

## CHAPTER - IV

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## WHY DO WORKERS JOIN A TRADE UNION?

A worker may join a trade union for a variety of reasons though he may be no more conscious of the motive or motives that prompt him to join a union. Many recent studies have sought to know the reasons of union members for their participation. The main reasons why workers join trade unions may be stated as follows:

i) The individual worker all alone feels specially weak in a world of mass production and mass movement. An organisation may give him an opportunity to join others for the achievement of those objectives that he considers as socially desirable;

ii) The primary purpose of trade union is to safeguard the economic interest its members. To improve and maintain the wages at a reasonable standard is one of the important reasons for which a worker joins a trade union;

iii) A worker does not only require the bare necessities of existence but he also wants to obtain the amenities of civilized life, eg., a better home, more leisure, better conditions of work, etc. The workers also join the trade unions, to a very large extent, because they have interest such as these to promote or defend;

iv) The need for trade unions arises due to this fact also that the workers require help in time of sickness or death, protection from suffering and want when they are out of job

and an income of some kind when they are too old to work any more. As stated by John Price (British Trade Unions), in England "the trade unions have provided cash benefits themselves and have worked for the development of social services by the state, recognizing that the needs of the individual are, to a large extent, the responsibility of the whole community";

v) There is another reason for the existence of trade unions, viz, need for adequate machinery for settling the relations between the employers and employees. A trade union is the best and socially most desirable to conduct bargaining on behalf of the workers' organisations is an essential basis for the establishment of peace in industry; and

vi) Trade unionism developed on proper lines lessons violent class conflicts and, thus, is beneficial to employers, the employees, the state and the public.

Thus no agency formed or promoted to look after the interests of the workers can be a real substitute for trade unions. The organisation of workers is, therefore, not only necessary but inevitable.

#### THEORIES OF TRADE UNIONISM:

A number of ideologies have influenced the trade unions in different places from time to time. Unions have been affected in one way or the other by the social, economic and even political movements in various countries. The place of trade unions and their objectives, therefore, has been differently emphasized by different thinkers.

Marx and Engels, in Germany, influenced trade unionism in various ways. To Marx, a trade union was first and foremost an organising centre. It provided the locus for collecting the forces of working classes. Referring to the struggle between the class of wage earners and the class of employers, Marx brings out that modern technique of production has concentrated the social means of production under the ownership of the capitalist who, thus, became the absolute master. The worker, of course, remains a free person to dispose of the labour he wishes but, "having lost possession of the means of production which he had as a master workman during the preceding handicraft stage of industry, his freedom is an illusion only and his bargaining is no greater than if he were a slave. The theory of a class war and dialectical materialism enunciated by Marx has created a class of trade unionists who regard labour organisation as essential to bring about a revolutionary and fundamental change in the social order in which we are living. For them trade unions are the instruments to overthrow capitalism. According to Marx, trade unionism thus represents a prime instrument of the class struggle between proletarian - workers and capitalist businessmen. He believed that capitalism itself renders effective, although unintended, aid to its enemies by developing three tendencies --

a) The tendency of heavy concentration of wealth and capital in the hands of a few of the largest capitalists reduces the number of the natural supporters of capitalism,

b) The tendency towards a steady depression of wages and a growing misery of the wage-earning class keeps revolutionary order alive, and

c) The inevitable and frequent economic crises under capitalism disorganise it and hasten it on towards destruction.

Marx advocated that the working class must not divert itself from its revolutionary programme and the labour struggle must be for the abolition of capitalism. Though he later showed some modification in the direction of an evolutionary and peaceful passing of capitalism rather than a revolutionary and violent overthrow of it, his fundamental view of trade union movement as a political agency for effecting the end of capitalism did not change. In his view it was imperative for the workers of the world to collect in an international trade union movement to accomplish the death of capitalism. He also stressed that complete emancipation of workers involves co-operation between political struggle and trade unionism.

The Webbs (Sydney and Beatrice Webb) in their work 'Industrial Democracy' have put forward a non-revolutionary theory of industrial democracy. They have considered trade unionism to be the extension of the principle of democracy in the sphere of industry. Trade unions are regarded to be "institutions for overcoming managerial dictatorship to strengthen individual labourers and to give them some voice in the determination of the conditions under which they have to work." The Webbs also recognised permanency of class conflict, but they thought that

a solution could be found out through equality and collective agreements. In their view, therefore, trade unionism is not an instrument for the revolutionary overthrow of the capital order but, on the contrary, is a means of equalising the bargaining power of labour and capital and thus encouraging the adoption of common rules which are practical and humane. Thus, trade unions provide a means by which workers can cope with the stronger political and economic power of employers and can introduce democracy into working relationships. To the Webbs, the trade union movement, therefore, is a vital instrument of the evolutionary process.

According to G.D.H.Cole (The World of Labour), the ultimate objective of trade unions should be the control of workers over industry, though the immediate objective may be the realisation of higher wages and better conditions of employment for the workers. He also recognizes the inevitability of class struggle and according to him, trade unions exist to carry on this class struggle. He says, "The class struggle is preached not on the ground that it is desirable but on the ground that it is a monstrous and irrefutable fact. The class structure is established in our social institutions and it is only by means of the class struggle that we can escape from it." According to Kerr and Siegel, a trade union gets workers organised and disciplined which is indispensable for industrial development. Anarchy and industrialization are incompatible. However, this view does not throw any light on the basic purpose of a trade union.

S.H.Slitcher, extending the Webbs' theory still further in his analysis of the purpose of unionism stated that wage-earners

could not exercise much control over working conditions through individual bargaining because of various reasons. In his view, "Individual bargaining is an unsatisfactory way of controlling work and working conditions because, employers who use methods which improve the labour supply, are not sure of gaining as a result and employers who use methods which spoil the labour supply suffer no direct loss." Consequently he believed that workers, through their unions, developed a system of work rules and traditions 'a system of industrial jurisprudence' which served as a means of production to employees in their work.

Contending from the study of American labour movement that the objectives of unionism change, Selig Perlman (University of Wisconsin, United States), propounded his (Scarcity - Consciousness. Theory of Labour Movement.' According to him, the character of the labour movement in any particular country must depend upon the particular combination of three factors -

i) The resistance power of capitalism, determined by its own historical development;

ii) The degree of dominance over the labour movement by the intellectual's mentality which regularly underestimates capitalism's resistance power and overestimates labour's will to radical change, and

iii) The degree of maturity of a trade union mentality.

He believes that the impulse of the employees is not "to suppress the employer but to suppress their competitive menaces -- To do so they feel they must organise into a union and engage in

a class struggle against the employer. It is labour's aim to continue increasing bargaining power and with its share of industrial control, just as it is the employer's aim to maintain a status quo or better. Although this presupposes a continuous struggle, it is not a revolutionary but an opportunist struggle." While Marx conceived technical progress as the cause class struggle, perlman saw the forces of market as the basis of the conduct of organised labour and industrial struggle. In his words, "The beginning of class struggle had nothing to do with machine technique and a capitalist ownership of the tools of production, the underlying cause was the rapid extension of markets out running the technical development of industry." Referring to the developments during the 17th to 19th centuries, he concluded that the class struggle instead of becoming sharper and sharper with advance of capitalism and leading to a social revolution, as predicted by Marx, grew less and less revolutionary in reality and led to a compromise or succession of compromises, viz. collective agreements.

Prof. Robert F. Hoxie, an American economist, gave a socio-psychological interpretation to trade unionism and believed that trade unions or labour organisations have emerged owing to a group psychology - a trade union constituting a common interpretation and set of beliefs concerned with the problems confronting the workers and generalised programme of amelioration. He established the idea of functional types of trade unions and found the essence of unionism "to be a social philosophy an interpretation of the social facts and relationships which bear upon the particular group of workers." He argues that "Workers similarly situated economically and socially and closely associated and not too divergent in



temperament and having will tend to develop a common interpretation of the social situation and a common solution of the problem of living, "and thus, "unionism is not so much an outward organisation as a like minded group." The analysis of functional types of trade unions led him, to believe that "unionism is not a unified, consistent entity .... Unionism is at bottom non-unitary." He further states that "while unionism in its ultimate effects on industrial organisation and conduct of industry is democratic in the sense of its effort to take from the hands of employers autocratic feudalistic control and put a share of the control and conduct into the hands of the workers -- tending to democratic industrial revolution .... Unionism in its own organisation and conduct is hardly to be called democratic."

According to Frank Tannenbaum, the emergence of trade unionism is spontaneous and inherent in the growth of capitalism. He believes that "The fundamental cause of exploitation of men is the use of machine and, therefore, the labour movement is the result and the machine is the major cause and thus the labour movement seems destined to achieve complete control of the industrial functions of the community by substituting service for profit in industrial enterprise and with service democracy into industry." The machine threatens the security of the individual worker and the wage earner reacts, in self-defence through a union, to attempt to control the machine, and in this process he contributes, through the union, to the well being of the present day society and intends ultimately to displace the capitalist system by 'industrial democracy; an achievement which is implicit in the growth and development of the organised labour movement.

According to Gandhiji, class collaboration and harmony rather than class struggle led to emergence of trade unionism. Trade unionism is not anti-capitalistic. The idea is to take from capital labour's due share and no more, and this, not by paralysing capital, but by reform among labourers from within and by their own self-consciousness, not again through the cleverness of non-labour leaders, but by educating labour to evolve its own leadership and its own self-reliant, self-existing organisation. Its direct aim is not in the last degree political. Its direct aim is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. The indirect result of this evolution when, and if it ever becomes complete, will naturally be tremendously political." The Gandhian approach to trade unionism is thus not only related to material aspect but also to moral and intellectual aspects Gandhiji emphasised that a trade union must strive for all-round betterment of the working class including training of its members in a supplementary occupations.

The various approaches to trade unionism may be summed up as follows:-

The Marxist approach looks upon unionism as the instrument for the complete displacement of capitalists both in government and industry by its revolutionary programme. The Webbs believed that trade unions represent a means by which the principle of democracy applied to the political sphere could be stretched to industrial field. The trade union movement in their view was an important instrument of the evolutionary process. Slitcher believed that workers, through their unions developed a system of industrial

jurisprudence which served as a means of protection to them in their work. Perlman viewed trade unionism as essential pragmatic and thought that it struggles constantly for the improvement of economic conditions and relationships through broad schemes of social and economic reform. Hoxie also viewed trade unionism as essentially pragmatic and non-revolutionary in its functioning but he did not stress plurist group responses to the underlying process of industrialisation. According to Tannenbaum, trade unionism is "unconscious rebellion against the atomisation of industrial society." The Gandhian approach observes trade unionism as essentially reformist organisation and economic institution to promote class collaboration as "capital and labour should supplement and help each other. They should be a great family living in unity and harmony." Thus, the basic objective of trade union every where and at every time continues to be economic ..... the safeguarding and furthering and economic interests of its members. Recently, the trade union activities are becoming increasingly more diversified and trade unionism has, therefore, ceased to be simply an economic phenomenon. It touches all the social services at some point. According to H.J.Laski (Trade unions in the new Society), "The union problem is a complex of economic, legal, ethical and social problems, which can be understood and met only by knowing the facts and genesis of the view-point of organized labour in all its diversity-contradictions and shifting-character, and by considering this view point in relations to developing social conditions and social traditions."

Thus, the interest of the trade unions in the larger economic problems and policies of the country where they function has been gradually increasing. They also now demand a greater share in the management of the nation's industries. The objectives of trade unions today may be stated as follows:

i) Defending or improving the wages and conditions of employment of labour;

ii) Raising the status of the worker as a citizen of industry and of society; and

iii) Extending the area of social control of the nation's economic life and participating in that control.

Clyde E. Danker (An Introduction to labour) emphasises unions aims as threefold, viz., economic security and betterment, industrial and social status and the role of unions as political institutions. It does not imply that the trade unions in every country must definitely pursue the objectives stated above. In fact the extent of industrial development and political and social conditions of a particular country all have an important bearing upon the development of trade unions and their objectives. Trade unionism in every country is, thus, being shaped and influenced by the particular stage of development in that country.

#### TYPES OF TRADE UNIONS:

There are several types of trade unions. Hoxie identified the following types of unions:

i) Business unionism (also known as Bread and Butter unionism)

aims at improving the wages, working hours and conditions of workers.

ii) Predatory unionism which serves as a means for the enrichment of its leaders who pay only secondary attention to the advancement of interests of members or purpue their own interests by whatever means deemed appropriate at the regardless of ethical or legal codes;

iii) Dependent unionism (also called company unionism) which relies upon the support of employers or company and hence is to likely to pay secondary importance to the interest of members;

iv) Friendly unionism which is idealistic, conservativation and law-abiding and mainly aspires to elevate the moral, intellectual and social life of the workers to improve the conditions under which they work, to raise their material standard of living and provide them security against unemployment, accident, disease or old age. It employs the method of collective bargaining

v) Revolutionary Unionism which is extremely radical both in viewpoint and action. It is class conscious and tends to repudiate the existing institutional order, specially individual ownership of productive means and wage system. It is strongly inclined towards strikes and violence and look upon unionism and socialism as the two wings of the labour movement.

TRADE UNIONS AND WAGES:

Since the primary purpose of a trade union is to promote economic interest of its members, the question of wages has been the main concern of the trade unions. It is generally believed that trade unions by improving the bargaining power of labour can bring about a rise in wages. The trade unions can raise the wages in the following ways.

1) The trade unions by organising the workers can improve their bargaining power and through collective bargaining enable them to obtain a rise in their wages to the level of the full value of their marginal net product.

2) Trade unions can improve the marginal productivity of labour itself in various ways and thus, can be successful in driving up the general rate of wages. The trade unions can force the less efficient employers to use more up-to-date appliances and organisation and thus, by placing labour in combination with capital in a better way, they can increase the marginal productivity of labour.

3) The trade unions can improve the efficiency of labour itself and thereby its marginal productivity by fostering habits of Sobriety, thrift and honesty and by helping workers in acquiring better education and training.

4) A trade union may increase the marginal productivity of a particular group of workers by suitably restricting its supply. This policy will succeed only under certain conditions such as the inelasticity of the demand for the commodity which the particular group of labour helps to produce, small proportion of wages of the workers to the total expenses of production and easy availability

of other classes of workers and other factors but it is doubtful whether the trade unions will succeed in their purpose by doing so in the long run. The high cost of employing such group of labour may induce the employers to search for substitutes or to invent machinery for doing the work done by that group. In that case the demand for labour will fall off and so also its rate of wages. In practice the trade unions not only increase the nominal wages of the workers in the ways indicated above but they also increase their real wages in the form of improvement in the conditions of work and various other benefits to the workers from time to time.

A common criticism against trade unions is that they exert an upward pressure over prices through their demand for wage-increases but since wage costs constitute only a minor percentage of the total costs of production, hence a moderate rise in wages need not result in a rise in the total costs provided proper care is taken for economizing on the other items entering into the costs. Besides, in under-developed countries, the trade unions being generally weak, wage-rises usually follow the rise in the cost of living and seldom precede it and in its upward movement also, the money-wages usually very often lag behind the rises in the cost of living. Further, the long-run effect of trade unionism in raising up the level of wages is really beneficial to an under-developed economy because in view of the low propensity to consume of the rich, a redistribution of income in favour of the workers in a developing economy increases the size of the home market for consumer goods. Since the limited size of the home market for consumer goods industries but also in the industries producing capital goods,

the expansion of the size of the home market will have a favourable influence over the whole economy. In addition, the higher wages in the under-developed countries may also have a favourable effect upon the workers' productivity through a rise in the standard of living reflected in better physical efficiency as well as the will to work. It has been asserted that poverty in under-developed countries keeps the efficiency of the worker at a low level.

But the necessity of higher wages cannot justify the pursuit of an irresponsible wage policy on the part of trade unions in a planned economy aiming at the establishment of a society based on abundance, progress, freedom and social justice. Trade Unions in planned economies must take into consideration the interests of national economic development as one of the criteria for formulating any wage policy. However, there may be three main alternatives regarding the wage policy which trade unions in a planned economy may follow to help the fulfilment of the production targets in the planned estimates. Firstly, the trade unions may totally refrain from putting any demand for wage-increase during the plan period. This alternative is likely to be most objectionable to the trade unionists in all countries. The second alternative is that the trade unions may claim for wage-increases, if indispensable, but in the case of any difference on such a claim with the management which may not be settled by negotiation they would be obliged to refer the dispute to adjudication and would in no case resort to a work-stoppage. The third alternative in this regard is that the trade unions may demand wage increase only on the grounds of increased productivity or rise in prices, but instead of referring



any difference of opinion with the management on such a demand to adjudication, may try to settle it by ordinary processes of collective bargaining, conciliation or by voluntary arbitration, though in the case of strategic industries or industries indispensable for the success of a plan, they may agree to accept adjudication. Under this alternative, collective agreements between national federations of workers and the employers' association in respect of the wage policy for the industry during the plan period will be concluded before each plan, allowance being made for automatic revision of wage rates on the bases of some agreed principles with the given increases in productivity of the workers or rise in the cost of living. Such a policy, however, can combine a reasonable wage stability during the plan period with the freedom of collective bargaining and thus can be helpful in the smooth growth of voluntary economic association in the long run.

TRADE UNIONS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

A strong and healthy trade unionism can make a substantial contribution to the economic development of an under-developed economy. These unions contribute a good deal to the success of a plan for economic development by formulating their wage policy in a responsible manner. The trade unions, however, can adopt many other measures conducting to the economic progress of an under-developed economy.

The three proximate causes of economic growth pointed out by Prof. W.A.Lewis, are economic activity, increasing knowledge and increasing capital. Economic activity means "effort directed towards increasing the yield of a given effort or resource or towards reducing the cost of a given yields." The possibility of increasing the yield or output, depends on the ability and willingness of people to work and the efforts directed towards reducing the cost of a given effort also largely depends upon certain attitudes, for example, whether the people who in their jobs are keen to find out means to reduce costs or not. In the words of Prof. Lewis himself, "men will not make effort unless the fruit of that effort is assured to themselves or to those whose claims they recognize." Thus, hope and confidence in the people who work are as much essential for economic development as addition to the stock of the country's real capital assets. The existence of a strong trade union movement capable of defending or promoting workers' interest through collective bargaining and other similar methods itself will create enough hope and confidence among the workers and will remove from their minds the sense of being exploited.

In a developing economy, expending supply of knowledge and skill of all types-technical, administrative as well as general is of vital importance. To keep pace with the rapid development, it is necessary to train up workmen to do better jobs and learn new techniques. So far as the spread of fundamental education and the fight against illiteracy in a developing economy like that of India are concerned, the workers' education properly organised and conducted by the trade unions can attract more workers and receive more co-operation and response from them than such programmes sponsored by other institutions. Once the workers are made interested in education, much can be achieved in this direction, of course, in regard to the vocational training, the trade unions in under-developed countries may find it very difficult to bear such a responsibility in view their meagre resources. Yet if the Government or the industry undertaking such projects seeks their co-operation in the matter, they will, perhaps, be very helpful in encouraging the workers to join such programmes actively and regularly. Further, the trade unions may directly participate in the programmes designed to improve the productive efficiency within the industry. In Russia, "the Stakhanov movement which contributed very much to the success of the Soviet Planning in the mid-thirties of this century, was to very great extent nothing but workers' participation in finding out the ways and means of increasing productivity and reducing cost through better division of work and minor technical innovations suggested by themselves." Thus the trade union as the natural leader of the working class can make various joint committees councils of workers and employers really effective by encouraging the workers to think about various improvement properly and to place their views in a concise and consistent form.

As regards capital formation, the trade unions may be of great help to the government by promoting and assisting in the small savings schemes, by organising voluntary labour squads for road-building and other similar projects and, if necessary, by persuading the workers to accept some less onerous scheme of compulsory saving like the payment of a part of the bonus or wage-increments in government bonds instead of cash.

Apart from the above contributions which the trade unions can make to the economic development of an under-developed economy, they are capable of making still another great contribution to economic growth by helping the process of adjustment and integration of the workers in the industrial way of life. A very large percentage of the industrial working class in a developing country like India is rural in origin, background and attitudes. Discipline, punctuality, the relation with the superiors and with the fellow workers and in fact the whole working environment are entirely new to the uprooted villagers who find themselves transplanted in an alien soil. The environment outside the work-place also reminds them of alien nature. It was therefore, stated in one of the conferences of the I.L.O. that the trade unions may be "one of the most powerful instruments for creating a new industrial society and for helping the new recruit from the rural community to adjust to the conditions of the industrial life." The trade unions can organise educational-cum-recreational centres which will not only make the mind of the uprooted villager informed of the values and requisites of the new way of life but may also provide substitutes to the rich media of entertainments which the village communities used to provide without requiring him to pay any thing extra over and above what he pays to the union by way of his contribution. Besides this,

the trade union may also help the process of adjustment by encouraging the workers to establish co-operative housing societies and thus enable them to build up healthy and decent houses for themselves. Similarly, other forms of welfare measures may also be undertaken by the unions to facilitate the process of such adjustment. Thus, the contributions that the trade union can make to economic development of an under-developed economy are substantial but it is imperative that unions keep the well-being and progress of the community constantly before them even in the midst of their endeavours to promote and advance the interests of the working class. Unions have to adopt themselves to changing social needs and it is only then they can progressively become instruments for constructive purposes.

#### LABOUR WELFARE AND IMPORTANCE:

The term 'labour welfare' lends itself to Plathoric interpretations and a precise definition is somewhat difficult. "It is a term which must necessarily be elastic, bearing a somewhat different interpretation in one country from another according to the different social customs, the degree of industrialisation and the educational development of the worker." The whole field of welfare is one in which much can be done to combat the sense of frustration of the industrial worker, to relieve him of personal and family worries, to improve his health, to afford him means of self-expression, to offer him some sphere in which he can excel others and to help him to a wider conception of life. "According to a report of the I.L.O., 'Workers' welfare should be understood to include such services, facilities and amenities which may be established in, or in the vicinity of, undertakings to enable the persons employed in them to perform their work in healthy, congenial surroundings and provided

with amenities conducive to good health and high morale." Arthur James Todd aptly observed -- "A series of sharply diverse opinion exist on the motive and merits of industrial welfare work."

The Labour Investigation Committee preferred to include under welfare activities anything done for the intellectual, physical, moral and economic betterment of the workers, whether by employers, by Government or by other agencies, over and above what was laid down by law or what was normally expected as part of the contractual benefits for which the worker might have bargained. Under this definition, the committee included housing, medical and educational facilities, nutrition (including provision of canteens), facilities for rest and recreation, co-operative societies, day nurseries and creches, provision of sanitary accommodation, holidays with pay, social insurance measures undertaken voluntarily by employers alone or jointly with workers, provident funds, gratuities and pensions etc

In view of these different connotations, the term 'Labour Welfare' is considered vague and confusing. "While to some people it will undoubtedly suggest certain modern personal practices, to many will bring to mind an earlier period of industrial history. It may suggest the paternalistic conception characteristic of early twentieth century welfare, reflecting the ideas of the 'good' employer with growing social conscience and increasing sense of responsibility for the well-being of 'his' employees." Thus 'labour welfare' is a wide term embracing in its purview the essence of all that represents the struggle for the amelioration of the working class from the paralysing bonds of poverty, ignorance, social inequality, conservative outlook, disease and squalor. It is an arduous task to

arouse in workers the faith in their destiny and to awaken the social forces to the truism that the working class, being the hub of our life, the creator of the national wealth, the sustainer of the life-lines of the national life, must be given a fair deal on all friends -- social, economic and political.

Welfare activities provided inside the factory are termed as intra-mural and those provided outside the factory are called extra-mural. Intra-mural welfare activities are related to the prevention of industrial fatigue like rest pauses, protection of health like sanitary conditions, cleanliness, medical facilities, drinking water, shelters, canteens, etc., provision of safety measures like fencing and covering of machines, good lay-out of the plant and machinery, sufficient lighting, first aid appliance, fire extinguishers, etc; fitting of worker to the job by improving condition of employment, recruitment, discipline, etc. On the other hand, extra-mural welfare activities cover the services and amenities provided to workers outside the factory. They include activities for the general well-being of workers like good housing, recreation, amusement, sports and games, education, lectures and debates, clubs, social insurance, old age pension, provident fund etc

IMPORTANCE:

The need of welfare measures designed to effect an all-round improvement in the labourers' working and living conditions can hardly be overstressed.

1) They assist in the maintenance of industrial peace.

With the feeling of the worker that the employer and the state are interested in his betterment, tendency to grouse and grumble on his part steadily disappears. Evaluation of a healthy psychological atmosphere paves the way for happier industrial relations.

2) The provision of various welfare measures makes workers feel and realise that they also have some stake in the enterprise in which they are employed and, therefore, any reckless action on their part which may prejudice the interest of the undertaking is likely to have reaction upon their own interest. The development of such a feeling helps in minimising the chances of industrial disputes on flimsy grounds.

3) Welfare activities carried on in the factories contribute in making service attractive to labour and in creating a permanent, settled labour force. "Whatever improves conditions of work and life for the employees, whatever leads to the increasing adaptation of the worker to his task and whatever makes him feel contented will lessen his desire or need to leave it for a time and lighten for him and the industry the burden of absenteeism." The Labour Investigation Committee also has stressed the fact that the present situation under which labour turnover and absenteeism prevail and the workers are constantly trekking to their village homes in search of social security and recreation will yield place to a new situation in which the working class becomes more stabilised and economically efficient.



4) Welfare work has been recognised as an integral part of industrial administration. It has been crystalised into an industrial tradition in industrially advanced countries and is no longer treated merely as a hobby of large-hearted employers and philonthropists. It postulates a real change of hearts and a change of outlook on the part of both employers and workers -- the two organs of a single mechanism. It refuses in them a new spirit of self-realisation.

5) It helps to improve the mental and moral health of workers by minimising the incidence of social evils of industrialisation. Pushed into a strange and uncongenial environment, the workers are liable to fall a prey to vices like drinking, gambling and prostitution. Healthy surroundings created by welfare work are likely to act as a great deterring force against such vices.

6) Welfare activity bring a marked improvement in the efficiency of workers. The Indian industrial worker has often been condemned as lazy and inefficient but "in all pursuits a high standard of efficiency can be expected only from persons who are physically fit and free from mental worries, that is, only from persons who are properly trained, properly housed, properly fed and properly clothed.

7) The social advantage of labour welfare activities are considerable. The provisions of canteens where cheap, wholesome and balanced food is available to workers, must improve the physique of workers, entertainment must reduce the incidence of vices, medical aid maternity and child welfare must improve the health of workers

and their families and bring down the rates of general, maternity and infant mortality. Thus the workers are enabled to enjoy a richer and fuller life.

#### TRADE UNIONS AND LABOUR WELFARE:

The part played by the trade unions in a nascent industrial society is by no means limited to increasing the bargaining power of workers and assisting them to obtain higher material rewards. A distinctive feature of these trade unions -- in societies that are changing from a pre-industrial to an industrial structure should be that, whatever their professed purpose, they readily expand or integrate into a movement of labour welfare. The modern industrial worker is not merely a factor of production in the industrial system, but a participant in it. The trade unions can help workers in realising their status in the society. In the new industrial society the worker who is crippled, unemployed or too old to work may have no tie with any group that feels a direct responsibility for his welfare. In most of the under-developed countries there is a long hiatus between decay of the traditional system under the impact of industrializing forces and effective substitution of new forms of assistance. It is in this vacuum that the forms of mutual aid and organization may be designed to help each other. Such enterprises would indicate that people undergoing economic change are not simply passive but are capable of constructive adaptation to the emerging industrial society.

Mutual Welfare Work is a sort of corporate enterprise undertaken by trade unions. But the trade union movement in India has not taken up the task of labour welfare which by its nature and composition can accomplish a good deal in this respect. Much of the desired role of trade unions has not been visible in the sphere of the welfare activities except by way of its association with the Labour Welfare Advisory Committees constituted by Governments. There are only a few unions like the Textiles Labour Association, Ahmedabad, Mazdoor Sabha, Kanpur, which have devoted themselves to labour welfare work. The Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, has several social activities designed for the betterment of its members. It conducts 25 cultural and social centres, scattered all over the working class areas. In these centres, workers arrange debates, discussions, group talks, meetings, study circles, social education classes, recreational programmes, etc. The Association conducts schools for the benefit of children of workers, reading rooms and libraries, gymnasiums, etc. With a view to rendering medical aid to the workers, the Association runs Ayurvedic and Allopathic dispensaries and a maternity home. In 1947, the Association started a co-operative Bank.

Generally speaking, trade unions in India have so far functioned as the platform from which the attack has been mainly launched against the spirit and content of economic exploitation. They have been effectively and almost exclusively operating in the field of industrial relations. There remains a vast field of activity which can result in making a worker happier, his surroundings more pleasant, his community life richer, his social consciousness more real; in short, his life sweeter than today, and his objective purposeful

Efforts are necessary to awaken the trade unions to the fact that unless they lay proper stress on other factors besides industrial relations, all are doomed to a dismal future. Trade Unionists and representatives of employers may hold joint deliberations frequently to chalk out a common and united plan of labour welfare work suited to the requirements of the areas concerned. The state may also do its bit in taking initiative in this respect.

In the field of co-operation, for the purpose of credit or consumption, the efforts of unions are likely to prove valuable. The co-operative movement would provide training and experience to the workers who want to participate in the management of industrial undertakings. They may embark on a movement to fight against illiteracy, squalor, disease and high birth-rate. Resources on their part must be augmented by sanctioning grants and aids.

Proper leadership and organizing capacity must be arranged by launching a scheme of seminars of trade union workers. Tours of trade unionists to various industrial centres of the country and the head-quarters of central organizations engaged in welfare activities should be encouraged.

ESSENTIALS OF A SUCCESSFUL TRADE UNION:

To be successful, a trade union:

1) Should be an enlightened one, so that it may be able to guide and direct the trade union movement properly. This pre-supposes the existence of a correct leadership which is not prepared to sacrifice the interests of the workers to imported doctrinaire enthusiasm but desires to hack a highway for them to attain their stature as participants in the new order of things.

2) Should have solid foundation, so that it may be strong enough to achieve success in the realisation of its objectives.

3) Should have clearly enunciated objectives and a coherent and well-conceived policy; and it should consider itself as a business organisation which requires careful planning and sound organisational methods for its success.

4) Should be run by the members for the members; that is, its leadership should come from the rank and file of its members, and it should be subject to their support or rejection.

5) Should have honesty and integrity of purpose; that is, it should be honest not only in financial matters; its integrity should be all-inclusive, and should extend to its relationship with employers, to the formulation of its policies and the evaluation of its performance, and to what it says to its own members.

6) Should look beyond its own horizon and recognize and fulfil its proper role in the life of the nation and of the community in the midst of which it lives and functions.

7) Should have sense of responsibility; that is, it is necessary that:

a) It should be internally strong so that it may be effective in protecting the interests of the workers;

b) It should use its economic power in a careful and responsible way; that is, it should be aware of the existing realities in terms of the opportunities it has to bring about an improvement in the living conditions of its members; and

c) It should be democratic so that the workers' right of self-government acquires a reality.

#### WHAT A TRADE UNION SHOULD DO?

Trade unions should not be content with protecting and improving the wages and conditions of work of their members but should also be concerned about all such matters by which the latter are likely to be affected, whether as producers or consumers or as units of industrial man-power, or as citizens. In other words, they should look after the wide interests of workers, both when they are on the job and off it, and try to solve the problems by which their members are most vitally affected --- their emotional disturbances and difficulties, their marital conflicts, and their personal adjustment problems. They should moreover, assist in progressively raising the standard of living of the workers and in developing their personality by arranging educational programmes for them --- literacy classes for adults and educational programmes for their children as well as for those who are interested in acquiring an education, and sewing and embroidery classes for women employees. They should be deeply involved in bringing about and maintaining industrial harmony and peace, and battle with the employers and the state, if necessary, at the bargaining table, on picket lines and in seminars and at conferences to ensure that labour is not exploited, that employers do not tyrannise over, or victimise, their employees and resort to unfair lay-offs or dismissals because the latter have participated in trade union activity.

Trade unions should always abide by the decisions of tripartite bodies and make a major contribution to the maintenance of industrial peace, to better industrial relations and to higher productivity by a fuller utilisation of the procedures and machinery provided by various laws and codes.

Finally, trade unions should be pluralist in character and pragmatic in method; if they are not, they are not likely to survive because of the exacting demands made upon them by a swiftly changing environment. They should, therefore, encourage their members to save; to participate effectively in family planning programmes and in the economic and political life of the country; to take a decisive role in the formulation of development plans, and act as pace-setters for the community; to give up drinking and gambling. Trade Unions should extend their activities and cover not only their members but also the families of other members; for a happy family makes a better owrker, and a better worker contributes substantially to an increase in the gross national product.