



Ikke bare vanskelig for fremmedarbeiderne

Slik kan det gjøres

— Av MENTZ TOR AMUNDSEN og HEIDAR FJUE (foto) —

De siste dagene har VG rettet søkelyset mot fremmedarbeidernes situasjon her i landet, og vist at mange lever under svært krittikkverdige forhold. Forhold som burde være ukjent i velferdsstaten Norge.

Det som har vært trukket fram i disse beklagene ikke har alle fremmedarbeidere i Norge. Rundt om i landet har mange bedrifter fortsatt å gi utenlandske arbeidere de samme småle og usansynlige vilkår som norske arbeidere i samme situasjon.

En av disse bedriftene er Jøtul A/S i Oslo. Bedriftens holdning til de problemer en arbeider står overfor når han kommer til et fremmed land, med språklige og sosiale barrierer, kan stå som et skampel for andre.

Betryggende

I statens tilfelle vil det Jøtul stillt et trykkesett med til disposisjon for sine 17 jugoslaviske arbeidere.

Ylløen har ledt søvnen, i kjøkken med kjøleskap, komfyr, oppvaskemaskin, og rikelig med skap og skuffer. To bad med dusjett og vaskemiddel som man har innredet et felles vaskerom i kjøler med brett og håndtraker.

For Jøtul gikk til det skitne å tilberedte arbeidene i bedriften, tok man kontakt med arbeidsdirektoratet og den statlige arbeidsforordning i Jugoslavia. Kjøkkengreid ved bedriften var hele tiden med på å utarbeide planene, og jugoslavene fikk en detaljert oppgave om arbeidsforhold, lønnsvilkår og boligtilbud for de undersøkte kontakt med bedriften.

Samarbeid

Vi er meget godt fornøyd med samarbeidet med våre ansatte fra Jugoslavia, sier direktør John Gåhr til VG.

— De har hjulpet oss i en krevende situasjon. Vi klarer nemlig ikke å dekke vårt behov på det norske arbeidsmarkedet, og måtte se oss om etter alternative løsninger.

— Vi visste at det var ledig arbeidskraft i Jugoslavia, og sendte enmanns utvalgte for å se hvilke muligheter som fersk. Den utvalgte kom som nå er kommet i stand, og oss vi svarer til forventningene.

senstidlig som jeg tror at den kontrakt vi har med arbeidene er tryggende for begge parter.

— Jeg tror også at det opplegg vi har hatt med spesialutvalgte og kontakt med kjøkkengreid har bidratt til at samarbeidet har vært godt. Mitt har vi ikke hatt grilletninger mellom jugoslavene og de øvrige ansatte.

Jugoslavene

Jugoslavene hos Jøtul er godt fornøyd med bedriftens tilbud. De betaler 100 kroner månedlig for bolig i Skarshed Eriens vei, og har en bruttolønn på vel 25.000 kroner i løst.

De fleste tok jobb i Norge for å hjelpe familien økonomisk og leve bedre under de 17 og 1900 kroner hver hjem til Jugoslavia. Helseparten er allerede gått i hjemlandet, og vil tilbake til Jugoslavia når kontraktene går ut, men mange vil fortsatt gjøre de familier til Norge og forsøke å få fast arbeid her i landet.



KJØKKENET i Stedråd Hølen vei 13 er romslig med all moderne utstyr.

In 1973 the authorities warned that new worker protection regulations would be introduced for foundries, setting much stricter requirements with regard to safety and health measures.

Jøtul was not alone in facing such problems. In 1972 an official committee was established to study future perspectives within the Norwegian foundry industry. One of the committee's tasks was to take a detailed look at the requirements that foundries would have to face with respect to their most basic operating framework, and pertaining to factors such as organisation, technology, capital requirements, access to labour and the environment.³⁰² The committee report, which was presented in 1974, pointed out that labour recruitment might be the greatest future challenge facing the industry. There was already a shortage of workers, and the committee was of the opinion that access to labour would diminish further in the coming years.

The committee presented a number of proposed measures that would contribute to improved recruiting, including an increased commitment to training. However, what was most important was to improve the work environment. Compared with industry in general, the foundry industry was encumbered by special environmental problems. Noise, intense heat, poor indoor climate, and the risk of toxins constituted discomfort and risk factors which rendered foundries less attractive as places to work, and even though increased mechanisation had gradually reduced the physical stresses, foundry work was still heavy labour. As the committee observed, "We have... pointed out that recruitment to the industry is very low, and there can be no doubt that this is attributable in part to a work environment which offers little enticement in comparison with many other industries."³⁰³

At the end of the 1960s Jøtul began bringing in foundry workers from abroad because of the lack of skilled workers. Claims were made that these men were not accepted on the floor or treated properly by company management. From an article in VG, 16 December 1970.



From the polishing hall at Enebakkveien. In the 1970s the company was no longer as contemporary and modern as it once had been.

Jøtul had already long been aware of problems in finding workers. Because of its location, the company may have been affected earlier and more severely by this problem than many other foundries. The labour market was generally tight throughout all of the 1970s. In any event, Jøtul had been forced to obtain labour from outside of Norway early on. A contingent of Yugoslavian foundry workers was brought in around 1970, and thereafter labour was imported from abroad.

A number of factors was thus driving the need to renovate the production facilities. These factors were closely intertwined with one another. Modernisation and renovation would make the company a more attractive place to work, which would facilitate recruiting. Rebuilding would at the same time enable increased mechanisation, thereby making the company less dependent on manpower. It would make it possible to replace human hands with machinery. The timing was also fortunate in such a context. New technology which opened the way for substantially more extensive mechanisation of foundry operation became available during the 1970s.

A committee was established in 1974 to study the renovation of the foundry. The committee was headed by Knut Tronstad, and also included representatives from the engineering department and employees from various levels. The committee first evaluated various types of automated moulding machines from abroad. However, it was soon determined that the costs of switching to new automatic moulding machines would be excessive, in part because it would entail producing entirely new patterns. Instead the decision was made to develop a proprietary automatic moulder tailored to the existing patterns; in other words, to invest in the same solution which had been chosen in the mid-1950s.³⁰⁴

In January 1975 the committee presented a proposal for a multiphase expansion of the foundry. In the first phase, the primary aim would be to develop a new automated moulder and a new method for emptying castings from moulds, and to test out taller patterns and casting pools in the top-half

Kjell Næsje came to Jøtul in 1978 as a project leader during the planning of the foundry modernisation. Later he became CEO.



mould. The costs associated with this effort were estimated at roughly three million kroner. In phase two the foundry would be renovated for the new moulding system. Plans called for the installation of four new automatic moulding units. Furthermore, the entire production line would be retooled for more efficient operation.

There was much to be gained from the overhaul. The need for manpower would be reduced substantially, while production would at the same time increase by roughly 25 per cent. Furthermore, the work environment would be improved and, lastly, the space would be utilised more efficiently. On this basis, the board of directors resolved to implement phase one in the spring of 1975. Phase two would be implemented once the results from phase one were in hand.³⁰⁵

But the plan was never executed. First, it proved more difficult than expected to develop an automatic unit tailored to an entirely new production system. Second, it gradually became quite clear that the existing premises were poorly suited for major retooling. Quarters were cramped, and the premises were so old that they could not be utilised appropriately. Furthermore, neither internal nor external environmental requirements could be fulfilled using the existing facility. Third, an entirely new technology arrived during this period which was tailored to foundries involved in series production of standard models. The combination of all these factors led to the project being set aside. In December 1975 the board announced that "phase II cannot be realised in the form in which it was presented".³⁰⁶

Planning for a more comprehensive overhaul began in early 1976. A new committee was set up, again headed by Tronstad. Martin Lekøen and Ole Sandvik represented the employees in the committee. Commercial manager Rolf Sjøel and engineer Per Erdahl were also included. Outside consultants were also finally brought in – architect Jørgen Secher and civil engineer Kjell Nielsen.

The committee was faced with two key issues: system selection and siting. The idea that the company could develop new moulding systems independently was now shelved. This was due primarily to the fact that the company had gradually become aware of systems developed abroad which could fully meet the needs of the operation. The choice was between two alternatives: flask moulding and flaskless moulding. Flask moulding was the traditional method, while flaskless moulding represented an entirely new system. Three factors favoured the former system. First, it required less moulding sand. Second, it imposed minor requirements in terms of the sand's strength. Third, it was best suited to casting large, heavy products. On the other hand, the advantage of the flaskless system was that it was technically less complex. It was also much less expensive both to buy and to operate. It took up considerably less space. Lastly, it was much more flexible in terms of model design; in other words, it offered much more freedom from a design and moulding standpoint.³⁰⁷

The committee strongly favoured the flaskless system. In addition to the aforementioned advantages, experience gained in various foreign foundries confirmed for the committee that the system was very well suited to use in foundries engaged in series production. Three such machines were consequently evaluated in depth – a Danish model (Disamatic, delivered by Dansk Industrisyndikat), a German model (Formatic, delivered by Badische Maschinenfabrik), and an English model (Wallwork, delivered by Henry Wallwork).

The committee felt that the Danish Disamatic machine represented "the most revolutionary process in recent times".³⁰⁸ Its biggest advantage was that it required unusually low manpower to run. However, the machine did have significant drawbacks. It required entirely new patterns, which would alone cost more than 10 million kroner. Moreover, it could not be delivered in the size that Jøtul required. This option was, for the time being, unworkable. The Formatic machine could not be delivered in the size required by Jøtul either, thus leaving only the Wallwork machine, which the committee felt was the best machine at any rate. It was based on many of the same principles as the Disamatic machine, but offered some additional advantages. Wallwork had not previously delivered machines in the size desired by Jøtul, but the supplier was in the process of building a "giant machine" which was to be delivered to a foundry in the United States. Even that machine would not be as big as the one Jøtul would need, but the supplier had indicated that it would be able to deal with the dimensions which Jøtul sought.³⁰⁹ The supplier had indicated that a machine meeting Jøtul's specifications would cost around 40 million kroner.

The committee had proceeded all along on the assumption that the new foundry would be located at the existing property in Enebakkveien. However, in the final phase, the committee questioned such a solution. The plan was based on having all of the operations buildings constructed from the ground up, but as we know, the property was small. It was also located in the middle of a residential area, and on rugged terrain. The committee therefore asked whether it would not be more desirable to relocate the facility to a more accessible property with a better location, farther from residential buildings. The construction costs for the buildings themselves, which the committee had estimated at roughly 10 million kroner for a 10,000 m² facility, would be about the same regardless of where the construction occurred. The sole cost of relocating the production would be that of paying for a new piece of property.³¹⁰

The fight over location

The committee had thus set into motion a process that would produce a result that very few people could have imagined beforehand. Everyone was initially in agreement that a relocation would be the best solution. This included the employees, who saw an opportunity to extricate themselves from the old facilities in Enebakkveien. However, it was also assumed that the new foundry would lie within the city limits, and that remained the objective for a long time. Nevertheless, other options gradually began to emerge. In 1977 Jøtul had acquired the bankrupt Kråkerøy Works in Fredrikstad. The purpose of the purchase was to acquire additional foundry capacity during a period in which the foundry in Enebakkveien was overburdened. However, over the course of 1979–80, the idea was proposed to site the new foundry facility at Kråkerøy Works rather than in Oslo. Thus jobs became an issue as well, and in that fight, the employees ended up the losers.

As we have seen, Jøtul became part of Norcem in the summer of 1977. However, this did not lead to any immediate changes in the foundry plans. In the autumn of 1977 the new Jøtul board of directors, which was chaired by Norcem managing director Gerhard Heiberg, decided that a final resolution concerning the new foundry was to be adopted by no later than April 1978.³¹¹ A project organisation was simultaneously created to assume responsibility for the foundry project. Co-ordinating responsibility would be assumed by Rolf Sjøøl, while a separate project manager would be in charge of the actual study. An engineer, Kjell Næsje, was given this assignment. The organisation also included

Ola Sandvik deeply absorbed in his work. Sandvik was one of the employee representatives in the committee working on the foundry project.



In 1978 Jøtul bought the bankrupt Kråkerøy Works outside Fredrikstad. The purchase would be fateful for the employees at the foundry in Oslo.



employee representatives. A consultant from Kockum Iron Works in Sweden was brought in for assistance on technical matters.

A separate committee subordinate to the project team was to handle the siting question, and this committee considered various options over the spring of 1978. The assumption all along was that the foundry would be within the Oslo city limits. Property was naturally scarce there, but the committee had contacted the municipality of Oslo, which had eventually proposed five options. Most of these were unsuitable for Jøtul's purposes, but one was a good fit, a piece of property in Leirdal. Indeed, it was large enough, measuring roughly 60,000 square metres, and it was also readily accessible. In addition, it would be possible to expand the property should the need arise. Lastly, the municipal authorities had indicated that a transfer could be effected quickly.

The committee opted for Leirdal in August 1978. It had also come across other suitable options, including a property in Lørenskog. Nevertheless, the committee chose to prioritise the interests of the employees. Most of them lived in Oslo, and Leirdal would be the most favourable location in terms of commuting time.³¹²

The board followed the committee's recommendations, and resolved to continue negotiations with the municipality of Oslo concerning Leirdal. These negotiations clearly went smoothly. Just two months later the board announced that "it looks as though it's going to be the property in Leirdal".³¹³ A final resolution was adopted in April 1979. A unanimous board agreed that the new foundry would be sited in Leirdal. The board simultaneously adopted a plan aiming at starting construction in the autumn of 1980, with the facility becoming fully operational by the summer of 1982.³¹⁴ It thus appeared that the siting issue had finally been resolved.



In the middle of the photo is CEO Rolf Sjøfl. To the right sits chief engineer Per Erdal, who was central to the planning of the modernisation at the Enebakkveien plant.

However, events took an entirely different turn over the course of the next year. In the autumn of 1979 the board began to be concerned about the profitability of the Leirdal project. This was due mainly to the fact that the construction costs were proving to be much higher than had originally been anticipated. In 1978 it had been estimated that a new foundry on an empty lot would cost between 100 and 120 million kroner.³¹⁵ Conversely, a new estimate made in the summer of 1979 indicated that the construction costs would total roughly 160 million kroner; in other words, an increase of from 33 to 60 per cent.³¹⁶

As a result of the new estimates the owners reversed their decision to expand. The profitability of the project was now highly debatable, and the matter had to be reconsidered.³¹⁷ In addition, an alternative solution now arose which would be much cheaper than the Leirdal option. In Kråkerøy, Jøtul already had a large and suitable lot with production facilities, infrastructure and everything else already in place. Preliminary estimates clearly showed that the cost of modernising there rather than building a completely new facility in Oslo would be much lower. At the same time, there would be far less risk attached to expanding within an existing framework than in building a completely new plant. The associated costs were more predictable, and it would presumably be easier to put such a facility into service.³¹⁸

In February 1980 Heiberg announced that it would not be possible to build in Leirdal as they had planned.³¹⁹ The high costs were the main problem. Heiberg proposed instead to site the new production facility at Kråkerøy, in combination with a retooling of the Enebakkveien facility. Norcem's other representatives on the board supported such a plan. On the other hand, the employees found it to be "unrealistic". Their primary complaint was that continuing operations in Enebakkveien would require a major environmental investment, but there would be no gains in terms of efficiency. However, the owners decided to take a closer look at such an option, and resolved that it should be studied in greater depth.

Two months later the decision was taken. The board discussed the so-called "Kråkerøy Report" at a meeting in late April. The report asserted that the "Enebakkveien–Kråkerøy solution" would cost a total of roughly 75 million kroner: 58.7 million for Kråkerøy and 16 million for Enebakkveien.³²⁰ Norcem's representatives supported this solution. For their part, the employee representatives continued to back the Leirdal alternative. Earlier objections were reiterated. The employee representatives also expressed fears regarding the jobs in Enebakkveien. They felt there was little likelihood that Jøtul's management would, in a situation characterised by declining demand, be inclined to cut back operations at the ultramodern Kråkerøy facility in favour of the old Enebakkveien facility. However, Norcem management emphasised that Enebakkveien would be configured in such a way that "the jobs in Oslo can be preserved for the foreseeable future".

Despite such promises, the decision engendered a great deal of uncertainty. During the spring of 1980 the shop union tried to convince the political authorities to block Norcem management's plans. The shop union contacted Norwegian Minister of Industry Lars Skytøen, among others. The expansion in Kråkerøy was subject to final approval by the government, which thus held the key to the situation.³²¹ But the government was unwilling to stop the plans, and in August 1980 it issued the establishment licence. However, the government imposed the condition "that the Oslo facility must continue in accordance with the promises made by the Jøtul company management in connection with investments in environmental measures as ordered by Arbeidstilsynet [the local labour commission]".³²² This condition was included in the actual permit. The Ministry of Local Affairs, which was the department with jurisdiction in the matter, was thus satisfied that the interests of the employees in Oslo had been "sufficiently taken into account".³²³

Norcem management had stated repeatedly, both internally and publicly, that the jobs in Oslo were secure. This promise was repeated after the permit was granted as well. After the government had granted the building permit, Heiberg told *Aftenposten* that "we understand the employees' fears that the operation in Oslo could be shut down, but we are going to show that the foundry operation there really will be kept going".³²⁴

Enebakkveien shut down

The "Rehabilitation of Enebakkveien" project was launched in the autumn of 1980. The retooling activities started in the spring of 1981, and the bulk of the work was done during the summer of that same year. The finishing touches were put on the plant early the following spring. Construction began at Kråkerøy in September 1980. The decision had ultimately been made to install a system from Dansk Industrisyndikat (DISA). The system was commissioned in July 1981. It ran almost problem-free from the very first day. Moreover, it proved to be more efficient than had been expected. "The new DISA system operates very efficiently, produces high quality castings and reduces the need for after-treatment," announced the board of directors in 1982.³²⁵

The international market for stoves and fireplaces collapsed concurrent with the rehabilitation work in Oslo and the expansion in Kråkerøy. Signs of declining demand for solid fuel stoves and fireplaces appeared in many major countries toward the end of 1980, and the bottom nearly fell out of the international market over the course of 1981. It was estimated that total demand fell 50 per cent between 1980 and 1982. The decline was even steeper in some countries, such as the United States,

where it was estimated that the market had shrunk by a full 75 per cent.³²⁶ The decline was prompted mainly by the fact that the oil crisis was coming to an end and the price of oil had begun to return to normal levels.

A number of manufacturers had emerged during the oil crisis, particularly in the United States. However, many of them did not survive the post-1980 downturn, and production thus gradually self-corrected to meet demand. But established manufacturers were also hit fairly hard by the flagging market. Turnover at Jøtul fell from 282 million kroner in 1980 to barely 223 million in 1982. Production declined from 13,000 metric tons to 9,800. The financial results were also severely weakened. During the latter years of the 1970s, the annual profit before taxes had been in the range of 15 million kroner. Conversely, the company posted losses in 1981 and 1982, with the loss for 1981 totalling fully 13 million kroner. The entire reversal was blamed on the weakened export market. The Norwegian market remained solid after 1980.

Staffing was reduced as a result of the production cutback. The number of employees was cut from 1,078 to 910 over the course of 1981. Some 20 workers were dismissed, with the remainder leaving

A new technological advance. In 1982 the new Disa unit was brought on line at the Kråkerøy Works. With the transition to the Disa unit, operations were made much more efficient. At the same time the production capacity increased dramatically.



Avgjørelse mandag:

Blått lys for Jøtul i Oslo

Støperibedriften Jøtul er i alvorlige vanskeligheter. Mange ansatte har vært permittert i opptil 40 uker, lagrene er fulle og fremtidsutsiktene om mulig enda dårligere. Førstkommende mandag vil sannsynligvis Jøtuls styre foreslå en nedleggelse av støperiet i Oslo, noe som i så fall vil medføre oppsigelse av 150 ansatte. De ansatte på sin side har allerede gått til anmeldelse av bedriftsledelsen ved adm. dir. Heiberg. - Bedriftsledelsen har garantert at Oslo-avdelingen ikke skal nedlegges, hevder de ansatte.

Av Reidar Gjærum

Utviklingen ved Jøtuls fabrikk er de siste par årene har utviklet seg fra stor optimisme og ekspansjon til en tristestilt markedsituasjon med stadig stigende underskudd.

Da Norcem-konsernet overtok A/S Jøtul i 1977 stod bedriften foran store utbyggingsplaner. Planene var å bygge et stort bedriftsanlegg på Leirdal i Oslo, men i 12. time vedtok man i stedet å bygge ut eksisterende anlegg på Kråkerøy ved Fredrikstad. For Oslos vedkommende var dette et alvorlig nedslag. Verdifulle arbeidsplasser og skatte kroner forsvant ut av kommunen. Men fra bedriftsledelsens side ble det fremholdt at man ikke skulle avvike eksisterende virksomhet i Oslo. Så sent som ifjor var stod så anlegget på Kråkerøy ferdig.

NY SITUASJON

I dag, drøyt et år etter utviklingen på Kråkerøy, er situasjonen så alvorlig at bedriften ønsker å nedlegge all støperivirksomhet i Oslo. De siste par årene er virksomheten i Oslo redusert betraktelig, fra 500 ansatte til omtrent 300 i dag. Bedriften regner med å ha tapt ca. 28 millioner kroner hittil i år, og det er ingen lysning å se. For å sikre arbeidsplassene på Kråkerøy, ønsker man nå å nedlegge virksomheten i Oslo. Kun en del av administrasjonen vil bli tilbake. Man regner med å spare inn minst 25 millioner kroner ved å konsentrere støperivirksomheten på Kråkerøy.

RETSSAK

De ansatte har anlagt sak mot bedriftsledelsen for brutte løfter. Denne saken har allerede vært i forlikrådet, men det er sannsynlig at den vil ende heit til

Høyesterett. De ansatte viser til at adm. dir. Heiberg så sent som i 1980 både muntlig og skriftlig slo fast at det ikke ville komme på tale å nedlegge virksomheten i Oslo. Videre hevder man at det i bedriftens etableringssamtalke for å utvide virksomheten på Kråkerøy, heter at det er en forutsetning at Oslo-anlegget skal opprettholdes. De ansatte ønsker i første rekke noen måneders utsettelse før man tar stilling til bedriftens fremtid. I løpet av denne tiden håper man at omsetningsutviklingen skal svinge i positiv retning. Fra bedriftsledelsens side avviser man imidlertid dette med den begrunnelse at man er oppe i ca. 2,5 millioner i tap pr. mnd. Når det gjelder markedsituasjonen, så er denne også stadig like mørk. I løpet av de siste to årene har totalmarkedet for Jøtuls produkter gått ned med over 50 prosent.

HURTIG AVVIKLING

Dersom styret vedtar en avvikling førstkommende mandag, vil dette forslaget bli lagt frem for bedriftsforsamlingen allerede i løpet av juni. En avvikling av støperiet vil så kunne gjennomføres allerede tidlig i høst.

KOMMUNALT ENGASJEMENT

I Oslo kommune ser man meget alvorlig på utviklingen ved Jøtul. Kommunen har hatt flere møter med både ledelse og de ansatte og i bystyrets møte sist onsdag ble også saken tatt opp. Det er imidlertid svært lite kommunen kan gjøre i en situasjon som denne. På den ene siden ønsker man ikke å legge seg opp i bedriftens disposisjoner og økonomiske vurderinger. Men samtidig er man i den forvildelede situasjonen at Oslo gjennomsnittlig mister 1000 industriarbeidsplasser årlig. Både når det gjelder arbeidsplassstilbudet og skatteinntekter, er dette en svært betenkelig utvikling.

due to natural attrition or acceptance of early retirement. In addition, the decision was made in September to switch to a four-day work week.

One key issue stood out in connection with the cutbacks: how should they be divided between the two production units? The initial idea was that Kråkerøy would account for roughly 60 per cent of total production, Enebakkveien the remainder. This breakdown was initially applied to allocating the cutbacks. At Enebakkveien the entire second shift was laid off as of September 1981, with no one being dismissed in the first round. On the other hand, Kråkerøy had to absorb the 20 dismissals, and 45 more workers were laid off there.³²⁷

However, a conflict soon arose between, on the one hand, what made the most financial sense overall and, on the other hand, consideration for the workers at Enebakkveien. After the DISA machine at Kråkerøy entered service, a large productivity gap naturally arose between the two units. Furthermore, the capacity at Kråkerøy was more than sufficient to handle the entire production alone. From a purely financial standpoint, all the factors argued against keeping Enebakkveien open.

Certainly the board did emphasise, in connection with the cutbacks in the autumn of 1981, that "keeping a minimum of one shift working at Enebakkveien for the foreseeable future is still a basic assumption".³²⁸ The board was further of the opinion that any necessary layoffs in 1982 would first occur in Fredrikstad, although "subject to the condition that the resulting financial impact is not unreasonable". At the same time, the company was clearly in a bind. Production was lower than it had been in many years. At the same time, the company's production capacity was higher than it had ever been. Finally, there was a large discrepancy between the divisions in terms of production. In other words, the arrangement involving the combined operation of Enebakkveien and Kråkerøy made absolutely no sense from a purely financial standpoint. It was stressed at a November board meeting that "the current volume is too low in relation to the size of the company's organization".³²⁹ No position was taken as to where the cutbacks would eventually be made, but the board's vice chairman, Kjell O. Kran, emphasised that Enebakkveien clearly had the weakest productivity.

Article about the shut-down of Jøtul in Oslo.

While the board was deliberating these issues, certain individuals within the management were at the same time beginning to consider what savings could be gained from relocating the entire production operation to Kråkerøy.³³⁰ Their calculations indicated that the potential savings were fairly substantial. It was estimated that such a solution could yield annual savings of between 25 and 35 million kroner in operating costs. Work on this option continued, and in May the management issued a more detailed report. This report confirmed the earlier estimates, and on this basis the management recommended that Enebakkeveien be shut down as quickly as possible. A five-month phase-out period was deemed feasible.³³¹

Naturally the report met with strong protests from the employees in Oslo. The matter was discussed at a board meeting in June. The employee representatives asserted that the report was based on false premises and that, among other things, the market situation had been assessed too pessimistically. They also pointed out that a shutdown would constitute a breach of management's repeated promises to keep the operation going, as well as a violation of the government's conditions for granting a permit to undertake the construction at Kråkerøy. They consequently sought to have the matter deferred so that it could be reassessed.

However, the owners and management had now taken their decision, and they had no desire to postpone a resolution to shut down the operation. Managing director Bjørn Sellæg, who had taken over from Rolf Sjøli in early 1982, stated that both the productivity and market situations would have to "change radically in relation to our expectations in order for it to be possible to preserve the operations at Enebakkeveien".³³² The owners agreed with this assessment. "Based on Jøtul's financial situation and the current market outlook," board chairman Heiberg agreed to shut Enebakkeveien down effective October 1, 1982.

The employees were undoubtedly correct in their assertion that the shutdown represented a broken promise. As we have seen, Norcem management had stated repeatedly during the period between 1979 and 1981, both internally and publicly, that the construction at Kråkerøy posed no threat to the jobs at Enebakkeveien. Heiberg repeated this promise as late as October 1981. The employees were also correct in their assertion that the shutdown represented a violation of the conditions set by the government when granting a building permit for the Kråkerøy expansion. Nevertheless, such arguments had little effect in 1982. Obviously the promises made by the owners were in no way binding, except on a purely moral basis. Nor did the formal terms suffice to prevent the shutdown. At a meeting with the shop union in February 1982, Minister of Industry Jens-Halvard Bratz (Conservative Party) indicated that the government could not intervene to prevent a potential shutdown on the basis of the terms set forth in the permit. The relevant provision was too vague for that to be possible.³³³ Bratz reiterated this position in June of that same year, after the shutdown resolution had been finally adopted. He told Aftenposten that "the government can find no formal grounds for preventing the shutdown of Jøtul's operations in Oslo".³³⁴ It was thus quite clear that the authorities were not willing to intervene.



In the 1980s, the "marketing decade", it became more acceptable to let the market decide which jobs would survive and which would not. The authorities began to show a declining interest in interfering directly in the affairs of certain industries and individual companies. At the same time the selective arrangement policy from the 1970s was largely set aside. Here is an ad from Norsk Arbeidsgiverforening [Norwegian Employers' Association], printed in Aftenposten on 6 February 1982.

150 Jøtulansatte uten arbeide:

Styret legger ned, ansatte reiser sak

BRIT MYHRVOLD

Jøtuls støperi i Oslo blir nedlagt fra 1. oktober. Dette forslaget vedtok flertallet i Jøtuls styre å fremme overfor bedriftsforsamlingen 30. juni, etter et møte som varte i ni og en halv time. Styret sluttet dermed fullt opp om forslaget fra administrasjonen ved Jøtul. Den ene av de ansattes representanter, Lars Borgersrud, gikk inn for å utsette behandlingen av saken i tre måneder. Nedleggelse av støperiet i Oslo betyr at Oslo mister 150 arbeidsplasser.

— Hvorfor kunne ikke styret gå med på utsettelse i tre måneder?

— Vi tror ikke markedsforholdene vi er oppe i vil endre seg, og en utsettelse ville dermed ikke få noen annen konsekvens enn dagens vedtak. Vi tror også

at det vil bli vanskeligere å få jobb i Oslo om tre måneder, sier styreformannen i Jøtul, adm. direktør Gerhard Helberg i Norcem, til Aftenposten.

— De ansatte har allerede gått til rettsak på grunn av løftebrudd?

— Det jeg uttalte da vi etablerte oss i Kråkerey, var at det ikke ville innvirke på arbeidsforholdene i Oslo i overskuelig fremtid. Nå er situasjonen en helt annen. Markedsforholdene har forverret seg betydelig de siste to år, sier Helberg.

— Er det prognosene som har vært for dårlige?

— Vi mener at de prognoser som lå til grunn skulle være et godt nok grunnlag. Men selv om markedsforholdene nå skulle svinge og bli bedre, regner vi ikke med en så sterk svingning at det kan gi grunnlag for å opprettholde to støperier, sier Helberg.

Helberg sier at han håper at man nå kan konsentrere seg om hva som kan gjøres for de som blir overflødige. Norcem vil tilby førtidspensjonering til dem som er over 60 år. Det dreier seg om 20 ansatte i Oslo og 20 i Fredrikstad, og dette vil koste

Norcem-konsernet 20 millioner kroner. Dessuten vil man i en periode operere med overbemanning på 30 i monteringsavdelingen i Oslo, hvor det normalt skal være 170 ansatte, opplyser direktør Gerhard Helberg.

Styreflertallet, som gikk inn for nedleggelse, besto av eiernes fire medlemmer og en representant for de ansatte ved bedriften i Fredrikstad.

Klubbformann Martin Løken sier til Aftenposten at de ansatte både er dypt uenige i og skuffet over styrets vedtak.

— En utsettelse hadde ikke betydning særlig mye for bedriften, mener Løken, som ikke har tro på at bedriftsforsamlingen vil komme til noe annet resultat. — Vi hadde en rekke forslag, blant annet at all montering, som nå er fordelt mellom de to bedriftene, skulle overføres til Oslo. Men heller ikke dette fikk vi medhold i, sier Løken.

Det er nå to år siden de ansatte i Oslo hevdet at en etablering på Kråkerey ville bety nedleggelse i Oslo. Løken sier at de frykter at også de 140 arbeidsplassene i monteringen vil forsvinne på litt lengre sikt.

Big protests – but to no avail. Management's decision in the spring of 1982 to shut down production at Enebakkeveien was final.



30 000 deltok i politisk streik

Det blir anslått at rundt 30 000 deltok i den politiske demonstrasjonsstreiken fra klokken 12.00 til 13.00 i Oslo igår. Den var spesielt rettet mot nedleggelse av Jøtul, men også mot den reduksjon av industriarbeidsplasser som har skjedd i hovedstaden i løpet av de siste ti år.

Samtlige store industribedrifter var rammet av streiken. Men det publikum merket var at også busser, trikker og T-bane stod stille en time. Barnhaverne lukket, og foreldrene ble bedt

om å hente barna klokken 12.00 og bringe dem tilbake klokken 13.00.

I Østlandssendingen var det fem minutters stilhet fordi Kringkastingens Landsforening hadde tatt ut teknikerne i streik. Renholdsverket og sosialetaten var ellers blant dem som var streikerammet en time igår.

Streiken blir ansett som en lovlig, politisk demonstrasjonsstreik.

This reluctance on the part of the political authorities is attributable to a number of factors. Bratz was clearly correct in saying that the permit condition was capable of broad interpretation, and that it hardly constituted grounds for preventing the shutdown from a purely legal standpoint.

In addition, the overall political will to intervene was by no means great. Around 1980 the view that economic policy should be based more on general measures and less on specific interventions at the industry or company level was gaining increasing support. Business growth was to be guided to a greater extent by the mechanisms of the market rather than through direct governmental control. Underlying this change in attitude was an acknowledgement that the economic policies pursued during the 1970s, which placed major emphasis on such direct interventions, had served to impede needed adaptations at both the industry and company level.³³⁵

An enforced preservation of unproductive units by the government would have run counter to such a policy. Moreover, Bratz and the non-socialist government to which he belonged were not the only adherents of this view. By 1980 the Norwegian Industrial Growth Committee [Industrivekstutvalget] also backed this revision of economic policy. The committee was chaired by Finn Lied – a former minister of industry and one of the Norwegian Labour Party's leading industrial strategists for many years.

When the politicians refused to come to the rescue, there was no turning back. Yet the employees did file a complaint against Heiberg for breach of promise.³³⁶ Several political pronouncements were also made which drew strong support and a good deal of public attention. The Norwegian Federation of Unemployment Insurance Funds [Samorg] in Oslo urged its members to demonstrate in support of the Jøtul workers on the occasion of the June board meeting at which the final resolution regarding the shutdown was expected to be adopted. Several thousand people turned up outside the offices in Grenseveien.³³⁷ Another tactic was also employed. In order to show the Jøtul management that the shutdown was unwarranted, the workers staged a "productivity demonstration". The work pace was accelerated, resulting in a 25 per cent increase in productivity.

But these measures did not affect the board's decision. Demolition of the Enebakkveien foundry began late that summer, and by October the company finally ended 129 years of continuous operation at the site. The management would remain at the Grønvold premises, as would the enamelling and assembly department. Nevertheless, the shutdown of the foundry resulted in a reduction in the number of employees in the Oslo department from 500 to 140. Seven years later, in 1989, these functions were also relocated to Fredrikstad, and Jøtul vacated the capital city entirely.

A deliberate strategy?

The process which led to the shutdown of the Enebakkveien facility raises many questions, but perhaps the most salient point is the great discrepancy between the words and actions of the owners. How could the management at Norcem say with such certainty for three years that Enebakkveien would remain in operation, only to deny all their previous pronouncements as soon as an alternate solution proved to be more profitable?

In her thesis, Ellen Røsjø analysed the process which led to the shutdown of the Oslo foundry in 1982. ³³⁸ Røsjø goes a long way towards showing that a deliberate strategy underlay the way in which the owners acted, a strategy that extended all the way back to the purchase of the Kråkerøy Works in early 1978. The plan to relocate all production to Fredrikstad took shape quite early on. The promises made were subsequently intended to protect production from strikes and demonstrations while the planning and expansion in Fredrikstad were under way. "The guaranties which were made had... a calculated effect: They safeguarded production. The company was totally dependent upon the production in Oslo to ensure delivery capacity and market position until such time as Kråkerøy was fully constructed and operational so as to be able to take over the job". ³³⁹

We must, however, ask whether such an explanation is entirely believable. First, the future was hardly as clear and unambiguous to Norcem management as such an explanation assumes. A number of factors gradually impacted the situation as events proceeded, factors which management could neither predict nor control at the start of the process.

Second, Norcem management's plans did not initially involve a major modernisation of Kråkerøy at all. Rather, the intention was to expand production capacity through a combination of retooling Enebakkeveien and acquiring production units abroad – a solution which was consistent with Norcem's internationalisation strategy. Feelers were put out to that effect in 1977 and 1978, mainly in the United States. For this reason, Heiberg was said to have long opposed the purchase of Kråkerøy. ³⁴⁰

Third, the idea of a shutdown initially arose within the management at Jøtul, and not among the leadership at Norcem. As we have seen, the Jøtul management undertook to calculate the financial consequences of such a solution on its own initiative. ³⁴¹ This process had been under way for a short while before the results were presented to Norcem management. Heiberg was in fact initially sceptical of such a solution. ³⁴² This is actually not all that surprising. Heiberg was Norcem's public face, and a renowned business leader who held numerous positions in the Norwegian business world. As a result, his reputation rested on appearing trustworthy. If Enebakkeveien were to be shut down, he would be confronted with his earlier pronouncements, and would thus risk being labelled as dishonest and lacking a sense of social responsibility. On these grounds Heiberg was, at the very least, reluctant.

Nevertheless, the fact that Norcem management did indeed commit a gross breach of promise cannot be denied. Despite the fact that the financial factors all eventually pointed in favour of the Kråkerøy alternative, the employees were promised repeatedly that their jobs were safe. Thus it might be asserted that Heiberg and Norcem management were not conscious of their responsibilities as owners. Of course, a business executive is always compelled to let financial considerations be determinative. Heiberg's biggest mistake was to rashly make promises which could not be kept under changed circumstances. The case must be viewed more as a manifestation of unfortunate management rather than a long-term tactical strategy aimed at deceiving the employees.

However, once a shutdown first became a possibility, it cannot be denied that Norcem management felt less obligated to the Jøtul employees than would have been the case under different circum-