Chapter Five

THE TRADE UNION LEADERS

It may be emphasised that in contemporary times the work of trade union leaders has become increasingly complex. This has to be so. The international strengthening of labour fraternity, burgeoning labour legislation, fluid socio-political conditions, specialisation in different fields of trade union work - are a few of the contributing factors. Logically, the stewardship of the trade unions needs to be in those hands - competent, skilled, shrewd and dedicated. Towards enabling a trade union leader to be successful in the work, he needs to be educated, experienced and trained in the affairs of trade unions. This lends trade union work a degree of dynamism and insight. Committed to the amelioration of
the conditions of the workers, the trade union leader has to be attuned to the problems of the workers. But what has been the situation as it obtains?

Hypothesis V: Education, training and experience equip the trade union leaders to serve the workers.

Trade unions are part and parcel of industrial relations system in any society that permits decentralised decision-making and group interests to shape work rules. Union and leaders are just one among several sets of actors that together determine the nature of industrial relations .... (Johri, 1967). Nonetheless, the basic issue is as to what makes an effective leader? The oft-reported phenomenon is that of 'charisma'. Many people have interpreted it in different ways. The discipline of psychology attempts to explain 'charisma' in terms of intelligence, personal adjustment, extraversion, dominance and interpersonal sensitivity (Filella, 1969). Needless to add that the phenomenon of charisma is beyond cultivation. On the other hand, sociologically speaking, the emergence of leadership is considered to be a long drawn social process, in which education, training and the like, play a crucial role.

Education is an important enabling factor in any field of human activity. In modern industrial system specially in trade unionism it is even more so important. As a matter of fact in a country like India where ignorance and illiteracy loom large in the better part of the industrial labour force, the need for
educated leadership assumes a pointed relevance. A trade union leader is one who is called upon to lead the opinion of workers and to articulate their grievances. At the same time we cannot afford to bypass the counter-part of a trade union leader in management with whom he almost constantly interacts. The employer or an executive is an educated person and possibly oriented in handling human problems. Should the leader be educated he would be relatively at ease with him. Besides, education has, according to Iberman (1950), a kind of sublimation quality. A good deal of aggression and hostility on the part of a trade union leader arises on account of difference in terms of status, employment, authority and the like, between him and the management executives. In this regard education help in instilling a sense of some kind of parity as well as of realism.

This is not to say that to become a successful trade union leader a high level of formal education is a prerequisite. Nonetheless, few would dispute that an orientation in the disciplines of history, economics, political science, collective bargaining, and so forth would go a long way in helping a trade union leader and would lend grace and realism to his dealings. In this regard the fact may not be lost sight of that management of trade union affairs may come about owing to the rigorous routine. But an element of formal education would be an added prop.

Likewise, the need for training in trade union work may be underlined. The trade union work calls for dedication and a missionary zeal. Nevertheless, some amount of systematic training would always equip a trade union leader better for his tasks.
Suitably designed and perhaps short term courses on labour laws and social welfare, would be greatly useful. They are likely to endow flexibility in his thinking and adaptibility in his dealings, and may generally improve his competence.

Thus education and training combined with experience should enable a trade union leader to serve his followers, namely, industrial labourers, better. He would be able to see their problems in a broader perspective and would be able to work out effective alternatives. It should be fitting, following the line above to discuss the aspects relating to the trade union leaders. Apparently, the matter of education and trained trade union leadership and that too in a developing country and under the conditions of mushroom-growth of trade unions become highly relevant. It would be of interest to examine the position in this regard obtaining in Dhanbad.

**Education**

Education of the trade union leaders assumes relevance from the point of sound industrial relations and durable industrial peace. Both informal and formal education influence and shape an individual's career. Here education is taken to be "the social process by which people are subjected to the influence of a selected and controlled environment (especially that of the school), so that they may attain social competence and optimum individual development" (Education dictionary, 1972). Illiterate leaders are not necessarily incompetent. Because most of the trade union work is looked after by the secretaries or joint secretaries. But
educated leaders are doubtless in a better position to adapt themselves to various situations. The formal educational level of the trade union leaders in Dhanbad has been analysed.

If education and society are dependent on each other (Mannheim & Stewart, 1962), this would be and should be equally true to the trade unions. Table 5.1 presents results in this regard.

**Table 5.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under graduate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA/DK</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be observed from the Table above that 34% of the trade union leaders have attended high school, followed by those who have attended middle school. There are leaders who are graduates (6%) but in lesser proportion. Further, the members of executive, except in one case who is undergraduate, the rest are not much education-wise; their formal schooling has been below 10th standard. However, all the trade union Secretaries/Joint and
Assistant Secretaries are found to be matriculates or above (75%).

Next, the educational level of the leaders has been cross-tabulated in relation to their social and demographic variables (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2

Showing the statistics obtained by cross-tabulating the educational level of the trade union leaders with other independent variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>63.246</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
<td>0.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>28.81</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.001 &lt; p &lt; 0.01</td>
<td>0.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union affiliated</td>
<td>30.917</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.001 &lt; p &lt; 0.01</td>
<td>0.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>48.985</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
<td>0.649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Often assumed to be an important factor, the caste groups have been arranged in the established hierarchical order i.e., Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya followed by Sudra and Scheduled Tribes. The analysis of education in terms of caste is highly significant (p < 0.001). The data further reveal a significant relationship between the two variables (C= 0.696). The fact that education tends to be higher among the upper castes, mainly Brahmin and Kshatriyas, is in evidence. The distribution of the educational level of the trade union leaders in terms of industry to which they belong may be examined. The data in this respect are highly significant (p < 0.001). It is interesting to note that all the graduate leaders are in coal-mining industry. However, electrical industry has fairly
large number of literate and/or educated leaders. Unmistakably inter-industry differences in terms of leaders' level of formal education show a high association (C = 0.548). Further, the trade union leaders' educational levels have been analysed in relation to their trade union affiliations. It is seen that more and more leaders of the trade unions affiliating to the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) are literate/or educated, followed by leaders affiliated to the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS). In contrast, the leaders of the unions affiliated to the Centre for Indian Trade Unions (CITU) are literate and less-educated. Likewise, out of three leaders having affiliation with the Indian National Mine Operators, Sardars and Shotfiers' Association (INMOSA Independent union), one leader is an undergraduate. The educational level of the trade union leaders is observed to vary over the trade union affiliation (C = 0.612). As may be predicted, the leaders who have higher education occupy higher posts in the union hierarchy (C = 0.650). Interestingly, the educational level of the leaders is inversely related to the amount of their experience in the trade union work (p < 0.001; C = 0.649). This implies that the old guards in the trade unions are less educated as compared with the up and coming leadership.

Training

Training is yet another important aspect which stands a trade union leader in good stead. If education is considered to be a preparation for life, training is understood to have always a specific purpose. "It is a specific preparation received just before entering public employment/service at a later point in the
career and directed towards the performance of the duties assigned to the individual (U.N., 1966). Generally speaking, training is taken to begin from where education ends. To equip and refresh an individual and to keep him geared to the assignment, there are various types of training. Pre-entry, orientation, in-service and post-entry training. In relation to trade union leaders general education as a form of pre-entry training still has some relevance; but formal orientation, and in-service and post-entry training are not found to be much meaningful. They may be elected to various trade union offices and as and when feasible they may undergo some sort of orientation course organised from time to time by the State Labour Department. Likewise, by way of post-entry training, occasionally they may participate in discussions, labour camps and symposia. Labour camps are reportedly organised by the State Labour Department, but their impact appears to be negligible. None of the respondent trade union leaders have ever participated in any of these camps or undergone any formal trade union training. Indeed, periodical conferences of the trade union leaders provide an occasion for the exchange of ideas. In the course of these, the participants have an opportunity to express their problems and to arrive at possible solutions. With reference to the leaders in Dhanbad, three out of ten leaders, the data show, have attended such conferences, among these the majority of the leaders have affiliation with the INTUC.

Public service record

Experience of a trade union leader for the purposes of the present analysis has been taken to be the indicator of his public
service record. Quite a few of the leaders have started work in trade unions in lower rungs. In course of time they have moved up in the hierarchy. In the present case, although the average experience of the trade union leaders has been 14 years, a larger proportion of them (42%) have been in the field of trade unionism between 10-20 years. There are also leaders having experience above 30 years in the labour field (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience (in years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 and above</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further age, religion, caste, union affiliation of the trade union leaders and, offices held by them have been analysed in relation to their experience. For obvious reasons, the relation between experience age of the trade union leaders is highly significant (see Table 5.4). As may be expected, the religion and castes of the leaders do not show meaning classification. So is the case with their union of affiliation and experience. In contrast, the experience shows significant differences over the type of post held in the union organisation (p < 0.001).
Table 5.4

Showing the statistics obtained by cross-tabulating the experience of the trade union leaders with other variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>56.480</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$p &lt; 0.001$</td>
<td>0.676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>2.795</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$0.30 &lt; p &lt; 0.50$</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>2.005</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$0.80 &lt; p &lt; 0.90$</td>
<td>0.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union affiliated</td>
<td>3.303</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$p &lt; 0.95$</td>
<td>0.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office held</td>
<td>53.547</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>$p &lt; 0.001$</td>
<td>0.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences attended</td>
<td>27.828</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$p &lt; 0.001$</td>
<td>0.542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, there is also a noticeably relation between the two (C = 0.666). Meaning thereby, the higher the experience, the higher would be the position of the trade union leader in the trade union. Same is the case with the experience and the conferences attended by them ($p < 0.001$). Also both are significantly associated, which seems to be obvious (C = 0.541).

The data and their analyses presented clearly bring out the fact that in the careers of the trade union leaders education has a significant role. Modal educational level of the union leaders in Dhanbad is 'high school'. A significant association has been found between the educational level of the union leaders and the trade union affiliations, and the type of industry. Further, the educational level of the leaders and the position they hold in the union hierarchy, have a major influence on the careers is rather strong. Additionally, the educated leaders are also experienced leaders: experienced leaders in turn are in top positions,
have attended many conferences and have a long drawn public
service record. On the other hand, the factors like religion,
caste etc. are not without influence, on the educational level
of the leaders. Naturally, in trade unions, as in any other
organisation, to rise high in the hierarchy it also requires
experience. A leader who has had a satisfactory record can only
reach the higher posts, is strongly indicated. The data and their
analyses, thus, generally substantiate the hypothesis, stated
earlier.

Hypothesis VI: Leaders in their working give priority to
the problems of the workers.

It goes without saying that the functioning and survival of
unions hinges upon the quality of the leadership. To a greater
extent it is upon the type of leadership that industrial harmony
and peace depend. It is the business of the leader to hear and
try for the redressal of the worker problems. It could be noted
that a group is more than the sum of its parts. The objectives
enunciated by the unions may be considered as the essence of the
problems of the constituents. The level of achievement of these
objectives by the unions would depend upon the extent to which a
leader dedicates himself and attaches priority to the problems of
workers. Doubtless, the workers would be better judges to comment
upon the leader and his efforts realising the objectives of the
union. The perception of the workers as to whether their leaders
are giving priority to solving their problems hinges upon many
things. On the other hand, the leaders given a large following,
may not find it easy to attend to each and every problem of the
workers. No doubt, the problems communicated to the management
and their magnitude may in turn determine the peace and tranqui-
licity of the industry. In the long run it may cost the leader his
position, should he be tactless. A leader genuinely interested
in the welfare of the industry and the nation has to exercise some
amount of tact, to convince the workers of the importance of
withholding their problems to some extent. On the contrary, if a
leader gives call for a strike on a superficial issue, could it
be concluded that he attaches priority to worker problem? Extreme
action or inaction by a leader may jeopardise the interests of
the workers also, leave apart industrial peace. The activities of
the leadership are subject to different interpretations by the
interested; management, active groups within the union, rival unions
and the government. These people may give a colour to his activit-
ies, which would suit their purpose. Finding it convenient the
rival unions may jump at the opportunity to denigrate the leader
and, thereby to swell their following. These situations, indeed,
would be uncomfortable, or even pernicious to the leader. However,
a leader who can retain the confidence of the workers can only
tread on this tricky line.

This apart, hostile management, unhealthy political climate
rival unions, and the like may divert his attention towards labour
problems. An equitable distribution of the union work amongst
different officials of the union may aid him, in this regard. This
naturally requires the cooperation of other members. This way,
whole union organisation is brought into action. Do all the
leaders live up to their tasks? Given time and the support of the
union staff, do leaders succeed in making a mark on the workers? The experience of some of the researchers on industrial relations, in this regard, reflects rather a feeble view of leaders so far as their dedication to the trade union movement in general and worker problems in particular are concerned (see Rastogi, 1949; Srivastava, 1955). Many workers do ask as to what the union and leaders have done for them? Keeping in view the above, it would be proper to ascertain whether leaders attach priority to the problems of workers.

It may be restated that unions have been organised to protect and promote the interests of the workers. A dedicated leadership of the unions can only ensure this. Although a variety of functions are required to be performed by the leaders, the workers would generally feel that their problems are important. Considering many of the limitations of the leaders, the present attempt aims to ascertain the role of the trade union leaders in promoting the interests of the workers. Additionally, the sum total of leader's actions themselves may have room for different interpretations by the workers notwithstanding external influences and the nature of the interaction between the workers and the leaders. Towards this, the responses of the workers, management, labour officials, and police have been elicited on three questionnaire items: (1) "Are leaders actually working in the interests of the workers"? (2) "Would leaders continue to work even if their personal interests run into danger"? and (3) "Have the leaders been exploiting the workers for
their personal gains"? This apart, in order to assess the attitude of the management and labour officials, towards trade union leaders, one more statement has been "Leaders have the interests of the workers in the upper most of their mind".

**Leaders and trade union work**

The changing social situation has considerably influenced the trade union work. The matters relating to trade unions are turning complicated day by day. Increasing awareness of the workers, mounting statuettes, the politics of trade unions, nationalisation of industries and growing unemployment have made the major trade union offices as complicated as any business executive's. This apart, the leaders have all the time to reckon with the competition from within as well as from outside. The employers (they have also associations and organisations) also attract their attention and are often a cause of concern. Employers virtually do not hesitate to toss wads of high denomination currency notes to purchase labour leaders. Then there are those lobbies of business people which influence legislation. Laski calls attention to the following passage from Prof. Hoxie's Truism in the United States: "The union's problem is neither simple nor unitary .... on the contrary, it is a complex of economics, legal, ethical and social problems, which can be understood and met only by knowing the facts and genesis of the view point of organised labour in all its riches, diversity, contradictions, and shifting character, and by considering the viewpoint in relation to developing social conditions and social standards (Quoted in Singh, 1968)."
In such an atmosphere have our present-day trade union leaders been able to exercise attention to protect and promote labour interests? It is not so uncommon to meet trade union leaders who are ready to cooperate with management in order to enjoy the fruits of greater prosperity that such cooperation yields at the cost of the workers. Even in case of wage increases, instances are not lacking where the economic objectives are subordinated to personal and political goals (Fonseca, 1965).

Table 5.5

Showing the distribution of the respondents on the item: In your opinion, present-day trade union leaders are equally working in the interests of the workers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Most of them</th>
<th>Some of them</th>
<th>None of them</th>
<th>Can't say</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>No. 7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>N 14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour officials</td>
<td>N -</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% -</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>N -</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% -</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leaders have been so much preoccupied with inter and intra union disputes that the organisational elections are seldom held (Pandey, 1967), leave apart giving priority to the problems of workers. With these points in view, what have been the opinion of
respondents? (see table 5.5). It would be observed that out of ten labour officials six feel that 'some of the leaders are working in the interests of the workers. And the rest take the view that none of the leaders are working in the interest of workers. Almost an equal proportion (61% & 62%) of management people and workers feel that none of the leaders are working in the interest of workers. So is the opinion of seven out of ten police officers. Notably, more managers feel that leaders are working in the interests of the workers than other sections of respondents. The responses from the four sources abundently indicate that leaders are not pursuing the interests of the workers. In the same direction, it has been attempted to ascertain "would leaders go on working to promote the interests of the workers even if their personal interests run into danger?"

Table 5.6

Showing the distribution of the respondents on the item: In your opinion, present-day trade union leaders would continue to work for the interests of the workers even if their personal interests run into danger?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Most of them</th>
<th>Some of them</th>
<th>None of them</th>
<th>Can't say</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>N 8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour officials</td>
<td>N -</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% -</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>N 8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>N 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this connection, 45% of the labour officials feel that some trade union leaders will continue to work, even at the cost of their personal interests. On the same score, more than half (55%) of the labour officials feel that none of the leaders would endanger their personal interests for workers' sake. In the case of managers 6 out of 10 do not see that the leaders would continue to work selflessly. Almost same proportions of the workers share this point with the management. In the case of police officers eight out of ten feel that none of the trade union leaders would pursue the interests of the workers, at the cost of their personal interests. It is obvious, in view of the opinions of the majority, that there is ample scope in the activities of the leaders, for the dedicated service to workers.

Next, the responses of the management and labour officials have been analysed on the statement "Trade union leaders have the welfare of the workers in the upper most of their mind (see Table 5.7).

Table 5.7

Showing the distribution of the respondents on the item: Trade union leaders have the welfare of the workers in the upper most of their mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Can't say</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>N 3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour officials</td>
<td>N -</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% -</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the managers (64%) have expressed negative opinion towards the statement given above. And the labour officials seem to be ambivalent on this score. This goes to show that trade union leaders in their day-to-day working have not devoted themselves much to the problems of their affiliates.

**Exploitation of workers**

Historically the Indian trade union movement has been dependent on outsiders. "Unlike the situation in Western countries, Indian workers could not create their own unions because of their lack of literacy and sophistication in the ways of modern world, because of their great poverty and threat of unemployment put them in a weak bargaining position, and because of the attitude of the management which often resorted to victimisation" (Crouch, 1966).

### Table 5.8

**Showing the distribution of the respondents on the item:**
In your opinion do the trade union leaders use the workers for their personal gains?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Most of them</th>
<th>Some of them</th>
<th>None of them</th>
<th>Can't say</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>N 34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 63</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>N 86</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 48</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour officials</td>
<td>N 10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>N 43</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 81</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a result, the workers have often been exploited. Trade union leaders are not uncommon who utilise racketeering to extort funds from the workers. On top of it, forced collection of funds, pulling those workers in the fold of their trade union who resent membership are some of the tactics followed by the leaders to swell their following (Hutchinson, 1969). Often the casual workers received their wages after parting with the share of the trade union leaders. In a democratic set up, the interests of the workers should have rated high. But what is the opinion of the respondents in this regard? (Table 5.8).

Respondents in majority feel that most of the (management, 63%; workers, 48%; labour officials, 45%) trade union leaders are using the workers for their personal gains. Interestingly, the proportions of workers and labour officials, in this regard are, lesser.

On the whole, a majority of the respondents express their opinion that trade union leaders are only taking marginal interest, in dealing with labour problems. They would not sacrifice their personal interests for the sake of workers. The labour issue has been attached low priority. They use workers for their personal gains. Cumulating data and their analyses presented above do not substantiate the hypothesis.

Hypothesis VII: The trade union leaders while dealing with the management or other trade unions are guided by ends not by means.

"Nations, or in fact any form of society, local communities, and states, have reputations and present images of mankind based
upon their conduct. This conduct is a part of mass behaviour which, in turn, is often shaped by that of individuals, particularly of leaders. These behaviour patterns are often described in terms involving value judgements; they are deemed either good or bad. They involve conceptions of ethics, standards of excellence, which the societies may cherish and which they may strive to maintain at what is considered a high level" (Nichols, 1966).

In the U.S.A. the congress observed .... in order to accomplish the objective of a free flow of commerce it is essential that labour organisations, employers and their officials adhere to the highest standards of responsibility and ethical conduct in administering the affairs of their organisations, particularly as they affect labour management relations. The Congress further found in its investigations that there have been number of instances of breach of trust, corruption, disregard of the rights of individual employees, and other failures to observe high standards of responsibility and ethical conduct (1966). In the field of trade unionism the leaders are the pivots on whom the affairs of union revolve. The leaders' behaviour is open to examination, imitation and during their efforts to reach goals. In these efforts, it should not be forgotten, that the means used to achieve a particular goal is as paramount and pious as the end itself. 'A disregard for the means employed in persuasion of given and is not only worthy of condemnation, but also reflect the weaknesses of the leaders'. By using such means they may fetch results: this may not last long.

Relating to trade unions, in the contemporary society, there is much to be expected from them and their leaders. Trade unions are the logical outgrowth of a mass-production economy. One may
interpret the role of trade unions in a number of ways depending upon his politico-economic ideology. However, the fact remains that protection and promotion of workers interests is the primary concern of the trade unions. Organisation and management of unions and its activities need dedicated and efficient leaders. Initially, it may be the sole concern of the leaders to identify and turn the individual discontentment into collective unrest. Towards building a union organisation, processes ordinarily involved include, mobilizing workers, electing office bearers, getting registered with the competent authority and seeking formal recognition of the employer. At the same time the emergent trade union is likely to affiliate with one or the other trade union federation. It should not be forgotten that in India there have been unions affiliating to different political parties. Indeed, each federating trade union has different approach to labour problems. Theoretically speaking, which union a worker would join should be his personal concern. Till now there is nothing extra-legal or objectionable in the ends. But the question remains of means?

The fact should not be lost sight of that unions were neither accepted with open arms by the employers nor was/is it that easy to survive in the face of other competing union leaders. Especially in India the trade union movement although it started around 1918, it could only gain momentum when the leaders engaged in freedom struggle gave thought towards labour field (Srivastava, 1955). One of the main factors that many have been felt has been the outside leadership, which has been responsible to many a advantage
as well as ailment in the trade union movement. To start with it was essentially the outsiders who took to organisation of the workers - there was resistance. However, few employers were bold enough to oppose the leaders like Gandhi. And it is only after the Independence that many trade unions came to be organised on party basis. How to organise a union in this atmosphere of competition and hostility?

In the early stages of the trade union movement union organisation, the outside leadership had its own merits and demerits. Ideally speaking, the leadership should have emerged out of the workers themselves. If that could have been the position, the shape the trade unionism in India would have been different. The professional leaders may have responsibility of unions more than one. Are leaders able to pay necessary attention to the union affairs? After Independence, India opted for the democratic political system and an emphasis on rapid industrialisation. It is for these reasons that political parties and prominent national leaders have, throughout its history, taken a great interest in the labour movement and sought allegiance of organised labour. Political parties have also sustained the labour movement, although their varying interests have given added force to divisive tendencies within the movement itself (Myers, 1958).

Thus, while organising trade unions the basic religious, caste, language and regional beliefs held by the workers were not altogether ignored. The trade union elections need to be conducted after a specified time. Have they been done so? The leaders, as has been reported, entered into understanding with the management to promote and get recognition for their unions (Ghosh, 1968). The competing
others may be subjected to humiliation so as to weaken or push them out of labour movement (Shivrao, 1959). The use of money and muscle may also be resorted to. While dealing with employers, the leaders may make use of threats of strike, gherao and so forth. All this may be in the name of redressal of worker grievances. Concerning inter and intra union rivalries, a code of conduct for trade unions has been evolved. The National Commission on Labour (1959) records that although the federations, seemingly have different charters of objectives, but ultimately, they boil down to protection and promotion of worker interests. To achieve these objectives, the means enunciated by different federations, are as important as the goal itself.

Management and leaders

It may be reiterated that unions in coal-mining industry are far more stronger than in two other sectors. It is owing to the larger work-force and long standing. Most of the leaders in coal industry are above forties and have been associated with the movement since long. Focussing on the present colliery under study, it is observed that there is little change in the leadership of either the Colliery Mazdoor Sangh or the Hind Mazdoor Sabha. In the early days as the Case Study I indicates the parent union had been HMS. In the beginning the leaders of this union had cordial relations with the management. After a while, the relations did not remain so cordial. Again, after some time they colluded with the management and affiliated with the INTUC. The spoils of such cooperation-and-non-cooperation have been indeed many. It is stated by quite a few surviving old-time leaders that
management spent money in stacks as tall as man high, so as

to bail out their favourite trade union leaders from critical

situations. In the electrical engineering industry there have

also been shifts in the unions. This is mostly attributed to

the employer's likes and dislikes. Consequently, other unions

resorted to violence (Case III). The posture adopted by the

leaders to establish their unions, and continue has been much

influenced by the tint of management. Towards these, from time

to time the leaders have taken postures rather violent ones.

The case of the firebricks sector is not much different. This

sector of industry in its dealing with the trade unions has been

no better as well. Several executives confided that the manage-

ment unabashedly shifted recognition to a secon of the INTUC

which was being led by more amenable leaders. Such shifts in the

trade unions are not altogether free from several undesireable

repurcussions.

Leaders versus leaders

Divide and rule has been one of the most used weapons ever

wielded by the management. As the case studies reveal, the

leaders were in the HMS earlier and splintered off to affiliate

to the INTUC. But the newly emergent leaders exerted pressure

to pull others within the folds of INTUC; in doing so no holds

were barred. Was it unavoidable? Were they able to exert so much

pressure without the backing of the management? Was it personal

sway that the leaders held on the workers or was it the illegiti-
mate means that the leaders utilised to establish themselves? In

fact the resistance from the well known union leaders like
Jaya Prakash Narayan came when a couple of leaders were found indulging in luxuries owing to their position. This was the spark in the volatile atmosphere which led to explosion. Although employers were in the background, the reactants were the leaders themselves. It is stated that, even the leaders like Ashok Mehta, Lohia and others were not spared from physical assaults. As time passed the union affiliating to the HMS has again found foot hold in the colliery. This is there as a small but pliant collection of those workers who dissent with the CMS in the colliery. The influence of communist unions is also increasing. In some areas of Dhanbad the influence of INTUC has been weakened and the communist are gradually gaining popularity in the area. The possibility of communists taking over has been the basis of understanding between the INTUC and the HMS leaders. Thus, the CMS has accommodated the HMS in the colliery. These manoeuvres, it is difficult to assert, are in keeping with the free democratic functioning. Again, in electrical engineering industry the union recognised by the management affiliates to the INTUC. And the rival union affiliates to HMS. However, the trade unions in the industries located in the surrounding areas are generally communist dominated. As in the case of coal-mines, the leaders of the INTUC gave way to the HMS when there was discontent among the workers. Again, the leaders of the INTUC and the HMS clashed, burnt down houses, damaged company property to change the union from HMS to INTUC. Does it all reflect workers' will? It has been the interests of the leaders backed by the management which have been responsible for violent activities and shifts in unions. On the other hand the financial interests of the INTUC leaders weighed
much more than the interests of the workers, when the communist
led strike was bothering the owner of a fire brick industry.
Instead of supporting the cause of the workers, they withdrew
themselves out. Thus leaving the workers at the mercy of the
police.

Workers versus leaders

The ultimate ends of the trade unions is to better the
conditions of the workers. To what extent a trade union would
be able to realise this objective is largely dependent upon the
nature of leadership. Of course, there are different approaches
followed by different unions. If the INTUC and the HMS believe
in establishing a socialist state with public ownership, the
communists lead unions to achieve the same goals but with extremist means. Also the communists consider any mobilization or
protest activity, whatever its results might be, a step forward in
the achievement of worker goals. If that would have been the
motive-power with which the unions were to move with, then there
should be little scope for coercion, intimidation, forcible levying
of Chanda, and so forth. Also the main concern of the leaders
should have been the worker interest. But it has been observed
that leaders have been forcibly pulling the workers in the folds
of trade unions with the aid of musclemen, by fetching undue
favours to their favoured workers. In this, the production goals
of the management have also been ignored, adding further strain to
the economy. To implement the decrees of the trade union leaders
they have maintained, in the opinion of many of the respondents,
lathials. This is not only for keeping the workers within the folds
of trade union but also to subdue other competent union lathials and leaders. The matter relating to exploitation, attaching secondary importance to worker problems and utilising trade unions for self development of the leaders themselves have already been analysed (see Tables 5.5 & 5.8).

Looking to the foregoing analyses, the trade union leaders while pursuing the ends of trade unions, apparently, have often utilised means which have been coercive and extra-legal in nature. Owing to the ideological commitments of personal interests often the ends pursued by the leaders themselves are open to question. Maintaining lathials, playing second fiddle to employers, carelessness towards production goals and economy, shifting their allegiance for the personal interests, have been the means. In the light of these analyses the hypothesis under examination stands substantiated.

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