

the indian working class :
size and shape

by

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ALL INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS

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Introducing

The Author

An active trade unionist for over twenty-eight years (1929-1957). He was elected as a member of the then Bombay Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Lal Bawta Girni Kamgar Union, Sholapur. Since 1958 he is working with the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti as Secretary of its Legislature Party.

and

The Book

The achievement of the unity of the working class and the broadening of the united front of all toiling masses rest in part on the correct understanding of the trends that are discernable in regard to the size, structure and composition of the working class. Such understanding is essential as trade unions cannot function in isolation from the realities of the changing situation. As a social movement and an instrument of class struggle, trade unions have to adapt themselves to the changing role and needs of the working population. This study is an attempt towards promotion of this understanding.

PREFACE

Sometime back Comrade S. A. Dange had initiated a scheme to publish a few studies on the 'Structure of the Indian Working-Class'. In a discussion with him, he asked me if I could write on the 'Size and Shape of the Working Class in India'. I hesitated as I knew that the subject was not quite simple. I was also conscious that for some time past I had ceased to have that personal and intimate touch with the working class so necessary for dealing with a subject of this kind.

But after this initial hesitation I agreed, thinking that even a bare outline of the subject prepared by putting together whatever material could be easily available, may have its own value for trade unions who undertake trade union education schemes.

This study does not bring out all the multi-lingual, multi-caste, multi-religious and multi-national complexities of which the new class of Indian society is made. Nor does it deal with how the new homogeneous class outlook of socialism is growing despite the complexities inherited from the past. That would have required a far deeper and far bigger study.

It must be pointed out that all attempts to organise workers on the basis of caste and religion have miserably failed. That speaks for the class consciousness of the working class. However, it cannot be denied that though caste, religion and regional affinities have not been able to prevent the growth of the trade union movement in the country they do have their corroding influence. But in the absence of reliable and sufficient data any detailed discussion on the subject and drawing of conclusions has its own dangers. Trade unions will have to make special efforts to collect the required data and study the subject deeply.

My object in writing the book being a limited one, I have not entered into a discussion on defining the contours of the working

class. I have taken all those as workers who earn their livelihood either by way of wages or salaries. I am conscious that all those who live by earning "salaries" are not workers. Those of them who are in the executive and the managerial cadre can by no means be included in determining the size of the working class. However in the absence of suitable data, I was not able to delineate the size of this section of salary earners from the total number of employees.

I have also omitted agricultural wage earners from this study though their number is formidable.

There are many scholars, institutes and study centres that have been publishing useful material on this or that aspect of the size and shape of the Indian working class. But most of them are not guided by a strictly working class outlook. That being so, this study, in my opinion, will be found to be filling a 'gap'.

In writing these pages valuable assistance was given to me by a few friends. I am extremely thankful to them. But for their valuable assistance I would not have been able to finish the present study.

May 1, 1966.

G. D. Sane.

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1

INTRODUCTION

How far is the working class in India ready to lead the struggle for socialism at this historic juncture? This question has assumed considerable urgency and importance in recent years, for it has now been established once more that irrespective of the professions of the ruling party in India, the struggle for socialism can be successful only if the working class discharges its historical role.

In order that a socialist India is born, the Indian working class must not only be at the head of the struggle for socialism but must simultaneously act as the unifying force for all the

toling masses. The minimum prerequisite for the working class to be able to play such a role is the achievement of trade union unity.

But, the struggle for unity cannot secure tangible results unless the most experienced wing of the working class movement correctly lays down its strategy and tactics. The working class forces are distributed over various detachments. Their relative strength is changing and will continue to change. With the introduction of new techniques, the structure of the class too undergoes a change. Their geographical distribution is also affected. Some sections occupy strategic places, while others hold relatively less important places. The laws of capitalist development narrow down the distance between manual and non-manual workers. New skills require an educated working class. These changes, cannot but have their impact on the trade union movement, and no trade union functionary can afford to be ignorant about them, if he wants to unite the trade union movement and desires to adopt an all-India plan of organisation.

It was, perhaps, this aspect of the question that led Com. S. A. Dange, General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress to pose the problem before a meeting of the trade union functionaries in December 1963. He asked, "Has there been any basic change in the industrial structure of the country? What is the direction of this change? Has it affected the working class? — size, number, trade, caste etc.?"

The following pages are an attempt to answer these questions. Though a brief review of the pre-independence period is given in the text, the main period covered is the period between 1951 and 1962.

A BRIEF SURVEY

The modern “working class” as a distinct economic and social group had its origin in the Industrial Revolution, and it was with the progress of machino-facture that the working class grew in number and divided itself into several skills and occupations. However, industrial development in India was very slow under the British rule and the little growth that occurred in industries was largely due to exigencies of the two World Wars. Consequently a very large population depends on land for its sustenance. Between 1901 and 1961, the proportion of gainfully employed population dependent on agriculture and allied occupations varied

between 30 per cent and 33 per cent. The percentage distribution of the working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors for the period from 1901 to 1961 is shown in Table No. 1, below:

Table No. 1

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FORCE AMONGST AGRICULTURAL, NON-AGRICULTURAL AND NON-WORKING POPULATION

	<i>Working force engaged in</i>		<i>Total</i> %	<i>Non-working</i> <i>Population</i> %
	<i>Agriculture</i> %	<i>Non-agricul- tural Sector</i> %		
1901	31.48	15.13	46.61	53.39
1911	33.82	14.25	48.07	51.93
1921	33.68	13.24	46.92	53.08
1931	30.24	13.06	43.30	56.70
1951	27.27	11.83	39.10	60.90
1961	29.88	13.10	42.98	57.02

(Source : Census of India Paper No. 1 of 1962, p. 396)

According to the 1961 Census, the total number of economically active persons was of the order of 188.7 million comprising 129.2 million men and 59.5 million women workers. Of the working population, 131.1 million (i.e. 69.5%) were engaged in agriculture while the remaining 57.3 million (i.e. 30.5%) in non-agricultural occupations; 99.6 million worked as cultivators while 31.5 million as agricultural labourers. Among the non-agricultural working population, as many as 12.0 million derived their livelihood from household activities while the remaining 45.6 million from non-household industries, such as plantations, mining, factory employment and services.

The further classification of the working force in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors shows that as many as 55.57 million workers earn their livelihood as wage-earners, their ratio to the total working population being 29.45%. The classification of wage-earners by sectors is presented in Table No. 2:

Table No. 2

WAGE EARNERS IN AGRICULTURAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL
SECTORS

<i>Sector</i>				<i>Total (in million)</i>
I. Agriculture				
a) Agricultural labourers	..	..	..	31.52
II. Non-agricultural Sector	..	..	..	24.05
a) Household industries			1.03	
b) Non-household industries	..	..	23.02	
			Total	55.57

(Source : Census of India Paper No. 1 of 1962 p .396).

Of the total of 24.05 million wage earners employed in household and non-household industries, as many as 6.33 million earned their sustenance from manufacturing activity and 9.01 million from services. The break up of wage earners by groups of industry in both household and non-household industries is set out in Table No. 3 :

Table No. 3

WAGE EARNERS BY GROUPS OF INDUSTRY

<i>Industry</i>	<i>(in million)</i>			
	<i>Household</i>	<i>Non-household</i>	<i>Total</i>	
I Plantation, Forestry etc.	0.18	1.98	2.16	
II Mining and Quarrying	—	0.73	0.73	
III Manufacturing	0.85	5.48	6.33	
IV Construction	—	1.07	1.07	
V Electricity, gas etc.	—	0.49	0.49	
VI Trade and commerce	—	1.75	1.75	
VII Transport	—	2.14	2.14	
VIII Services	—	9.01	9.01	
IX	—	0.37	0.37	
	Total	1.03	23.02	24.05

(Source : Indian Labour Statistics 1966, Tables 1-41 and 1-42).

Of the 5.48 million employees in the non-household manufacturing industries sector, about 3.91 million were employed in organised industries in 1961. This constituted about 71.45% of the total employment in the non-household industries sector. The rest belonged to the unorganised sector of industries. Although the employment in the unorganised sector constitutes a significant proportion among the wage earning class in the non-agricultural sector, yet it is among the factory wage-earners that the real leadership of the toiling masses grows. It is the factory workers that form the leading contingent of the trade union movement. In view of this let us briefly review its historical growth and its occupational characteristics.

3

HISTORICAL GROWTH OF FACTORY EMPLOYMENT

In 1911, prior to the First World War, the employment in factories employing more than 50 persons and using power stood at 2.1 million. During the First World War, the factory industries received certain impetus, thanks to the war-efforts. As a result, by 1921 the factory employment rose to 2.6 million. The decades between 1921 and 1941 saw a steady rise in factory employment, although it constituted just a small fraction of the total working force in the country. With the outbreak of the

Second World War, however, industrial development again received a phillip due to the exigencies and requirements of war. The need to secure self-sufficiency in respect of goods the supply of which was abruptly cut due to interruptions in imports also gave a good deal of stimulus to the growth of basic and consumer goods producing industries. The Labour Investigation Committee appointed in 1943, estimated that the total factory employment was 2.6 million. Today organised labour stands at nearly 4.5 million.

Over the decade, 1939-49, the daily average employment in factories covered under the Factories Act increased from 1.75 million to 2.45 million (i.e. by 40 per cent). During the same period, employment in mines went up from 4.13 lakhs to 5.19 lakhs and on railways from 7.09 lakhs to 9.01 lakhs. Although the factory employment had grown over the period, textile industries still retained their position as the largest employer accounting for almost 28.4% in 1939 and 26.8% of the total employment in 1949. In a sense, this also shows how lopsided the industrial development was. Other industries which accounted for a large proportion of industrial employment were railway workshops, general and electrical engineering, iron and steel, ordnance and chemicals. The factory employment for these industries for 1939 and 1949 is shown in Table No. 4:

Table No. 4

FACTORY EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES

	<i>(in thousand)</i>	
	<i>1939</i>	<i>1949</i>
Cotton Textiles ..	499	653
Jute Textiles ..	299	322
General and electrical engineering ..	58	136
Railway workshops ..	104	108
Ordnance ..	31	84
Iron and Steel ..	41	60
Chemicals ..	4.8	18
Total (including other industries not specified above)	1,751	2,434

In 1952, the First Five Year Plan was formulated and with it India entered into an era of planning. As industrial development has been one of the major objectives of Planning, considerable progress in industrial development has been made in that direction. India today has big steel works. It can also boast of heavy electrical and machine industry. Machinery required for cement, paper, and sugar industries can now be indigenously manufactured. India now produces urea, ammonium phosphate, penicillin, synthetic fibres etc. in significant quantities. Consumer and utility goods such as bicycles, sewing machines, telephones and domestic electrical goods are also produced. On the whole, the three plans have laid a secure foundation for industrialisation. As a result the industrial structure has become highly diversified. In recent years, this diversification has significantly contributed to the overall growth of industrial production. For ready reference the indices for production of some of the newly developed industries are presented in Table No. 5:

Table No. 5

INDEX NUMBERS OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION
IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES

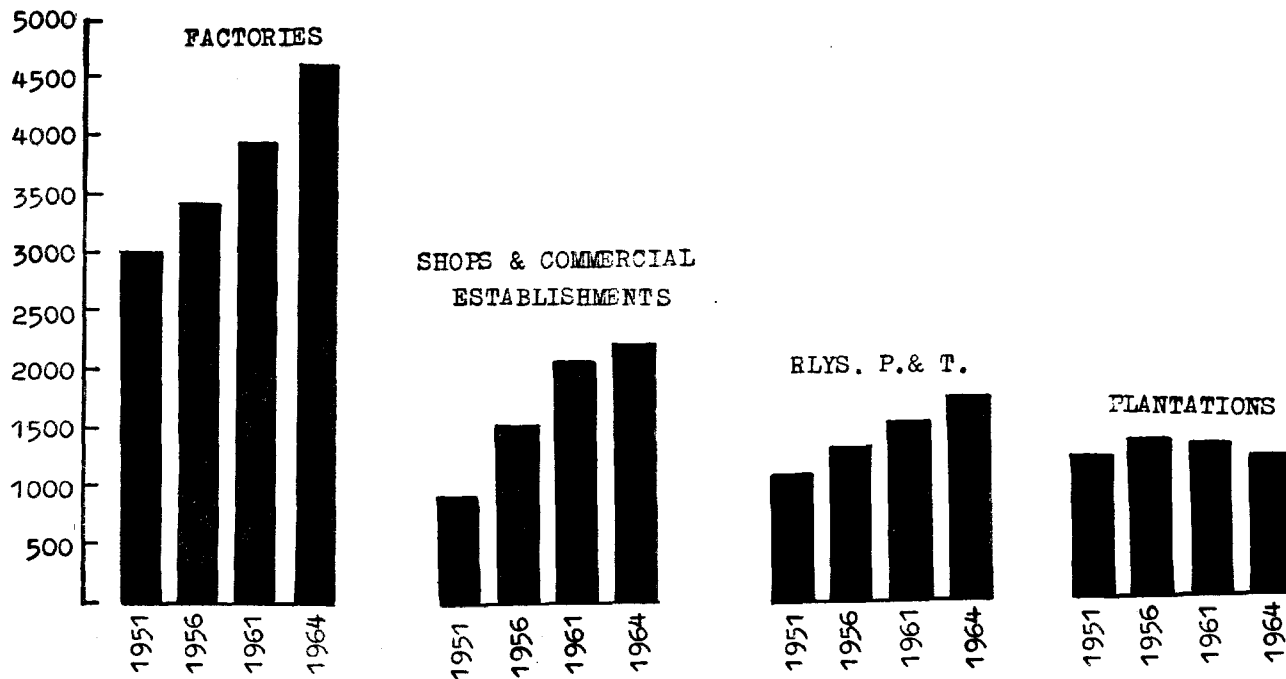
<i>Industry</i>	(Base 1956=100)				
	<i>1951</i>	<i>1961</i>	<i>1962</i>	<i>1963</i>	<i>1964(P)</i>
Cement	65	165	171	187	192
Iron & Steel	84	192	239	269	268
Aluminium Manufacture	59	196	277	382	389
Petroleum products	6	159	169	197	217
Chemical & Chemical products	73	173	184	225	226
Fertilizers	22	168	185	215	251
Electrical cables & wires	31	180	207	238	320
Automobiles	69	169	180	162	207

(P = provisional).

(Source : Handbook of Labour Statistics: The Employers' Federation of India, 1965.)

With the progressive development of manufacturing industries, plantations, mines and commerce, the volume of employment

GROWTH IN EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED BRANCHES OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.



therein also tended to rise manifold. This can be seen from Table No. 6:

Table No. 6

EMPLOYMENT IN MAJOR BRANCHES OF ECONOMIC
ACTIVITY BY YEARS

Year	Factories	Plantations	Mines	<i>(in thousand)</i>	
				<i>Shops and Commercial Establish- ments</i>	<i>Railways Posts and Telegraph ments</i>
1951	2,914	1,236	594	928	1,116
1952	3,021	1,245	559	1,091	1,144
1953	2,970	875	594	1,094	1,167
1954	3,037	1,215	568	1,029	1,207
1955	3,114	1,250	591	1,171	1,252
1956	3,402	1,294	628	1,529	1,313
1957	3,408	1,274	651	1,582	1,350
1958	3,413	1,260	649	1,704	1,427
1959	3,635	1,269	618	1,631	1,483
1960	3,764	1,222	652	1,858	1,514
1961	3,918	NA	671	2,069	1,536
1962	4,112 (P)	NA	684	2,032 (P)	1,567
1963	4,362 (P)	NA	704	2,031 (P)	1,644
1964	4,585 (P)	NA	686	2,200 (P)	1,792

(P = provisional). (NA = Not available).

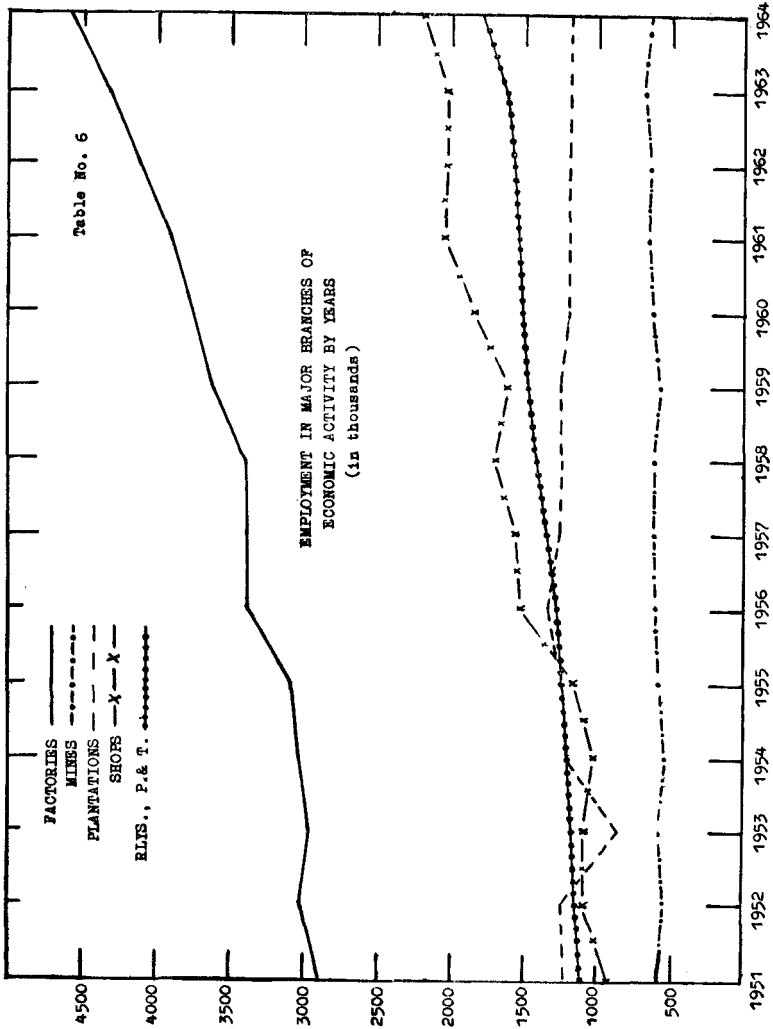
(Source : Handbook of Labour Statistics "The Employers' Federation of India," 1965, page 11 Table 1-8. Data for 1964 is taken from Indian Labour Statistics 1966, Table 2.5).

It will be seen from the above table that between 1951 and 1964 the employment in factories went up from 2.91 million to 4.58 million, that is to say by 57.3%. During the same period, mines, railways, posts and telegraphs, shops and commercial establishments also recorded a big growth.

By contrast the level of employment in plantations remained almost static. Barring plantations, it is obvious that all the other branches of the industrial sector and commerce recorded a significant rise in individual work-force over the planning period. It must be stated that this expansion was not only confined to traditional industries such as textiles, but was spread over

almost all the new branches of industries. A closer study of the full meaning of these changes will be of particular importance to the trade union movement in India.

Fig. No. 2



4

INDUSTRYWISE CHANGES IN THE WORKING CLASS

We will first try to show the changes in employment in factories for major industry groups for 1951, 1962 and 1964.

It will be observed from the data in the table overleaf, that the broadening and diversification of industries has inevitably led to certain important shifts in the relative strength of workers employed in different industries. The largest growth was recorded during the period by electrical machinery (371%) closely followed by machinery (187%), metal products (165%) and basic

metal industries (159%) in that order. It is needless to state that these changes in the growth of employment are bound to project themselves in the growth of the trade union movement.

Table No. 7

EMPLOYMENT IN FACTORIES BY MAJOR INDUSTRY GROUPS

(figures in thousand)

Industry	Employment		
	1951	1962	1964(P)
Processes allied to agriculture (Gins and presses)	89	154	160
Food (except beverages)	.. 385	573	595
Beverages	.. 6	9	10
Tobacco	.. 122	172	181
Textiles	.. 1,045	1,236	1,327
Footwear and other wearing apparel etc.	.. 10	27	40
Woodwork except furniture	.. 24	66	70
Furniture and fixtures	.. 7	18	21
Paper and Paper products	.. 22	47	54
Printing, Publishing and allied industries	.. 71	111	118
Leather and Leather products	.. 15	22	26
Rubber and Rubber products	.. 22	44	57
Chemicals and Chemical products	.. 78	158	187
Petroleum and Coal products	.. 11	17	19
Nonmetallic mineral products	.. 110	204	226
Basic Metal Industries	.. 95	194	246
Metal Products (except Machinery and Transport equipment)	.. 57	151	189
Machinery (except electrical)	.. 97	233	279
Electrical machinery	.. 28	107	132
Transport equipment	.. 184	377	418
Miscellaneous industries	.. 65	132	153
Electricity, gas, steam	.. 22	48	48
Water and sanitary services	.. 4	8	8
Recreation	.. 4	4	4
Personal services	.. 1	6	7
Total	2,531	4,111	4,575

(P = provisional).

(Source : for 1951 Indian Labour Gazette 1953;
for 1962 Indian Labour Statistics 1965;
for 1964 Indian Labour Statistics 1966, Table 2.3)

Fig. No. 3

EMPLOYMENT IN FACTORIES BY MAJOR INDUSTRY GROUPS.

The black portion represents the employment in 1951 and the white portion represents the increase in the employment in 1964.

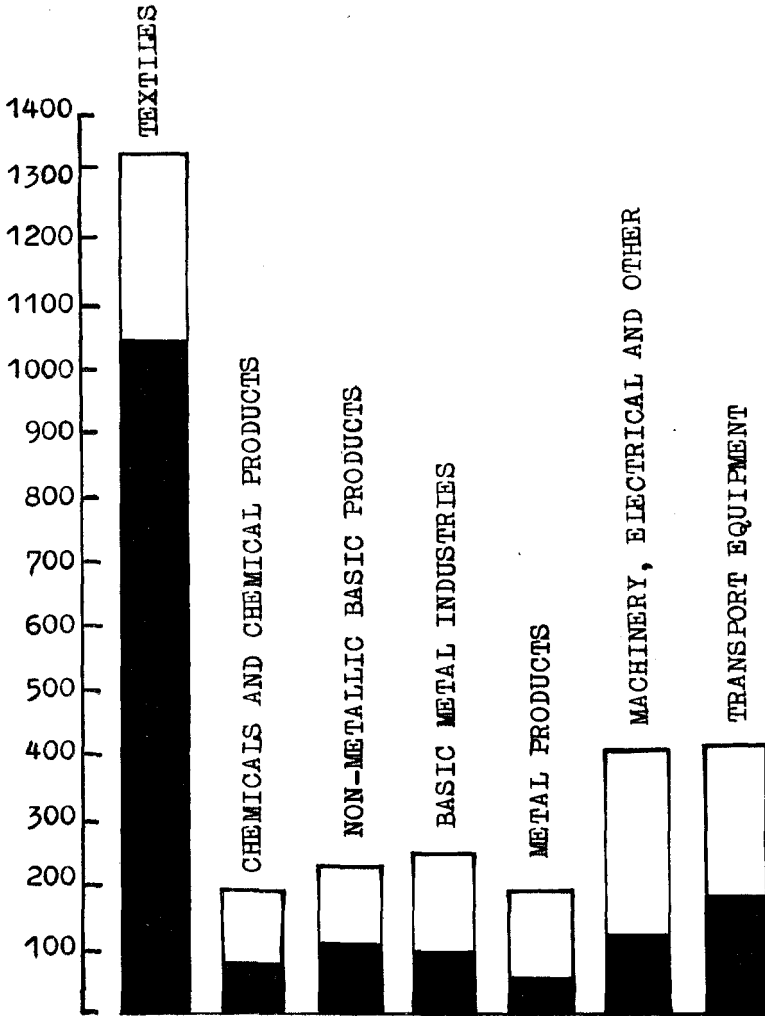
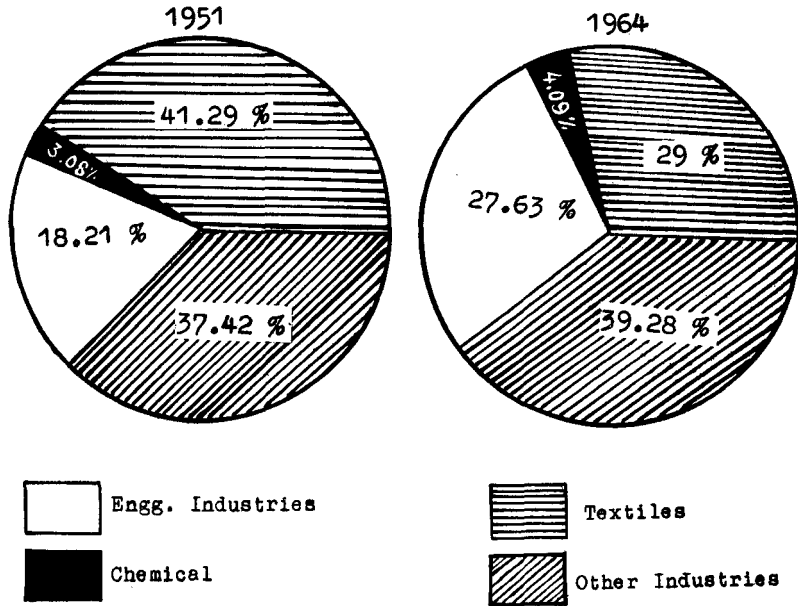


Fig. No. 4

PERCENTAGE SHARE OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN SELECTED GROUPS OF INDUSTRIES IN THE TOTAL FACTORY EMPLOYMENT.



However, the tremendous expansion recorded by new industries in respect of the number of the workers, has to be placed side by side with the changes in the percentage share of workers in each industry group compared to the total number of factory workers. That will enable us to know what contingents of the working class are coming up in great strength and speed. It will be noticed that the working force in the textile industry which once predominated the field of factory employment has tended to decline in importance compared with employment in other industries. This is borne out by the fact that although their number over the period grew up by about 27 per cent, their share in the total factory employment fell from 41% in 1951 to 29% in 1964. Though textile workers still occupy a dominant position relative to workers employed in other branches of manufacturing industry, the reduction in their share in total

employment indicates, without doubt, that the textile industry is now gradually losing its position to workers in other manufacturing groups which are steadily growing in importance. For instance the proportion of total employment in basic metals, metal products, machinery, electrical machinery and transport equipment to the total factory employment improved from 18% in 1951 to 27% in 1964.

Like the industries in the manufacturing sector, employment in Railways, motor transport, docks etc. too recorded a considerable growth between 1951 to 1964. In the railways for instance the employment during the period went up from 9,22,791 to 13,24,227, a rise of 43 per cent. Similarly in Ports the employment shot up from 57,415 (1950) to 95,200 (1962) i.e. by about 66%. Road transport has developed by leaps and bounds. However, employment figures for the sector are not readily available.

An important feature of this growth is that between 1951 and 1964, the number of factory workers grew by 80 per cent. This means that in the overall factory employment at least five workers out of every ten workers employed in the factories are post-1951 entrants. Thus nearly half of the factory workers have not seen the past bitter struggles waged by workers during the pre-independence period and immediately afterwards. Instead of traditions of struggles, they have been brought up in a period when industrial law developed and brought with it certain legal illusions. This is a point which needs attention by trade unionists.

5

REGIONAL CHANGES IN FACTORY EMPLOYMENT

One of the legacies of foreign rule in India was the regional disparities in the distribution of industrial activities. The industrial activity in the country was extremely uneven, both absolutely and in relation to industrial population. Bengal and Bombay with 15 and 5 per cent of the population had 29 and 23 per cent of the total number of industrial workers in 1939. Again the major manufacturing industries were by and large located in the regions of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. It will

be interesting to see what geographical changes have taken place in the distribution of the working class between 1951 and 1961.

An attempt has been made here to trace the regionwise growth of the working class between the years 1951 and 1961. As the boundaries of the states have changed, consequent on the re-organisation of states in 1956 and again in 1960, we have grouped the states in five suitable zones in order to ensure comparability in regional figures. These zones are: Northern Zone comprising the Punjab and Rajasthan, Central Zone of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, Eastern Zone of Assam, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal, Western Zone of Maharashtra and Gujarat and Southern Zone of Andhra Pradesh, Mysore, Kerala and Madras.

We have taken only the factory workers for comparing the zone-wise growth of the working class.

Table No. 8

GROWTH IN FACTORY EMPLOYMENT BY ZONES

	<i>Number of Workers 1951 (‘000)</i>	<i>% of total workers</i>	<i>Number of Workers 1961 (‘000)</i>	<i>% of total workers</i>	<i>% rise over 1951</i>
Northern Zone	126	4.43	188	4.79	49
Central Zone	264	9.29	507	12.91	92
Eastern Zone	924	32.54	1044	26.58	3
Western Zone	897	31.58	1280	32.59	42
Southern Zone	629	22.16	908	23.12	40
Total	2840	100.00	3927	100.00	38

(Note : Figures for 1951 are taken from the Indian Labour Year Book 1951-52 and 1952-53. Figures for 1961 are taken from a paper prepared by Mr. Raj K. Nigam for the Seminar on Problems of Industrial Location).

From the above table it is obvious that despite progress recorded in factory employments in Northern and Central Zones, the Eastern, Western and Southern Zones still account for more than 4/5th of the total factory employment in India, the proportion of these three Zones together in 1951 and 1961 being 86.28% and 82.29% respectively. The data make abundantly clear that

the policy of having more even economic development has had only a marginal impact in correcting the imbalance in industrial growth in different zones.

While studying the changes in the factory employment in different Zones, it may be useful to relate the data with the capital invested in factory industries in different states. That may give another angle of the uneven growth of industries in different states, and show that whatever be the attempt of the Planners to remove economic imbalance between different states or regions, the agglomeration tendency still continues. The Statewise distribution of capital investment in factories, the number of factories and factory employment in 1961 is given in Table No. 9.

Table No. 9

CAPITAL INVESTED IN FACTORY GROUP OF INDUSTRIES BY STATES IN 1961			
<i>State</i>	<i>Productive Capital (fixed and Working) (Rs. crores)</i>	<i>Number of Factories</i>	<i>Number of workers employed (in thousand)</i>
ALL STATES	2,374.15	9,161	2,738.7
Andhra Pradesh	86.79	448	132.5
Assam	65.77	441	53.9
Bihar	271.85	278	143.3
Delhi	25.72	164	36.1
Gujarat	188.41	850	279.8
Himachal Pradesh	1.46	7	1.5
Jammu & Kashmir	3.59	40	7.4
Kerala	46.66	554	128.4
Madhya Pradesh	71.17	631	92.5
Madras	145.53	805	210.0
Maharashtra	537.20	1,837	600.1
Mysore	86.05	396	100.1
Orissa	58.10	102	21.1
Punjab	74.04	385	67.9
Rajasthan	25.38	116	38.1
Tripura	0.42	13	0.6
Uttar Pradesh	167.58	602	226.0
West Bengal	519.35	1,484	599.0

(Source : Annual Survey of Industries 1961, Vol. 1).

Factories covered under the Annual Survey of Industries 1961 are those that are registered under the Factories Act, 1948, which employed 50 or more workers with the aid of power or 100 or more workers without the aid of power including those which did not work during the year. But the data exclude those factories that are under the control of the Defence Ministry, Oil Storage Depots or Technical Training Institutes. The coverage being different, figures for factory employment and the number of factories do not tally with the figures given in Labour Statistics publication issued by the Ministry of Labour.

An analysis of the data given shows that Maharashtra and West Bengal together employ about 44 per cent of the total productive capital employed in all the factories registered and covered under ASI-1951. The share of the population of the two states together in the total population of the country is only 17 per cent. This fact alone shows that the gap between the industrially developed states and the rest of the states is too wide and the tendency continues to persist despite planning. No wonder that Maharashtra and West Bengal continue to be the states that set tone to the trade union movement in other states.

The disparity in the state of industrial development necessarily reflects itself in the growth of employment in factories in individual states. This can be seen readily from Table No. 10.

It can be seen that factory employment in Orissa showed the highest percentage rise in factory employment. Next comes Punjab, where during the period factory employment jumped up from 99,000 to 1,52,000, a rise of 53.33 per cent. It can also be seen that though Bombay (Maharashtra-Gujarat), Madras, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have kept the lead in the share of total factory employment and even show an increase in absolute factory employment, except Uttar Pradesh, where the rise in employment is 31 per cent, all other leading States have recorded a lower rate of growth than the national rate of growth which is 25 per cent. Between 1951 and 1963, factory employment in Bombay (Maharashtra and Gujarat) went up by 20 per cent,

that in Madras by 11 per cent and that in West Bengal by 23 per cent. Despite these facts, it is clear that factory employment is spreading over new areas and giving rise to new centres of trade union movement.

Table No. 10

AVERAGE ESTIMATED DAILY EMPLOYMENT IN ALL FACTORIES
BY STATES

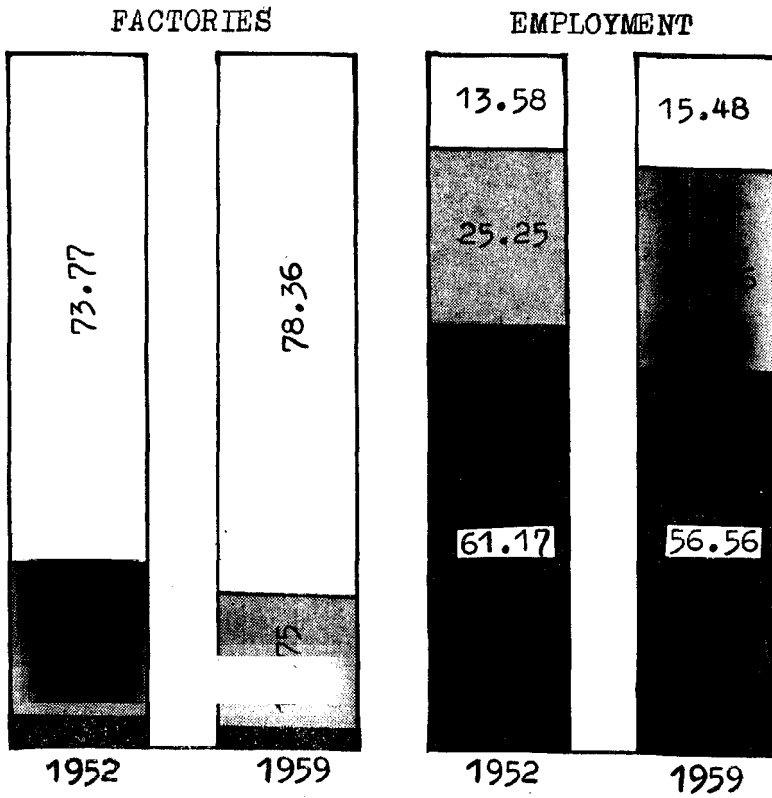
<i>States</i>	<i>1957</i>		<i>1963 (P)</i>	
	<i>Number of working factories</i>	<i>Estimated average employment</i>	<i>Number of working factories</i>	<i>Estimated average employment</i>
Andhra Pradesh	3,802	197	5,031	241
Assam	1,050	72	1,324	82
Bihar	4,511	180	8,186	215
Bombay	10,626	1,076		
(a) Maharashtra			9,167	907
(b) Gujarat			4,260	393
Madhya Pradesh	1,743	155	2,035	186
Kerala	1,653	155	2,594	177
Madras	4,956	325	6,417	362
Mysore	1,278	113	2,445	224
Orissa	343	25	585	52
Punjab	2,307	99	4,485	152
Rajasthan	545	48	1,250	67
Uttar Pradesh	1,977	283	3,181	372
West Bengal	3,432	688	5,032	847
Centrally administered areas	915	64	1,412	85
Total	39,138	3,480	57,404	4,362

(P = Provisional)




(Source : Indian Labour Statistics issued by the Labour Bureau).

Fig. No. 5

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FACTORY WORKERS BY SIZE OF MANUFACTURING UNITS.



SIZE OF MANUFACTURING UNIT

-  Upto 49 Workers
-  50 to 499 Workers
-  500 and Above

Division of factory employment by size of factories.

We have described the changes in the concentration of the factory workers on regional or state basis. It will be interesting to note the changes in the distribution of labour force by size of the manufacturing industries.

Table No. 11

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FACTORY WORKERS
BY SIZE OF MANUFACTURING UNITS

<i>Size of Manufacturing Unit employing</i>	<i>Factories</i>		<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>1952</i>	<i>1959</i>	<i>1952</i>	<i>1959</i>
Less than 50 workers	73.77	78.36	13.58	15.48
50 to 499 „	22.61	18.75	25.25	27.96
more than 500 „	3.62	2.89	61.17	56.56
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

(Source : Handbook of Labour Statistics 1965, Employers Federation of India).

Note ; The data include establishments employing 10 or more workers working with the aid of power and those employing 20 or more workers working without the aid of power and covered by the Factories Act 1948.

Though little over 56 per cent of the factory workers are employed in establishments employing more than 500 workers, employment in small and medium units is increasing. This indicates that trade union movement cannot ignore the fact that organisation of workers employed in small and medium units will assume greater and greater importance.

6

EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The growing share of workers employed in the public sector compared to the total employment has significant importance for the trade union movement in the country. Important contingents of the working class, such as iron and steel workers form a big proportion of workers employed in the factories in the public sector. Industrial relations and working conditions in the public sector will, therefore, demand more and more attention from the trade union movement.

How the total employment in different industries is growing in the public sector is shown in Table No. 12.

Table No. 12

EMPLOYMENT IN DIFFERENT INDUSTRY DIVISIONS IN THE
PUBLIC SECTOR

(1956 to 1965)

Industry Division	Description of Industry	(in thousand)	
		Number employed 31-3-56	1965
0	Agriculture, Forestry etc.	14.1	209.0
1	Mining and Quarrying	53.8	160.0
2 & 3	Manufacturing	204.6	635.0
4	Construction	416.0	740.0
5	Electricity, Water and Sanitary Services	77.5	291.0
6	Trade and Commerce	43.2	143.0
7	Transport and Communications ..	1,391.8	2,044.0
8	Services	3,033.5	4,735.0
	Total	5,234.5	8,957.0

(Source : Employment in the Public Sector, All India Quarterly Report).

Within a period of nine years employment in the manufacturing industry grew more than three times. Employment in mining, electricity, water and sanitary services, trade and commerce also showed various degrees of increases during the period. Employment in the public sector as a whole grew by 71 per cent between 1956 and 1965.

What changes have taken place in the total factory employment in the public sector and how they stand in comparison with the changes in the total factory employment in India is shown in Table No. 13.

An analysis of the data given in the table shows that from year to year the percentage share of factory employment in the public sector to the total factory employment has been increasing. Whereas in 1951 the percentage share of factory employment in the public sector was only 9.4, by 1964 it increased to 16.8 and the total factory employment in the public sector rose from 273

thousand in 1951 to 768 thousand in 1964, a rise of 171.4 per cent. In the same period the factory employment in the private sector rose from 2299 thousand in 1951 to 3,807 thousand in 1964, a rise of 71.3 per cent. Though the share of factory employment in the public sector compared to total factory employment is small even now (16.8 per cent), its increasing importance in the total factory employment cannot be ignored. It may be noted that substantial factory employment in the public sector belongs to such industries as iron and steel. They represent not only basic heavy industries but also industries with advanced technology.

Table No. 13

FACTORY EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

(figures in thousand)

Year	Public Sector	Private Sector	Total Employment	Percentage of Public Sector Employment in Total Employment
1950	283	2,222	2,959	11.3
1951	237	2,299	2,914	9.4
1952	326	2,241	3,021	12.7
1953	328	2,200	2,970	12.98
1954	342	2,348	3,037	12.7
1955	347	2,344	3,114	12.9
1956	361	2,521	3,402	12.5
1957	429	3,051	3,480	12.3
1958	452	2,961	3,413	13.3
1959	497	3,138	3,635	13.7
1960	540	3,224	3,764	14.4
1961	584	3,334	3,918	14.9
1962	640	3,472	4,222	15.5
1963	721	3,645	4,366	16.5
1964	768 (E)	3,807	4,575	16.8

(E) = Estimated.

Percentage increase in
1964 over 1950

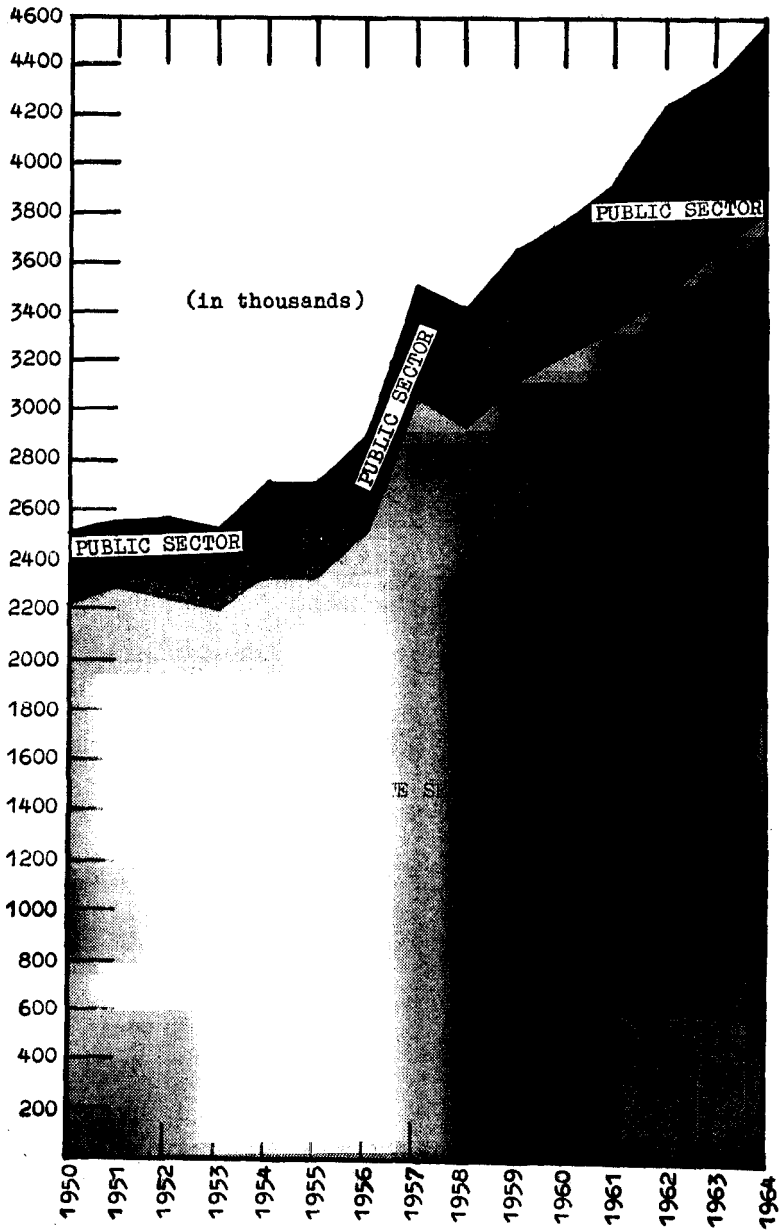
171.4 71.3 54.6

(Source : Monthly Abstract of statistics, April, 1964, pages 70-71)

Note : Up to 1956, the total of public and private sector employment does not tally with the aggregate totals shown in Column 4 of the table.

Fig. No. 6

FACTORY EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN RELATION TO TOTAL EMPLOYMENT.



The public sector thus occupies commanding heights in the economic life of the country. In 1961 the employment provided by public sector (3.68 lakhs) accounted for 6.72 per cent of the total employment in non-household industries in the public and the private sectors. Again in certain sectors as transport, storage and communications, public sector employment practically holds a monopoly position. Not only this, in most states it constitutes the most dominant segment of employment. In Delhi, for instance, almost half the number of total employees belong to the public sector. In Andhra Pradesh and Bihar it is almost one third of the total number of employees in the non-household industries. Table No. 14 gives statewise figures of all employees and employees in the Public Sector.

Table No. 14

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT AND
EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR
BY STATES

1 9 6 1

(Figures in lakhs)

State			All Employees	Employees in Public Sector
Andhra	..	..	15.7	5.2
Assam	..	..	8.8	1.7
Bihar	..	..	15.7	5.6
Delhi	..	..	5.1	2.3
Gujarat	..	..	11.2	3.6
Kerala	..	..	13.0	2.0
Madhya Pradesh	..	..	12.4	5.2
Madras	..	..	21.9	6.1
Maharashtra	..	..	30.3	8.8
Mysore	..	..	13.4	3.5
Orissa	..	..	5.3	2.1
Punjab	..	..	8.2	3.4
Rajasthan	..	..	7.0	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	..	..	23.6	9.6
West Bengal	..	..	32.8	6.9
India	..	..	230.0	70.5

(Sources The data for employees in non-household industries are taken from the 1961 Census Report, while the data for employees in the Public Sector are taken from the All India Quarterly Report of Employment in the Public Sector January-March 1965. The number of employees shown includes all divisions of employees in the non-household industries).

1. Major Industries of India Annual, 1964-65.

Industrial workers working in factories are naturally the leading contingent in the working-class movement. The persons employed in the Public Sector, (inspite of the fact that a substantial part of them is not employed in factories) cannot however, be ignored, if the conditions of service and work have to be improved. Trade Unions will have to give more and more attention to the conditions of service and pay packets of the vast number of employees employed by the Union and the State Governments, as also by the Local Self Governments. Ways and means will have to be found to forge an alliance between the factory workers and other employees and as employees in the public sector have more uniform and regularised condition of pay and service etc., an approach to this section of employees will be more easy. An alliance between industrial workers and employees in the public sector has added importance due to the fact that both of them hold vital nerves of the present-day order of the society.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE UNORGANISED SECTOR.

So far we have considered only the working force in the organised sector of industries. But employment in the unorganised sector is also vast and varied. The conditions of service etc. in this sector have received little attention, though wages are fixed for certain categories of employment under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The field has been so callously neglected that even reliable data of employment in the unorganised sector are not available.

'*The Labour Year Book 1951-52*' published by the Government of India on page 23 tells us that no reliable data or even estimates are available in respect of the employment in unorganised industries in India. According to the Planning Commission, the hand-loom weaving industry alone provides employment to about a crore of workers. Besides these, there are a number of other cottage industries which employ a considerable number of workers.

The Year Book tries to inform us about employment in this sector from such states as have sent the estimates of employment. For instance the Director of Industries, Uttar Pradesh, has estimated the total employment in cottage and unorganised industries in the State at 32,50,000. The industries included brassware, lock and scissors making, handloom weaving, wood carving, leather works etc.

In Madhya Pradesh the bidi industry alone employed about two lakhs of workers. It was reported that during the period under reference Jammu and Kashmir employed about 1,30,000 workers in unorganised industries.

Some information about employment in Shops and Establishments is, however, available from the *Indian Labour Statistics* a yearly official publication. The data relate to Shops and Establishments covered by the Shops and Establishments Acts of various States. But as the area of application of the Acts in various states widens from year to year the serial statistics given in the publication are not strictly comparable. The Acts are not made applicable to smaller towns and villages. This leaves a large number of workers uncovered. However, from such data as are available for 1964 (provisional) it is revealed that shops alone employed about 1,094,000 workers. Employment in Commercial Establishments was 7,88,000 and in Restaurants and Theatres 319,000. The total employment in shops and commercial establishments aggregated to 2,200,000.

Employment in small scale manufacturing units is also vast and varied. It is reported that there are 57,000 small-scale units

voluntarily registered with the various State Directors of Industries. The Second Ford Foundation Team, which reviewed the programme last year estimated the number of workers employed in non-registered non-household small-scale factories at about two to two and half lakhs.

Apart from the traditional industries like food products, grain milling, textile weaving, finishing etc., metal working and machinery industries are the most important parts of small-scale sector confirming their recent growth. They constitute many producer as well as consumer goods industries with a total outlay of Rs. 218 crores employing 2,17,600 persons in 1960.¹

In view of the paucity of information relating to employment in the unorganised sector, the same can be estimated on the basis of 1961 Census data. According to the Census, the total number of employees engaged in the household industries amounts to 1,035,000 and in the non-household industries to 23,018,000. The total number of non-agricultural wage earners, therefore, reaches a figure of 24,053,000. If the total number of workers employed in the organised sector is deducted from the total number of non-agricultural wage-earners, we get a rough estimate of workers employed in the unorganised sector. Total employment in organised sectors such as factories, mines, plantations, government and quasi-government bodies, ports, insurance, and banks etc. comes to about 14 million. Deducting this number from the total employment of non-agricultural wage-earners we get a total of about 10 million wage earners employed in the unorganised sector. The ratio of employment in the organised sector to the employment in the unorganised sector works out to 58:42.

Contract Labour

An important branch of considerable employment is contract labour. However, this is a branch where latest data on employ-

1. *Major Industries of India Annual 1964-65.*

ment are not available. Some idea about the extent of such employment can be had from Table No. 15.

Table No. 15

EMPLOYMENT OF CONTRACT LABOUR				
<i>Industry</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Contract labour</i>	<i>Total labour</i>	<i>Proportion of contract labour to total labour %</i>
A Factories				
1. Petroleum Refining	1957	3,823	12,622	30.3
2. Iron and Steel	1960	35,793	127,568	28.1
3. Chemical	1959	3,929	54,953	7.1
B Mines				
4. Coal	1954	51,811	300,197	17.3
5. Mica	1963	295	3,463	9.5
6. Manganese	1960	12,297	18,632	65.7
7. Iron Ore	1957	4,408	6,017	73.3
C Ports				
8. Visakhapatam	1958	2,400	542	44.3
9. Kandla	1958	1,039	2,245	46.3
10. Cochin	1958	416	4,266	9.7
11. Calcutta	1961	11,839	48,125	24.6
12. Bombay	1962	4,846	29,866	16.2
		20,540	89,922	22.8
All Ports				
D Railways	1949-50	700,000	1,623,000	43.1
E Construction				
Central, and State P.W.D. etc.	1956	423,457	621,938	68.08

(Source : Handbook of Labour Statistics 1965,

The Employers' Federation of India — Table 1.11)

Legislation for abolition of contract labour has been discussed in the Tripartite Labour Conference. But employment in this branch is not likely to decrease in the coming few years. In fact it may grow.

8

WHITE COLLAR WORKERS

The emergence of trade unionism among white-collar workers is a recent phenomenon. In fact there was a period when white-collar or non-manual employees looked upon trade unionism as an activity alien to the culture of the section of the population to which they belonged. However, the post-war situation compelled middle class employees to take to the path of struggle and that gave birth to their trade unions. The experience they gained made them realise that their problems are not materially different from those of manual workers. The bank employees were the first in the field. In 1946 they presented their demands and

threatened strikes. Then followed a stir among Government employees. It would, therefore, be interesting to ascertain the strength of this section of employees and get acquainted with allied matters.

White collar workers or middle class employees, sometimes described as non-manual workers, mainly belong to the service industry. They are composed of Bank and Insurance employees, Government employees, employees working in shops and commercial offices, teachers, nurses and journalists etc. Though exact comparable data are not available, some idea of the strength of the working force of non-manual employees can be had from census data.

The 1951 Census of India, Vol. I, Part II-B gives us population figures by status — Employers, employees and independent workers by industries. As white collar or non-manual employees are found mainly in service industries, the Census data pertaining to these industries provide useful information about their strength both for 1951 and 1961. These data are summarised below:

EMPLOYEES IN SERVICE INDUSTRY — 1951			
<i>Industry</i>			<i>Employees ('000)</i>
Commerce .. .. .	..	..	1,087
Health, Education and Public Administration ..	..	..	2,798
Services not elsewhere specified .. .. .	..	..	2,800
		Total	6,685

(Source : Census of India 1951, Volume I, Part II B)

EMPLOYEES IN SERVICE INDUSTRY — 1961			
<i>Industry</i>			<i>Employees ('000)</i>
1. Public Services .. .. .	..	..	3,288
2. Educational and Scientific Services .. .. .	..	..	1,470
3. Medical and Health Services .. .. .	..	..	325
4. Religious and Welfare Services .. .. .	..	..	170
5. Business Services .. .. .	..	..	102
6. Legal Services .. .. .	..	..	49
7. Community Services and Trade and Labour Associations			106
8. Recreation Services .. .. .	..	..	112
9. Personal Services .. .. .	..	..	1,482
10. Services (not elsewhere classified) .. .. .	..	..	742
		Total	7,846

(Source : Indian Labour Statistics 1965, page 14, Table 142).

The 1961 Census data enable us to get a more detailed break-up of the service industry and employment therein.

The total number of employees in the service group of industries reaches the figure of 7,781,000. To this total must be added the number of employees engaged in Trade and Commerce. The total thus comes to 7,846,000. It must be remembered that a large number of employees engaged in service industry belong to the category of Hamals i.e. manual unskilled labour, and therefore, not all the employees engaged in trade and commerce can be taken as white collar or non-manual employees. The total figure of employees in the service, trade and commerce group of industries (9,485,000) is therefore, only a rough estimate of the strength of non-manual employees. It excludes white collar workers such as technicians and engineers engaged in other sectors of economy.

The idea about white collar workers employed in manufacturing industries can be had from the figures for 'workers' and 'other than workers' contained in the Annual Survey of Industries. A break up of these figures for some industries is given in Table No. 16.

Table No. 16

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF 'PERSONS OTHER THAN WORKERS'
IN THE EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES.

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Total employment</i>	<i>Persons other than workers</i>	<i>Percentage of column 3 to column 2</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Cotton Textiles	819,998	45,357	5.5
Manufacturing of paper and paper products	1,749	176	10.0
Drugs and Pharmaceuticals ..	30,656	4,755	15.5
Petroleum refineries	4,693	843	18.0
Iron and Steel	92,962	17,104	18.5
Heavy chemicals (organic)	436	74	21.3
Aircraft Manufacture	5,436	1,468	26.8

(Source : Annual Survey of Industries, 1961, Volume I.)

From the above data it is obvious that while the percentage of persons 'other than workers' is relatively high in certain industries, it is lowest in the textile industry. It may be stated that the category of 'other than workers' includes all those who are in the supervisory or managerial posts. The experience of the industrially developed countries shows that with advances in technology the proportion of technical personnel in the employment in industries tends to grow. This is also true for the developing countries like India, where automation is making gradual headway. Not much data are, however, available in India on the subject of automation and the character of the working force — a subject which needs to be closely studied. However a pamphlet published by the Secretariat of the 'Committee Against Automation (Maharashtra State)' which gives details of a case study of a Nut and Bolt Factory Division of a Company in India by Dr. Julius Rezler, throws considerable light on skill distribution in the Old Shop and the New Shop (i.e. after automation) as follows:

Table No. 17

SKILL DISTRIBUTION OF DIVISIONAL WORK FORCE

<i>Category of workers.</i>	<i>Old Shop</i>		<i>New Shop</i>	
	<i>No. of workers</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No. of workers</i>	<i>%</i>
Skilled	7	18.9	12	57.1
Semi-skilled	21	56.8	7	30.0
Unskilled	9	24.3	2	12.9
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	37	100.0	21	100.0

From the facts cited in the study and given in the above table, it is clear that automation reduces employment and increases the proportion of skilled workers to the total workers employed. The effects of automation on the structure of employment, therefore, need to be closely studied.

Another consequence of higher technology is the increased earnings earned by the workers. We will not go here into the

discussion of whether the increased earnings due to use of higher technology is a fair return for workers compared to the extra profits that the employer may earn. We are here concerned only with the effects of higher earnings in these industries on the trade union movement.

A number of manufacturing industries in India, that enjoy monopoly position are already paying relatively higher wages and fringe benefits to their workers. An estimate of the average earnings of a factory worker and the average earnings of a worker working in monopoly concerns can be had from certain data published by the Employers' Federation of India. Estimating the average fringe benefits and average wages per employee in 1960, the Federation works out average total earnings per worker for certain industries.

Table No. 18

AVERAGE ANNUAL FRINGE BENEFITS AND AVERAGE WAGES
PER EMPLOYEE IN 1960 BY INDUSTRIES.

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Average wage Rs.</i>	<i>Average Fringe Benefits Rs.</i>	<i>Total of 2 and 3</i>
1	2	3	4
Cotton textiles	1,647	311	1,958
Petroleum refining and selling ..	2,834	1,340	4,174
Mfg. of electrical and other machines	1,884	421	2,305
General electrical engineering ..	1,993	604	2,597
Paper and paper products ..	1,366	347	1,713
Metal products	1,945	631	2,576
Cigarette manufacturing	2,189	1,003	3,192
Ship-building	2,269	426	2,695
Iron & Steel	2,152	714	2,866
Coir factories	873	185	1,058

(Source : 'Fringe Benefits in Indian Industry', page 29. Monograph 5.
The Employers' Federation of India.)

Compared to the annual average earnings of Rs. 1,462, the average total earnings (comprising of wage and fringe benefits) works out to Rs. 4,174 in the Petroleum Refining and Selling,

Rs. 3,192 in Cigarette Manufacturing and Distribution, Rs. 2,695 in Ship Building and Rs. 2,866 in Iron and Steel industries. The disparity in the average earnings per worker for all industries mentioned above is too glaring. The industries giving higher wages and fringe benefits are also the industries that hold monopoly position and use relatively higher form of technology.

How the differences in earnings for workers employed in different industries affect the class solidarity of the working class, and what role technicians and highly skilled workers in the better paid monopolistic industry can play in the trade union movement need to be closely studied.

This problem is not peculiar to Indian trade union movement only. For instance Luis Figueroa, writing about '*Some problems of the working class movement in Latin America*' states, "With the emergence in some countries of a rudimentary heavy industry and the gradual development of the chemical and other modern branches, not only physical strength and traditional skills but also some measure of technological knowledge is demanded of the workers. In the capital intensive, mass production and technologically more advanced branches of industry (primarily in monopoly owned enterprises) the workers have been able to win comparatively high wages and social benefits exceeding the average. As a result, there emerged 'objectively privileged' strata of workers. (Previously in similar circumstances it was mostly a matter of deliberate corruption of a very small number of workers in U.S. monopoly owned industries). These new sectors of the working class are a far cry from the labour aristocracy in the developed capitalist countries (as a rule the highest paid wages paid in our countries fall short of the subsistence minimum). Nevertheless the workers tend to allow their class consciousness to be eroded and to gravitate towards bourgeois ideology". (*Peace, Freedom and Socialism*", Vol. 9, No. 3. March 1966, Page 39).

9

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

So far we have considered the size of manual, skilled and non-manual (i.e. technical, supervisory, clerical etc.) work force. Let us now examine the occupational pattern. Such a study has important bearings on the organisation of the trade union movement.

According to the International Standard Classification of occupations adopted by ILO, all occupations are divided into 9 groups viz. (1) Professional, technical and related workers, (2) administration, executive and managerial workers, (3) clerical, sales and related workers, (4) farmers, fishermen, loggers,

miners, quarrymen, (5) workers in transport and communications occupation, (6) craftsmen, production process and related workers, (7) service, sports and recreation workers, (8) unskilled office workers and (9) other skilled workers.

A survey of 'occupational pattern' in India undertaken by the Director General of Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour and Employment, enables us to see the percentage distribution of employees in the Public and the Private Sectors by broad occupation groups. The data for 1962 are given in Table No. 19.

Table No. 19

PATTERN OF EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATIONS IN THE
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

<i>Occupational Division</i>	<i>Percentage distribution of employees</i>	
	<i>Public Sector</i>	<i>Private Sector</i>
1. Professional & Technical	21.8	5.1
2. Administrative, Executive and Managerial	5.1	1.2
3. Clerical & Sales	15.0	7.7
4. Farmers and Miners	2.9	5.1
5. Workers in Transport and Communications	8.0	1.3
6. Craftsmen and Production Process workers	9.7	37.8
7. Service, Sports, Recreation	8.5	1.0
8. Unskilled (Office)	8.2	4.9
9. Other unskilled	20.8	35.9
Total	100.0	100.0

The difference in percentage distribution of employees by occupations, in the Public and the Private Sectors is due to the fact that manufacturing establishments account for the bulk of employment in the private sector, while administrative occupations form a substantial proportion of the total employment in the public sector.

With the growth of manufacturing industries and transport in the public sector, the occupational pattern in that sector is bound to change. This is reflected in Table No. 20.

Table No. 20

CHANGES IN THE OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN IN THE
PUBLIC SECTOR

(1960 — 1962)

<i>Occupational Pattern</i>	<i>Percentages</i>	
	<i>1960</i>	<i>1962</i>
1. Professional & Technical	19.7	21.8
2. Administrative, Executive and Management	5.0	5.1
3. Clerical and Sales	15.5	15.0
4. Farmers, Miners etc.	1.4	2.9
5. Workers in Transport and Communication occupations	5.0	8.0
6. Craftsmen & Production Process workers	7.7	9.7
7. Service, Sports, Recreation workers	8.3	8.5
8. Unskilled (Office)	10.1	8.2
9. Other Unskilled	27.3	20.8
Total	100.0	100.0

It will be seen that while the proportion of craftsmen and production process workers has gone up that of unskilled workers has gone down.

How the occupational pattern changes with the size of the establishment can be seen from the study of the Private Sector in Maharashtra.

Table No. 21

OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN IN BIG AND SMALL
ESTABLISHMENTS IN MAHARASHTRA.

<i>Occupations</i>	<i>Proportion in big establishments</i>	<i>Proportion in small establishments</i>
Professional, technical and related workers ..	4.3	13.3
Administrative, executive and managerial workers	1.7	6.9
Clerical, sales and related workers	12.1	13.3
Farmers, fishermen, loggers, miners, quarrymen	1.4	0.8
Workers in transport and communications ..	1.2	0.7
Craftsmen and production process workers ..	56.2	31.8
Service, sports and recreation	0.8	14.1
Unskilled office workers	3.0	3.4
Other unskilled workers	19.3	15.7
Total	100.0	100.0

(Source : Report on Occupational Pattern of Employees in the Private Sector in Maharashtra, September 1961).

It will be seen from the data given in the above table, that the proportion of craftsmen and production process workers is higher in the bigger establishments than in the smaller ones. In contrast the proportion of professional, technical and related workers is smaller in bigger establishments compared to smaller ones.

The Report gives interesting data on the occupational pattern for certain industries. It is found that the proportion of craftsmen and production process workers was 80.5 per cent in the textile industry; 26.5 per cent in sugar factories, and 31 per cent in the manufacture of medicines, pharmaceuticals, perfumes and cosmetics. In the motor vehicles manufacturing industry (excluding motor-engines) the proportion was 55 per cent. In contrast, 74.2 per cent of the workers in the construction industry were unskilled.

These proportions will show that as the industrial base widens and industries grow, the demand for craftsmen and other technical workers rises. In fact, though the number of unemployed is big, the shortage of technically trained personnel and skilled workers already exists.

10

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

What are the employment opportunities for women? What is the number of women in employment, and what proportion do they form of the total employment? What are the trends in employment opportunities for women workers? These are some of the questions that need attention from trade union movement.

The total employment of women in 1963 in the Public and the Private Sectors comes to about 13.71 lakhs, of whom 4.83 lakhs are known to be employed in the public sector and the remaining 8.87 lakhs in the private sector. This information, according to the official estimate covers establishments employing more than

25 persons. The respective figures of total employment in the public sector and the private sector are 74.41 lakhs and 51.60 lakhs. Thus the share of women workers in the total number of workers employed is 10.8 per cent approximately.

The distribution of total employment as well as the total number of women employed in the Public Sector by industries is given in the Table Nos. 22 and 23.

Table No. 22

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN BY INDUSTRIES AND SERVICES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

<i>Industry Division</i>	<i>Total No. of persons employed.</i>	<i>Number of women employed.</i>	<i>Percentage of col. 3 to col. 2.</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	
Plantations, Live stock, Forestry, Fishing	1,74,323	9,711	5.6
Mining & Quarrying	1,45,313	14,023	9.7
Manufacturing	4,20,617	11,967	2.8
Construction	6,57,840	24,138	3.7
Electricity, Gas, Water and Sanitary Services	2,33,960	12,098	5.2
Trade & Commerce	1,08,786	13,659	3.4
Transport, Storage and Communications	17,86,654	28,367	1.6
Services	39,03,053	3,80,191	9.7
Total	74,40,546	4,84,154	6.5

(Source : Directorate General of Employment and Training. Ministry of Labour and Employment. Employment of Women, June 1963.)

The table indicates that the largest number of women were employed in services which alone accounted for 78.5 per cent of all women employed in the public sector. The difference in the employment situation of women in services and other industrial divisions may be marked. Of the women employed in services, as many as 1,53,723 belonged to educational and scientific services, 75,000 to medical and health services, 19,031 to community services and 2,935 to welfare services. The number of women employed in administrative services was 9,025 in Central Government, 22,574 in State Government Services and 96,77

in Quasi-government Establishments and Local Bodies. There was 1 woman for every 3 persons employed in Welfare Services, 1 in 5 in medical and health services and 1 in 7 in educational and scientific services. Transport and Communications stands next in having the biggest employment for women. Every eighth worker engaged in telephone communication is said to be a woman.

The distribution of women workers according to whether they are employed by the Central Government, State Governments or Quasi-government and Local Bodies is shown in Table No. 23.

Table No. 23

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN WORKERS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR (1962)				
<i>Branch of Public Sector.</i>	<i>Number employed as on 31-3-62.</i>		<i>Percentage (column 3 to column 2)</i>	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>		
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>		
Central Government ..	21,86,443	43,729	2.0	
State Government ..	30,93,257	1,94,875	6.3	
Quasi Government ..	8,96,366	39,440	4.4	
Local Bodies	12,64,480	2,06,110	16.3	
Total	74,40,546	4,84,154	6.5	

(Source : Data released by the Directorate General of Employment and Training, New Delhi, June 1963.)

Both in percentages and absolute number Local Bodies keep a substantial lead in the employment of women. That is probably due to women teachers and women employed in the sanitation department. Of the women employed, it appears, 42.6 per cent were employed by Local Bodies and 40 per cent by State Government establishments.

Employment of women by industries in the Public Sector has already been given in Table No. 22. Table No. 24 gives the same information so far as it relates to the Private Sector.

Table No. 24 shows that of the total number of women employed by the private sector as many as 41.4 per cent are employed in the Manufacturing industry, the largest number being still employed in the textile industry (91,865). The Pharmaceutical industry employed only 6,362 women workers. Rice mills, flour mills, cigarette and bidi, bricks, tiles etc. employed the bulk of the remaining women employed in the manufacturing industry. Next to manufacturing, the largest number of women were employed in Plantations and Mines.

Table No. 24

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN BY INDUSTRIES IN THE
PRIVATE SECTOR

<i>Industry Division</i>	<i>Total No. of persons employed.</i>	<i>Number of women employed.</i>	<i>Percentage of column 3 to column 2</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	
Plantation, Live Stock, Forestry and Fishing	7,53,747	3,50,553	46.5
Mining and Quarrying	4,95,088	70,416	14.2
Manufacturing	30,85,310	3,64,205	11.8
Construction	1,69,586	34,453	20.3
Electricity, Gas, Water and Sanitary Services	40,174	334	0.8
Trade and Commerce	1,68,337	7,024	4.2
Transport, Storage and Communications	1,26,070	2,178	1.7
Services	3,21,688	57,797	18.0
Total	51,60,000	8,86,960	17.7

(Source : Data released by the Directorate General of Employment and Training June 1963.)

The occupational pattern of women workers in the Public and Private Sectors may be examined. A survey conducted by the Directorate-General of Employment and Training, Government of India, published in 1962, gives the following details.

It will be interesting to note from Table No. 25 that 30.2 per cent and 63.8 per cent of the women employed in the public sector

and the private sector respectively belonged to the unskilled category.

Table No. 25

OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN OF WOMEN WORKERS
IN THE PRIVATE AND THE PUBLIC SECTORS

<i>Occupational Division</i>	<i>Percentage Distribution</i>	
	<i>Public Sector 1962</i>	<i>Private Sector 1961</i>
Professional and Technical	52.2	6.2
Administrative, Technical, Executive and Managerial	2.4	0.6
Clerical and Sales	7.5	1.5
Farmers, Miners etc.	1.8	2.9
Workers in Transport and Communications Occupations	1.3	0.1
Craftsmen and Production Process Workers	2.4	24.5
Services, Sports and Recreation	2.2	0.4
Unskilled Office Workers	3.4	6.7
Other Unskilled	26.8	57.1
Total ..	100.0	100.0

How the occupational pattern changes with regional economic development can be well illustrated by comparing the all India pattern with that in Maharashtra.

Table No. 26

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN WORKERS IN
MAHARASHTRA AND IN INDIA IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

<i>Occupational Division</i>	<i>1961 Percentage Distribution</i>	
	<i>Maharashtra</i>	<i>India</i>
1. Professional and Technical	6.5	6.2
2. Administrative, Executive and Managerial	0.6	0.6
3. Clerical, Sales and Related Workers	6.5	1.5
4. Farmers, Fishermen, Loggers, Miners, Quarrymen	5.0	2.9
5. Workers in Transport and Communications Occupations	0.6	0.1
6. Craftsmen and Production Process Workers	62.6	24.5
7. Services, Sports and Recreation Workers	0.7	0.4
8. Office (unskilled) Workers	0.4	6.7
9. Other (unskilled) Workers	16.9	57.1
Total ..	100.0	100.0

The above data reveal that the all India percentage of employed women in the occupational division of professional and technical; clerical, sales and related workers and craftsmen and production workers is lower than that for Maharashtra. The difference can be explained as the result of the State being one of the most industrialised States in India and also as a result of spread of education amongst women in Maharashtra. The higher percentage of women workers in the occupational division of craftsmen and production process workers, however is due to the particular concentration of textile industry in the State and employment of women in the bidi industry.

Women workers in Factories.

So far we have not gone into the question of factory employment for women and the trends as revealed from the employment figures. Table No. 27 gives the average employment of women in factories for 1956 and 1963.

Table No. 27

<i>Industry</i>	<i>1956</i>		<i>1963 (P)</i>	
	<i>Women employees ('000)</i>	<i>% to total factory employment</i>	<i>Women employees ('000)</i>	<i>employment % to total factory</i>
Factory — Processes				
allied to Agriculture ..	44.7	40.7	54.8	41.5
Food except Beverages ..	53.2	15.1	108.4	22.3
Tobacco ..	72.4	49.0	96.3	63.8
Textiles ..	79.9	7.0	67.1	5.5
Paper and Paper Products	1.1	3.9	1.8	4.3
Chemicals and Chemical Products ..	16.1	18.5	14.0	8.8
Non-Metallic and Minerals	15.0	14.1	26.3	13.9
Basic Metal Industries ..	6.2	6.0	5.9	2.8
Miscellaneous ..	6.6	5.0	7.6	7.0
All Factories (including Other Industries not mentioned above) ..	301.4	10.45	399.6	10.36

(P = Provisional)

(Source : Handbook of Labour Statistics 1965. The Employers' Federation of India, Page 15, Table 1-11).

The figures for average employment of women in mines is given in Table No. 28.

Table No. 28

AVERAGE DAILY EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN IN MINES

(figures in thousands)

Mines	1956		1963		1964	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Coal	352.4	46.0	450.7	37.6	430.8	34.2
Mica	34.0	2.7	23.2	1.9	20.1	1.7
Manganese	110.0	44.3	36.6	14.6	42.2	16.1
Iron Ore	37.3	10.7	44.8	11.6	51.9	13.0
Others	94.9	22.1	142.5	33.0	141.9	32.5
Total	628.6	125.8	698.8	98.8	686.8	97.5

(Source : Indian Labour Statistics 1966, page 35, Table 2.6).

Figures for average daily employment for women in Plantations are not readily available for 1963 and 1964. Indian Labour Statistics for 1966 issued by the Labour Bureau, Government of India do not give the data relating to the employment of women in plantations. Data available are given in Table No. 29.

Table No. 29

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN PLANTATIONS

	1956		1962	
	Women employees ('000)	% to total employment	Women employees ('000)	% to total employment
Tea				
a) Assam	.. 262.2	45.6	270.1	47.9
b) South India	.. —	49.9	—	49.1
c) Madras State	.. 30.4	52.0	32.8	52.1
Coffee				
a) South India	.. —	42.9	—	45.3
b) Madras State	.. 8.0	48.1	8.2	50.1
c) Mysore	.. 11.0	41.5	—	—

(Source : The Employers' Federation of India, Handbook of Labour Statistics 1965, page 15).

We have not been able to present data on the trends of employment of women in different sectors. However, from the information given so far two contradictory trends are observable. In view of the growing need for administrative, educational, medical, welfare and other services in which women appear to be particularly suitable to perform the tasks, the employment of women in these sectors appears to grow. On the other hand employment of women in factories, and mines has tended to decrease.

Except factories processing agricultural produce, food (except beverages) and tobacco industries, the percentage of women employees in manufacturing industries to the total industrial employment has gone down generally. In some cases, such as textiles, chemicals and chemical products and basic metals, the employment of women has gone down, both absolutely and relatively. The percentage of women employees to the total employment in mines has been reduced from 20 per cent in 1956 to 14 per cent in 1963. The total employment of women has been reduced from 125,800 to 98,800 during the same period.

Textile industry, particularly the Cotton Mill Industry was most unsympathetic and unkind to women workers. As an instance the case of Bombay Cotton Textile Mill Industry can be well cited.

Table No. 30

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN WORKERS IN THE COTTON MILL INDUSTRY IN BOMBAY

<i>Year</i>	<i>Employment of Women Workers</i>	<i>Total Employment</i>	<i>Percentage of Women Workers to Total Labour Force</i>
1939 August ..	21,757	1,45,691	14.9
1944 November ..	26,784	2,20,681	12.1
1951 March ..	18,421	1,96,636	9.3
1961 January ..	11,110	2,08,000	5.3

(Source : G. K. Thakkar — Labour Problems of Textile Industry, page 5).

It is interesting to note that while the total employment in the Cotton Mill Industry in Bombay went up by 42.5 per cent

from 1939 to 1961, the employment of women workers was reduced by 50 per cent.

The changes in the occupational pattern of women employees as also the trends in total employment of women workers in factories and other economic sectors require to be watched and studied in more details. Without such a study it will be difficult to formulate a new programme for the trade union movement in this sector.

11

STABILISATION AND MOBILITY

A question that is repeatedly asked in the context of the role of industrial labour force vis-a-vis industrial relations is 'how far is labour force stabilised?' For a long time it was argued that the 'Indian worker was essentially an agriculturist at heart and that 'he worked for a certain length of time in a factory until he had collected sufficient funds to return to his village'. The relatively large labour turnover and absenteeism were explained on the above ground. However, it is now fairly agreed that sizable portion of the working class is committed. The Labour Investigation Committee (1946) in its report clearly

stated that 'the bulk of the factory workers though immigrant in character have now little stake in agriculture and are rather pushed than pulled to the cities'. Mr. Charles A. Myers, often quoted by scholars from universities, does not hesitate to state in his book *'Industrial Relations in India'*, that a committed industrial labour force has developed in India and workers no longer look to their industrial employment as temporary.

One way of assessing the 'commitment' is by examining the length of service of workers in a given industry or undertaking. The distribution of work force in the Bombay Cotton Textile Industry for selected years between 1890 and 1955 is shown in the Table No. 31.

Table No. 31

LENGTH OF SERVICE IN BOMBAY COTTON MILL INDUSTRY (1890-1955)					
<i>Years of Service</i>		<i>1890</i>	<i>1927-28</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>1955</i>
Less than 5	..	72.2	37.5	29.5	9.7
5 — 9	..	11.1	23.4	28.5	34.0
10 — 14	..	5.6	15.9	18.8	25.6
15 and more	..	11.1	23.2	23.2	30.7

(*Source* : 'Emergence of an Industrial Labour Force in India', By Morris David Morris, page 88).

Though more recent data are not available, it is clear from the above Table that a significant proportion of workers in the textile mill industry in Bombay have no attachment other than the employment in the industry. Is the position at Chittaranjan a new industrial centre, different?

Data on the length of service of workers of Chittaranjan Loco factory are given by Mr. Mohammad Moshin in his book *'Chittaranjan — Urban Social Survey.'* From this survey the picture that emerges is no different from the one in the Cotton Mill Industry in Bombay.

That as many as 63.6 per cent of the workers covered in the sample survey should have worked in the Loco Factory for more

than 10 years, may mean that service conditions at the centre were quite attractive and that workers had job satisfaction. That may not be true as the author himself has noted deep dissatisfaction among Chittaranjan workers. But looked at from the point of view of satisfaction or a committed labour force the percentage of those who have served at the Loco Factory Shop for more than ten years is impressive. Thus whether in an old industry or a relatively recently established industrial unit the signs that workers no more look upon their industrial employment in urban areas as a temporary job are clearly discernible.

Table No. 32

LENGTH OF SERVICE AT CHITTARANJAN				
<i>Years of Service</i>		<i>No. of workers</i>		<i>per cent.</i>
Less than 5	75	15.0
5 — 10	107	21.4
More than 10	318	63.6

Mobility — Industrial and Occupational.

Mobility has various aspects. A high percentage of mobility from rural areas to urban areas may on the one hand show the growing ruination of agriculture and on the other may indicate the speed of industrialisation. Some socio-economic surveys made in India refer to the aspect of mobility — inter-industry and occupational. Their findings show interesting results.

Economic Survey of Bombay City conducted between 1955 and 1966 with a sample of 13,400 tenements (*Work, Wages and Well-being in an Indian Metropolis — Economic Survey of Bombay* conducted by D. T. Lakdawala) shows that from the point of view of occupational mobility 56.1 per cent were in the same grade as that of their head earners. The survey found that another 27.0 per cent were found in lower grades while only 13 per cent moved up. The average of moves in either direction was roughly the same. It should be noted that occupational mobility was studied in relation to the occupations of other earners compared to the occupation of head earners.

The survey points out that the movement outside manual classes was small; and whatever movement was noticed did not necessarily imply any substantial improvement. Of the sample only 67 i.e. 2.7 per cent from the manual classes were able to raise themselves to the position of clerks, and of these 67 clerks from manual classes as many as sixty had their head earners in the skilled and semi-skilled manual occupations. Only seven clerks came from the ranks of unskilled manual workers. The survey, however, points out that within the manual classes there was greater mobility as between skilled and semi-skilled workers on the one hand and unskilled workers on the other. Among women, other male earners coming from manual occupations were hardly found in other classes.

From the detailed discussion on occupational mobility appearing in the relevant pages of the book, the survey concludes that other male earners belonging to families in the Occupational Grade of hawkers, street vendors, farmers, fishermen, cowherds and unskilled manual workers are the most immobile. A study in urban sociology conducted at Chittaranjan and quoted earlier, studies occupational mobility on the basis of two castes, the Brahmins and the Scheduled Castes. Though the basis of the survey is different than the one in Bombay the conclusions are not very much different. It is 'observed' that in the manual workers there is no particular change in the occupation from one generation to the next.

Social and Economic survey of Gorakhpur (which is not an industrial centre, except for a big railway workshop) conducted by Radhakamal Mukerjee and Baljit Singh, gives some data on occupational and industrial mobility. It says: "Nearly two thirds of the earners have had no change in their occupations or the industry in which they were employed. Occupational mobility appears to be less than industrial mobility. One-fifth of the persons have changed their occupations once and another one-eighth, twice or more. As against this, about one-fourth have changed their industries at least once and some ten per cent twice or more". In this case we have not been able to ascertain whether the

mobility observed had resulted in any betterment after the change in occupation or industry.

It is dangerous to draw far-reaching conclusions from the data presented. However, it can be said that though caste division of society is yielding to class division, the progress of industrialisation is not quite fast and because of that inter-industry and occupational mobility is slow.

12

LITERACY AND EDUCATION AMONG INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

The Royal Commission on Labour in India reported in 1931: "In India nearly the whole mass of industrial labour is illiterate, a state of affairs which is unknown in any other country of industrial importance". Practically the same state of affairs was reported by the Textile Enquiry Committee in 1941. The report of the Committee states "Nothing impressed us more during our tour of the various cotton textile centres of this province (Bombay) than the almost complete absence of education among

workers". The case of the textile workers is illustrative and it had to its credit the maximum share of industrial workers in the total employment in organised industries.

The Economic Survey of Bombay City conducted by Prof. D. T. Lakdawala and others, and to which a reference has been made earlier, showed that by 1955-56 "lowest level of education prevailed among the manual workers and the highest among professionals". The survey points out that "nearly two-fifths of the manual workers were illiterate. Only 19 per cent among them had gone beyond the primary school stage". However, according to the survey, only 28.9 per cent of the workers employed in the processing and manufacturing industries in the metropolis, were illiterate earners. But textile industry reported about two-fifths of its earners as illiterates. In comparison, industries other than textiles revealed only one-fifth of the earners as illiterate.

In contrast, the educational background at Chittaranjan loco shop shows that only 12.2 per cent of the employees were illiterate, while 25.0 per cent were graduates and below, 58 per cent were matriculates and below. All employees except a handful (13.4 per cent including illiterates) were educated at the levels of middle schools or above. The findings of the study made by Mr. Mohamed Moshin, at Chittaranjan, go to show that with improved technology the percentage share of educated workers also increases. It will be interesting to note that 92.3 per cent of the union membership at Chittaranjan (C.L.W. Labour Union) was of educated workers and nearly 84.7 per cent of the membership had passed the middle school level.

This may serve to prove that given proper approach educated working class is an asset for building a strong trade union movement. The recent trend among white collar employees to form trade unions also strengthens the argument. What is, however, necessary for trade union functionaries is to understand that their appeal and agitation among the growing number of educated workers must be more enlightened and convincing. Their work and propaganda must tear to pieces the thousand and one argu-

ments that are made day in and day out by the employers and their propagandists, who have easy access to the press.

With the further growth of industries such as heavy chemicals, light and heavy engineering, iron and steel, and technological advance the demand for skilled and technically trained workers will go on increasing. We have found from the study of occupational mobility that it is difficult for workers or their next generation to climb the occupational ladder or rungs.

The main difficulty is the dearth of proper educational and training facilities. Here, therefore, is a field where trade unions have to apply their mind. One of the things on which they will have to concentrate their attention is in respect of education required for speedy promotion of technically trained cadre of workers to higher posts.

SUMMING UP

The foregoing pages present the general picture of the growth, composition and industrial distribution of the working force in India. This picture reveals that the total strength of wage earners in relation to the working force in India is yet very small; and the total strength of workers employed in the factories is still smaller. However, over the years this force has been growing, albeit, gradually in strength. From this it is obvious that the working class would tend to assume greater importance in the industrial life of the country in times to come.

A notable fact revealed by the study is that while traditional industries still provide employment to a very significant proportion of population of factory labour, employment is now expanding mainly in the new branches of industries in recent years. As a result old industries such as the cotton textile, which once served as the chief source of employment have tended to diminish in importance as increased employment opportunities became available with the emergence of new industries such as Chemicals, Engineering etc.

This study has also disclosed another fact : it is this that out of every ten workers employed in the factories at least five belong to post-independence period. These factors have to be noted by the trade union functionaries for they give rise to new tasks. As the new branches of factory industries are growing, and growing relatively faster than the traditional factory industries it is obvious that the centre of trade union activities will also shift from textiles to the new branches of industries, particularly to basic heavy industries which have been set up for the first time in the country.

The workers employed in the new industries are by and large freshers. They have chosen employment in factories at a time when they enjoy relatively a high degree of protection under labour legislation. In a sense they are reaping the fruits of the pre-independence struggles waged by workers although they themselves were not participants in those glorious struggles. Naturally they need to be educated and made conscious of the role of the trade union movement in conducting the working class struggles for achieving better working conditions. The importance of this task is obvious as practically half the number of workers now employed in factories are new to the past tradition of working class struggles. When forms of exploitation have changed from being naked to being more subtle, the importance of education in raising the class consciousness of the working class and making it conscious of its historical role is indeed self-evident. This in a measure is true for old workers also.

The general level of literacy is rising particularly in urban areas, and we have seen elsewhere in this study that in the new establishments like Chittaranjan, the educational level of workers is relatively high. On account of their education they are likely to succumb to bourgeois ideology more easily due partly to their better earnings and due partly to the influence of bourgeois literature which is available in the form of newspapers, magazines and books. A special responsibility, therefore, falls on the shoulders of trade union functionaries to devise methods to counter the possible influence of the bourgeois ideology. This is necessary if workers have to become class conscious. The exponents of bourgeois ideology use subtle arguments to corrode the minds of workers. Trade Unions will have to be vigilant and resourceful if these arguments are to be exposed in their true colours.

A significant change in the distribution of working forces is to be seen in their division between the public and private sectors. Prior to Independence, the volume of employment in the public sector industries was very small. With the adoption of the 'Industrial Policy Resolution' in 1948, and the implementation of certain measures during the period of the Second Five Year Plan, the public sector (and with it employment too) has grown enormously. A remarkable fact about the growth of employment in this sector is that it has grown much further than the employment in the private sector. Nevertheless, the private sector still holds the dominant position accounting for 5 employees for every 1 employee employed in the public sector. In view of the growing importance of employment in the public sector, its peculiar characteristics will have to be borne in mind while organising the trade union movement in that sector.

A very large proportion of the public sector employment is to be found in services. In certain regions such as Delhi, they even account for about half the total employment in public and private sectors. In states like Andhra and Bihar their proportion is almost half of the total employment prevalent in these two states. This is a sufficiently wide area for trade unions to be active.

Employees in the public sector are showing greater awareness for bettering their conditions of wages and employment. The fact that this section of employees has started resorting to collective action shows that they are not much behind the industrial workers in resorting to various forms of struggle to achieve their legitimate rights. It, therefore, shows that trade union movement cannot ignore such an important field of work.

The geographical distribution of workers constitutes an interesting aspect of the composition of the working class. Industrial workers continue to be concentrated in the few traditional centres of industries. Maharashtra and West Bengal continue to be premier industrial states despite developmental efforts in other states, whether judged by the total factory employment or number of factories, or the extent of productive capital invested. Nevertheless new industrial centres are emerging on the map of industrial India. The working class movement in these new centres will have its own peculiarities. It will be faced with a number of problems with which even a trained trade unionist will not be familiar. Barring highly skilled workers and technicians, the new recruits to the factories might be experiencing the discipline and rigours of industrial life for the first time. Lack of housing facilities, absence of sanitation and medical aid and lack of proper market facilities and similar problems may require simultaneous handling. It will entail a good deal of thinking in framing demands, and in defining the method of approach for educating workers in trade union activities.

Although employment opportunities for women are increasing in certain occupations, such as teachers, this has been accompanied by a fall in the share of women workers in the total employment in factories and mines. The reasons for these contradictory trends need to be studied and efforts made to widen the employment opportunities for women in factories. At the same time, the problems of wages and conditions of employment of women employees employed in services and teaching professions need to be closely studied and examined. These problems will have certain distinctive characters. Perhaps, the trade union

movement may have to consider the possibility and necessity of setting up a separate section to deal with the problems of women workers. In this context the question of how to organise the women workers, whether within the existing fold of trade unions or separately or within both the folds deserves serious consideration.

The rise of middle classes or non-manual workers is yet another recent phenomenon. The entrants to the clerical and non-manual cadre are generally those who in the past looked upon manual labour as something alien to their culture, and kept themselves aloof, more or less, from working class movement. The picture has changed since the end of World War II, particularly after the bank employees resorted to various forms of mass action. We now see well organised unions of middle class employees. They have come out against automation. On occasions they have shown willingness to fraternise with industrial workers. This is a change, the significance of which cannot be missed. The fusion of middle class employees with that of factory workers in a developing country like India will build not only quantitatively but qualitatively a leadership of the working class which could be invincible. However, the process will not be easy. Trade union functionaries, therefore, will have to study in all details the particular tasks they will have to shoulder in this field.

Indian workers have gone through a round of rationalisation. They are now threatened by higher and most modern technique of production. The new industries are already equipped with modern technical know-how. Simultaneously some of the old industries are gradually going over to automation. Some industries like petroleum refineries and the State owned Life Insurance Corporation have already introduced modern devices such as electronic computers.

There is hardly any study which answers the impact of automation on employment in industries in India. We have cited the study of a nut and bolt factory. This single study has brought to the forefront a number of issues. Unemploy-

ment is one of the biggest problems of India. The modernisation of industries and introduction of automation would only accentuate the problem of unemployment. Similarly the change produced by them in the structure of the working class is equally important. Further such questions as the probable share of workers in the additional value created by automation and training facilities for promoting the desired skills will also assume importance. It is in the context of these issues that the trade unions will have to define the goals and objectives of a desirable employment policy and to strive for achieving the same by bringing suitable pressure on the Government. Automation is qualitatively different from rationalisation as it is commonly understood. It will, therefore, not be sufficient for the trade union movement to remain contented with the agreed tripartite formula on rationalisation adopted in 1957.

More and more workers are now gradually settling in cities and towns. This inevitably involves them in urban civic affairs. Housing, transport, educational facilities and the very question of city planning assume importance for workers as never before. The importance of these facilities for the life of workers living in congested and ever growing cities, cannot be denied. In fact these subjects assume importance next only to the question of pay packet. The significance of such movements as 'Zopadpatti Sangh' (Hutment dwellers' association) must be grasped by the trade union movement. In discharging their responsibilities towards bettering the living conditions of workers, the trade unions will have to encompass within their activity, these problems which affect the social and living conditions of industrial workers in towns and cities. Trade unions will have to take up such demands as the municipalisation of all urban land.

The Preface indicates the reasons for the absence of a discussion on the caste composition of the working class and its changing character. But it must be emphasised that trade unions at different centres will have to pay greater attention to the study of this aspect of the question and collect sufficient material to enable them to arrive at certain firm conclusions. The attempt

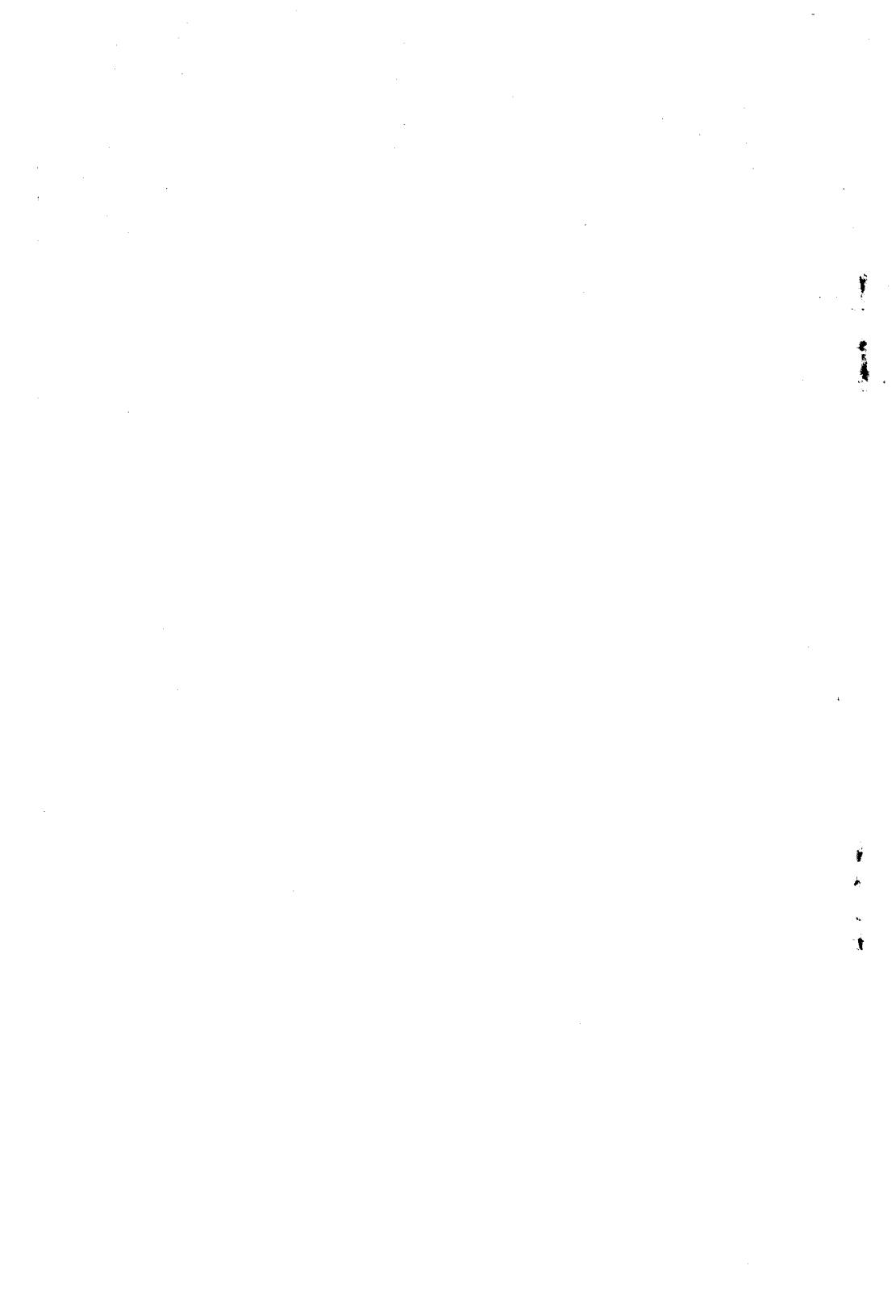
of the reactionary, communal and regional forces to divide the ranks of workers through the use of the weapon of religious, regional and caste differences is assuming proportions that cannot be ignored. It is known that these forces always have the blessings of the capitalists who are eager to see that the working class unity is disrupted.

The trade unions must also extend their field of activities to relatively unexplored areas. This study has highlighted the fact that a preponderant section of the working force derives its livelihood from small household, or cottage industries both in rural and urban sectors. Despite this, trade unionism has so far remained confined to big and organised sections of industry and has almost neglected the employees in the small sector presumably because of their unorganised and dispersed character. In view of the large employment provided by this sector it is obvious that urgent attention must be paid to the task of organising this quantitatively most numerous but weak and exploited working population.

In this connection the question of the huge number of self-employed (not dealt with in this study) in India will also have to be considered. This section will be one of the principal allies of the working class and it may be useful for workers to forge links with it. The class of workmen mentioned above is interested in the achievement of the broadest united front of toiling masses.

The achievement of the unity of the working class and the broadening of the united front of all the toiling masses rests in part on the correct understanding of the trends that are discernable in regard to size, structure and composition of the working class. Such understanding is essential as trade unions cannot function in isolation from the realities of the situation as represented by the intrinsic change in the size, structure and composition of the working population. Trade unions cannot ignore these dynamics of the working class without peril to their existence. As a social movement and an instrument of class struggle, they have to adapt themselves to the changing role and needs of

the working population. To facilitate such adaptation, it is necessary first to appreciate and grasp the manifold changes occurring in the composition and structure of the working population. The study precisely is an attempt towards promotion of that understanding.



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