regard, it has recommended high, but 'orderly' wage increases in order to not only prevent Singapore from falling into the 'low wage trap', but propel it into high value-added economic activities as well. At the same time, the NWC has also focused its attention on the motivation and skills upgrading of workers, even recommending disincentives, to channel workers towards upholding desirable work behaviours and productivity.

Flexible Wage System 1985

Since 1985, in the wake of the mid-1980s recession in Singapore, the NWC has championed replacing the commonly utilised wage system, based on built-in annual increments, with one that is more sensitive to economic fluctuations. The competitive advantage of a flexible wage system lies in tying wage increases to individual and organizational performance. This

feature makes it possible for business organizations to weather the lean years, obliging them to share their profits in bountiful years, and even motivating employees to strive for higher productivity.

Given the need for flexibility, whether in terms of organizational structure, manufacturing process, and technology imposed by a highly unstable, volatile, competitive global market in the Pacific Century, it is argued that only a flexible wage system, together with skills upgrading and productivity consciousness, can ensure the survival and growth of business organizations and, thereby, avoid the danger of job loss. Significantly, the path towards wage reform in Singapore will also enhance the role of collective bargaining at the level of business organizations.

Productionist Unionism 1969 and Beyond

While the revitalisation of firm-level collective bargaining could put employer-employee relations to the test, particularly in a period of full employment and tight labour market conditions such as the one Singapore currently experiences, it is unlikely that the NTUC will turn away from the productionist role it adopted since the late 1960s.

Indeed, one observes that the present character of the NTUC as an industrial relations institution is best reflected in, rather than dictated by, an amendment to the Trade Unions Act in 1982. This amendment defines a trade union as an organization of workers or employers, as the case may be, whose principal objectives are to (1) promote good industrial relations; (2) improve the working conditions of workers or enhance their economic and social status; and (3) increase productivity for the benefit of workers, employers, and the Singapore economy (NTUC, 1992: 39); whereas earlier versions of the Act, explicitly listed the promotion, organization, and financing of strikes or lockouts as one of the main objectives of trade unions. Clearly, along with the NWC, the NTUC is oriented towards promoting labour productivity and maintaining the long-term survival of the Singapore economy.

The CPF Scheme 1985-86

During the 1985-86 recession, the NTUC even agreed to some wage cut measures. Fortunately, the pain of wage reduction was rendered more bearable by an ingenious device – the Central Provident Fund (CPF), a compulsory savings scheme established in 1955. Through the years, the CPF has become a major instrument of labour and financial policy in Singapore.

The scheme requires both the employer and employee to contribute a certain percentage of the latter's gross monthly salary to the CPF. At present, total contribution adds up to 40 per cent of gross income. This savings could be utilised by employees for sponsoring their children's tertiary education, paying personal and family hospitalisation expenses, buying approved stocks and shares, and for purchasing residential properties.

During the recession years, the government was able to order a significant wage cut of as high as 15 per cent merely by reducing the employer's contribution, while keeping the employee's take-home pay intact. The CPF scheme therefore provides an indispensable buffer against otherwise unpalatable wage cut measures (Tan, 1993: 192).

Enterprise Unionism 1982 and beyond

Nevertheless, even for the productionist union and the developmentalist state, the need to resort to wage reduction measures should be the exception, rather than the rule. The more important strategy is to create wealth and jobs. In this regard, the NTUC has expanded its functions to include workers' education, skills upgrading, and leadership training. It participates actively in tripartite committees at the national level, while its affiliates are involved in joint consultation at the firm level.

As early as 1982, it supported the move towards enterprise or house unionism, a concept made popular by large corporations in Japan. The rationale for promoting enterprise unions is to strengthen the link between workers and their employers through providing a structure for joint consultation, cooperation, and bargaining at the enterprise level. Perhaps, the supporters of the enterprise union concept also harbour the hope that it will eventually enhance both organizational and union commitment, an attitude (and behaviour) which should bring about tangible results in the forms of rising productivity and union density.

Summary

Following political independence in the early sixties, the PAP government was primarily occupied with fostering non-militant unionism and creating institutions for the peaceful, efficient resolution of industrial disputes.

From the late sixties onwards, its key strategy was to nurture a productionist unionism and construct a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing network of industrial relations institutions geared towards maintaining the robustness and flexibility of a Singapore economy integrated into a volatile and highly competitive international environment.

4. A New Role for Trade Unionism

What emerges in the Singapore case during the last three decades is arguably an almost pure type of industrial order designed to ensure that the economy is well-positioned to secure an abundant supply of resources – technology, capital and markets – from the international environment. Indeed, judging from Singapore's economic performance in the last three decades, one would be inclined to suggest that there is a fairly good fit between Singapore and its environment.

For our purposes in this paper, the question to ask is whether the new industrial order spells the eclipse of trade unionism as an institution in industrial relations, particularly since the market, the legislative framework, and the PAP-NTUC partnership do impose a limit on union power. As we see it, the 'institutionalization of industrial conflict' as practised in Singapore does mean that trade unions cannot espouse an extreme welfarist position; they must, in fact, adopt a predominantly realist position, since the industrial relations system is geared towards balancing and reconciling the interest of capital, labour, and the nation-state. However, because the process of determining the optimum point of interest reconciliation is unlikely to be a neutral, apolitical one, there is a case for arguing that trade unions should have an autonomous voice in a tripartite industrial relations system.

While what we are proposing does not appear to be entirely new, it should be reiterated that the optimum position as noted above constitutes the best approach to constructing a viable economy and effective industrial relations system, yet capable of optimising the welfare of workers within the confines of capitalism. Moreover, under the optimum position, trade unions could, while espousing a realist position, continue to explore ways and means of reducing the impact of market forces on the welfare of workers. Given that workers constitute a significant constituency, they could, for instance, negotiate a social contract with the state guaranteeing some protection for workers in exchange for union cooperation. At the same time, trade unions could also work towards increasing ownership and control at the workplace. In the Singapore context, trade unions even set up their own cooperative ventures, thus adding another frontier furthering the goal of enhancing worker ownership and control.

5. Conclusion

We began with the premise that the conditions which trade unions are likely to confront in the future are not necessarily those of their own choosing.

These conditions are characterised by capital seeking the most conducive locations for investment and by nation-states competing with one another for technology, capital and markets.

As trade unions have to operate under such constraints, they are unlikely to be able to adopt an extreme welfarist position, nor can they pursue an extreme socialist position, although these constitute their fundamental objective. It would, therefore, seem that they can only adopt a realist position.

However, it is our contention that they can and should adopt an optimising position. This position combines the three types of positions and entails that unions contribute towards skills training and upgrading (the realist position), negotiate for some level of welfare protection for workers (welfarist position), and seek to enhance worker ownership and participation at various levels (socialist position).

The roles which trade unions play in seeking to achieve these goals require that they maintain a strong, autonomous voice, yet choose to cooperate with a state which is dedicated to improving the welfare of the citizenry. The rationale for this argument is that a strong state is in a strategic position to garner support for beneficial development programmes, while autonomous trade unions can ensure that the interest of members are factored into state and employer policies.

Notes

1. This section is a modified version of Section 4 of Tan's (1995) working paper.
2. The NTUC was formed in 1961 and formally registered in 1964.

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