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**Industrial relations
and the political process
in Pakistan
1947-1977**

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PREFACE

In 1978 the International Institute for Labour Studies initiated a comprehensive international research project on "The inter-action of industrial relations and the political process in selected developing countries". This project is being carried out by the IILS in co-operation with research institutes in a number of developing countries. The subject is not an easy area of inquiry and requires careful analysis of the groups, personalities and institutions which influence industrial relations through the political process or the political process through industrial relations. Thus, the project focuses on the role of trade unions, trade union leaders and politicians in this interaction process.

The project is grounded on a series of national studies covering, among others, Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Israel, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and the Philippines. Comparative work by the IILS will attempt to draw some findings and conclusions.

"Industrial relations and the political process in Pakistan, 1947-77" by Rashid Amjad and Khalid Mahmood is the fifth of the national studies carried out in the framework of this project to be published in the IILS Research Series.

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INTRODUCTION

✓ This paper is a brief introduction to the development of industrial relations in Pakistan over the last 30 years. One of its aims has been to put together a brief history of the trade union movement in the country. It is divided into four parts. Chapter I is a historical and political analysis of the trade union movement over the last 30 years as divided into four distinct phases. Chapter II gives a very brief history of the growth of employers' organisations. Chapter III gives a detailed account of the important labour legislation which has been introduced during this period. Chapter IV deals with organisations and functions of the trade unions in Pakistan and tries to focus attention on some of the major problems with which the movement is faced. Finally we conclude with a broad review of the present state of labour relations in Pakistan. ✓

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT FROM 1947-77

In this chapter we trace the broad history of the trade union movement from the period of partition in 1947 to the fall of the Bhutto government in 1977. This analysis also reviews and takes into account the over-all economic and political developments which took place in the country during this period and which had a deep impact on the nature, strength and direction of the trade union movement. The period covering the last 30 years can be divided broadly into four distinct phases:

1. 1947-58: the formative phase;
2. 1958-68: suppression and stagnation;
3. 1968-72: upsurge and militancy;
4. 1972-77: retreat and decline.

1. 1947-58: the formative phase

At the time of partition all the important industrial centres became part of India and in the areas which became Pakistan there were hardly any industries at all. Of the important pre-partition industries Pakistan received only 16 of the 451 cotton mills, nine of the 160 sugar factories, five of the 18 cement factories and none of the 91 jute or 35 iron and steel mills. Of the total employment in these industries of 1,073,250 Pakistan's share was only 25,700, i.e. 6.5 per cent (Akhtar, 1956, p. 4).

As shown in table 1, the labour force in the industrial, mining, plantation and transport sectors in Pakistan was only 526,522 out of a total population of nearly 80 million.

The situation in terms of registered trade unions at the time of partition was also not very encouraging. In August 1947 there were not more than 75 registered trade unions in the whole of Pakistan (compared to 1,087 in undivided India), of which the greater number hailed from West Pakistan and of the 450,000 workers less than one-third

Table 1: Employment in different sectors; 1949
(all Pakistan)¹

Registered factories	181 752
Mines	9 413
Railways (excluding railway factories)	135 357
Docks (approx.)	15 000
Plantations (approx.)	85 000
Inland water transport	100 000
	<hr/>
Total	526 522
	<hr/>

¹ i.e. both West and East Pakistan.

Source: Report of the ILO labour survey mission on
labour problems in Pakistan (1952-53) (Karachi,
Ministry of Labour), p. 26.

belonged to a trade union. These existing trade unions found themselves faced with two major problems. Firstly, in most cases they were branches of the All-India organisations and had no independent existence of their own. Secondly, most of the unions had been run by Hindu trade union leaders who were forced to leave Pakistan in 1947 and the unions were hence deprived of the leadership and active members which had been previously provided by the central organisation.

There were also a number of other factors which greatly weakened the growth of the trade union movement in the early years after partition. There had been an exodus of almost a third of the labour force who were non-Muslims and those workers who migrated to Pakistan were not in a position to contribute positively to the movement. Living in a temporary makeshift fashion and in scattered places these refugee workers were extremely afraid that they would lose their jobs if they took an active part in trade union activities. Another factor was a general feeling created by certain vested interests that, since Pakistan had been established and an Islamic State formed, there was really no need for a trade union movement as in such a State capitalists and workers were considered to be brothers and both would live happily without conflict. It was also alleged that in such a society social justice and equality would prevail and those who aimed at enhancing the labour movement were "professional trouble-makers" and against the "ideology of Pakistan". However, this line of thinking, although it created confusion amongst the workers for some time, was soon discarded by the workers.

The only segment of the workers who were to some extent organised in 1947 were the railwaymen, the employees in the Post and Telegraph Departments, and the dockers. The important trade unions in West Pakistan were those of railway workers, the Karachi Port Trust Labour Union and the Lyallpur Cotton Mills.

In the early years after partition, although Pakistan had an almost non-existent industrial sector, the rate of industrialisation was slow. A number of Muslim traders had come and settled in Karachi after partition. Here, they took over the trading left by the Hindus and successfully operated it. Profitability in commerce was high especially during the period of the Korean boom, and there was little incentive to invest in industry. The imposition of government controls on imports of consumer goods after the collapse of the Korean boom in 1952 radically altered this situation and made investment in industry very profitable. These traders who had made large profits during the period of the boom now diverted their capital into industry, especially cotton textiles and jute manufacture, so unfolding a classical path of industrial growth through import substitution. From the period between 1949-50 to 1954-55 the rate of growth in the manufacturing sector was extremely high. The figure of 23.6 per cent, however, tends to exaggerate the actual situation as it started from a very small base. As a result the number of industrial workers also increased rapidly during this period and those employed in the large-scale manufacturing sector increased from about 150,000 in 1949-50 to 350,000 in 1954-55.

There were two main groups amongst those who lay claim to the leadership of the workers during this period. The first group claimed to be "left wing" or "socialists" in that they saw the movement as one of class struggle and its final goal as that of revolutionary change in the prevailing economic system. The members of the other group were termed "reformists" as they believed in improving the lot of the workers within the prevailing system. They saw the trade union movement mainly as a bargaining agent of workers who confronted capitalists with demands and, through mutual consultations, reached agreements which would improve the living conditions of the workers.

It should be pointed out in the very beginning that in most cases these differences remained theoretical. Even those who raised the slogan of socialism, class struggle and radical change in fact never seriously attempted to educate the workers in terms of these goals. They mainly concentrated on focusing the attention of workers on their immediate demands such as higher wages, protection against dismissal, hours of work, etc. The result of this was that until 1965 the workers were never really politicised and failed to play any part in the political history of the country.

Both the "reformist" and "radical" groups were prominent in the trade union movement after 1947. The Pakistan Federation of Labour (PFL) was established at the time of partition by trade union leaders who had been earlier actively associated with the Indian Federation of Labour (IFL). At its inception, it claimed to have the affiliation of 22 registered trade unions with a membership of 50,000 workers. Mr. M.A. Khan of the United Union of North Western Railways (NWR) Workers was elected President and Mr. M.A. Khatib of the Karachi Port Trust Labour Union was elected first General Secretary. The PFL was deeply influenced by the Royist "reformist" doctrines and stood for the same principles as were propagated and practised by the IFL, namely the promotion and protection of the immediate interests of the working class by negotiations, using strikes as a last resort.

In West Pakistan many of the unions which considered themselves representatives of the "radical" group and had been earlier associated with the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) did not join the Pakistan Federation of Labour. In a meeting of 50 representatives of these trade unions in Lahore in January 1948 the Pakistan Trade Union Federation (PTUF) was formed. Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim was elected as its first President and Dr. M.A. Malik its first General Secretary. This organisation from the very beginning stood for more militant trade unionism and in its opening meeting decided to observe the first day of February as "Demands Day". This day was observed in West Pakistan alone and, as a result of the processions and mass meetings which took place, Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim was arrested under the Public Safety Act on 15 February 1948. This led to strong protests by the railway workers and on 16 and 17 February about 20,000 workers of the Moghalpura Railway Workshop went on token strike.

In East Pakistan most of the AITUC unions joined together in September 1947 to form the East Pakistan Trade Union Federation (EPTUF) and Dr. Malik was elected President. During the first two years after partition the PTUF and EPTUF worked in close collaboration with each other. This was also because Dr. Malik was President of one and General Secretary of the other. In 1949 when several trade unions of Karachi joined the EPTUF its name was changed to All Pakistan Trade Union Federation (APTUF). In 1949 the Trade Union Federation, Dacca, also merged with it. Mr. Nurul Huda was elected President and Mr. Faiz Ahmed Secretary.

In 1950 efforts were made to bring about unity among the different trade union federations. An offer of unity by the PTUF was rejected by other organisations. The PFL (i.e. Pakistan Federation of Labour) and APTUF, however, decided to merge and on 9 September 1950 the All Pakistan Confederation of Labour came into existence (APCOL). The

new organisation consisted of two constituent federations, namely the West Pakistan Federation of Labour and East Pakistan Federation of Labour, which were given complete independence in their internal affairs. In 1950, APCOL claimed the support of 180 trade unions and a membership of 320,498.

The more "radical" Pakistan Trade Union Federation (PTUF) was mostly active in West Pakistan in the early years after partition. Most of its leadership was either associated with the Communist Party or were its sympathisers. Prominent among them were Mirza Ibrahim, Fazal Ilahi Qurban, Muhammad Afzal, Dada Amir Haider Khan, C.R. Aslam, Sardar Shaukat Ali, Sobu Giani Chandani and Lal Khan. The Federation stood for the abolition of feudalism through land reforms without compensation, the nationalisation of banks, basic industries, and foreign capital. In 1950 it claimed the association of 59 unions and 80,000 members. But this point in time, as we shall see, turned out to be the peak of its strength and activities.

The decline of the PTUF can be traced to its inability to compete effectively with rival federations and infighting amongst its own leadership. Before 1950 there had been little competition but after this the ruling party, the Muslim League, also entered the field and captured a number of trade unions and its members, like Ahmed Saeed Kirmani, Abu Saeed Anwar, Chaudhri Rehmat Elahi and Abdul Rauf were elected to office. In 1951 because of internal dissension some of its prominent leaders, including Fazal Elahi Qurban and Sindhi Khan, left the PTUF and formed a rival group which at first worked under the same name but later called itself the Pakistan Mazdoor Federation.

A major blow to the PTUF came after the alleged "Rawalpindi Conspiracy" in 1951 in which army officers and communist leaders were arrested for hatching a plot to overthrow the Government and a number of them including prominent communist leaders like Sajjad Haider, Muhammad Hussain Ata and Faiz Ahmad Faiz were arrested. Although the rank and file of the union leaders were unaware of this plot, the fact that links had existed between the PTUF and the communist party led to its being subject to considerable harassment by the state apparatus, which weakened its activities.

By the end of 1951 the period of radical trade union activity for all practical purposes had come to an end although the PTUF continued in existence. As mentioned earlier APCOL (All Pakistan Confederation of Labour) had been formed under government patronage and from 1953 onwards began to be recognised by the Government as the sole representative of the working class in Pakistan. It was given representation in all national and international

organisations. The Confederation stood mainly for the protection of the rights of workers, e.g. the right to organise, to assemble, to free speech, to strike, to vote and fight elections and, although in its earlier constitution it had also professed support for those political organisations which stood for introducing a socialist democratic state in Pakistan, in 1954 this clause was deleted.

In 1954 a very important event took place in Pakistan's political history when it joined in defence pacts with the USA and certain neighbouring countries and so came directly within the American sphere of influence. As a result of this, the Communist Party was banned, its leaders arrested and many of them who worked in the PTUF had to leave the trade union movement. The PTUF, although not banned became inactive and practically non-existent as its active members were either arrested or not allowed to take part in its activities. Many of them were released before 1955, but they made no serious attempt to reorganise the PTUF.

The direct foreign involvement in Pakistan also influenced the trade union movement in another significant manner. The signing of the defence pacts had led to a considerable increase in foreign aid and advisers. These advisers now began to interfere openly in trade union activities. The major thrust of these activities was concentrated on the government-supported APCOL which they brought under their direct influence.

There were four main ways in which the foreign advisers strengthened their hold over APCOL. The first was through direct financial assistance which helped APCOL to set up and run offices in different cities as well as to influence local trade union leaders. The second was through financing trips of trade union leaders to America and European countries to attend international conferences. The labour leaders were paid large grants to cover expenses for these trips much of which they saved and bought expensive items for sale in the domestic market. Thirdly, the advisers set up organisations to train trade union leaders. Prominent amongst these was the "Asia Foundation" which ran courses (all expenses being paid by the Foundation). The major aim of such courses was to drill into the minds of those who attended them the "democratic" nature of the capitalist system and the "ruthless suppression" which accompanied a socialist one. Finally, the foreign advisers dispersed in different cities so that local labour leaders in most cases could consult them before coming to any important decision.

It was because of government patronage and foreign support that APCOL became the dominant trade union federation in the country and other trade unions, either because of lack of financial support or fear of government reprisals, slowly came into its fold. Although there was much internal

dissension within APCOL, the fear of losing government support and in many cases attractive salaries acted as a strong disincentive to leave it. In 1958 it claimed to be the most representative organisation of the working class in Pakistan with the support of 235 trade unions with a membership of 351,009.

Between 1951 and 1958, although there was a large increase in the number of registered trade unions in the country, there seems to have been little increase in membership, as can be seen from table 2 and in comparison with 1954 there was an over-all decline.

The large increase in the number of trade unions during this period with, however, a stagnation if not a decline in total membership was a reflection not of the strength of the movement but more of dissension and internal weakness. A number of these unions existed on paper only. In many cases there was a large number of unions in the same factory whose major role was to fight amongst themselves rather than for the rights of the workers.

By the end of 1958, the first stage of Pakistan's industrial growth was beginning to come to an end. The opportunities for industrial growth through import-substitution were becoming exhausted because of the failure of the domestic market to grow mainly as a result of stagnation in the agricultural sector. Similarly, the economy faced a foreign exchange constraint as the foreign exchange surplus earned during the Korean boom had run out and exports had failed to compensate for it. These factors led to a considerable slowing down in the industrial sector.

These years had seen the birth and initial growth of an indigenous trade union movement in the country. The increase in the industrial labour force which resulted from rapid industrialisation acted as an impetus for the growth of trade unions. But this period failed to see the emergence of a strong and independent trade union movement. This was the result of many factors. Most important was the general decline of certain unions after the banning of the Communist Party and the collapse of its mass fronts. In the case of APCOL there was growing opportunism, corruption, factionalism, and alienation from workers of the top leadership and government patronage, all of which contributed to this decline. It was these factors which played an important part in the workers not being able to even maintain their real wage rates at a time when profits in industry were extremely high (see table 4).

Table 2: Number of registered¹ trade unions and membership 1951-58 (All Pakistan)

Month	Year	No. of registered trade unions	Membership
December	1951	309	393 137
December	1952	352	394 923
December	1953	394	424 563
December	1954	382	410 755
December	1955	474	325 610
December	1956	542	316 642
December	1957	611	366 317
January	1958	559	357 033
June	1958	635	376 029

¹ There was also a large number of unregistered trade unions. Their number, however, is impossible to estimate.

Source: Pakistan Labour Gazette (Karachi, Ministry of Labour) April-June 1958, p. 273.

Table 3: Number of strikes and man-days lost (All Pakistan)

Year	No. of strikes	No. of workers involved	Man-days lost
1948	57	36 231	135 580
1949	72	44 582	101 723
1950	32	16 836	83 164
1951	64	22,810	77 471
1952	95	28 035	126 173
1953	86	35 776	89 058
1954	107	69 831	283 944
1955	75	42 103	121 312
1956	150	111 831	374 915
1957	150	188 001	530 573
1958	93	89 954	

Source: Government of Pakistan: Pakistan Labour Gazette (quarterly), various issues.

Table 4: Index of real wages in large-scale manufacturing
1959-60 = 100

Year	Index
1954	103.53
1955	97.30
1957	97.12
1958	99.64

Source: Hamid (1974), p. 151.

2. 1958-68: suppression and stagnation

The military coup of October 1958 solved many of the country's immediate economic problems which had become increasingly dominant. The large increases in foreign aid (which doubled from 3.5 per cent of GNP to 7 per cent) removed the foreign exchange constraint which the industrial sector had been facing. The introduction of a multiple exchange rate system and especially the export bonus scheme increased profitability in the industrial sector and also created an export market for manufacturers. The Government also removed "direct" controls on investment and by clearly stating its support for the private sector as the engine of industrial development boosted up the confidence of the private sector. The result of these measures was the investment boom in the first half of the sixties and a growth rate of over 16 per cent in the large-scale manufacturing sector, which now with a much larger industrial base was indeed very impressive.

The coming into power of the Ayub government also ushered in a new phase in Pakistan's industrial relations and trade union movement. The imposition of martial law had led to a banning of all political activities and although trade unions themselves were not banned trade union activity was stopped. The Government also imposed a ban on all strikes and threatened heavy punishments for those who participated in them.

The basic change in government strategy was that it no longer worked through the trade union federations as it had done in the mid-fifties by gaining indirect control of APCOL, the largest trade union federation. Dr. Malik, Labour Minister at that time, had helped to build up this confederation which had gained in strength as a result of government and American patronage. The removal of government patronage from APCOL was to signal its downfall.

Since there were no more government favours to be distributed amongst its membership, it soon fell apart and broke into rival factions and groups.

Besides the removal of direct government support and patronage there were other factors which led to the weakening of APCOL. In 1961, the breaking away of the Karachi Shipyard Workers Union with approximately 6,000 members was as a severe blow to the confederation as this Union had been one of its most powerful affiliates in West Pakistan. Furthermore, there was infighting over the attitude which the Union should adopt in regard to the decentralisation of labour. The Punjab group led by B.A. Bakhtiar and Chaudhry Rehmat Ullah wanted the WPF to comply with the decision of the government whereas the Karachi group led by M.A. Khateeb opposed this move. In an election meeting of the WPF held in Lahore by the Bakhtiar group, the Karachi group did not participate. In the election Bakhtiar was nominated President and Chaudhry Rehmat Ullah as General Secretary. The Karachi group, immediately after the elections, called another meeting of the trade unions under its influence in Karachi and formed a parallel organisation which they named the West Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions.

A similar split on the same issue occurred in the East Pakistan Federation of Labour. The group in favour of retaining a centralised labour organisation elected Faiz Ahmad as President and M. Suleman as Secretary. The other group elected Aftab Ali as President and Abdul Qadeer as General Secretary.

The two groups with similar views in the two provinces then joined together. In January 1963, a meeting of representatives of APCOL elected Khateeb as President and Faiz Ahmad as General Secretary. Simultaneously Bakhtiar and Aftab Ali tried to arrange a meeting to elect the officers of APCOL, but the Khateeb group got a court injunction against them for using this name. They decided to convert their joint committee into the All Pakistan Federation of Labour.

There were further splits in the Trade Union Federation as time went along. The West Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions led by Khateeb and Wasti split and the latter held a convention meeting in Hyderabad in 1966 which was attended amongst others by Mirza Ibrahim of the Railway Workers Union and Tufail Abbas of the Airways Employees Union. A new organisation with left-wing leanings called the West Pakistan Workers Federation was formed with Shamin Wasti as President and Nabi Ahmad as Secretary.

A similar split in the leadership of the West Pakistan Federation of Labour occurred when Bakhtiar resigned

as President and was elected President of WPTFU in place of Shamin Wasti. Rehmat Ullah Durrani of NWFP (North West Frontier Province) was elected President in Bakhtiar's place.

Tufail Abbas after returning from Hyderabad formed a new organisation called the "Markazee Mazdoor Committee". In 1969 it was named "Quami Mazdoor Mehaz" with the Airways Employees Union as its strongest member.

The Pakistan Trade Union Federation which had been dormant since 1954 was once again revived by Mirza Ibrahim of the Railway Workers in December 1966. However, he was arrested soon afterwards during the railway strike in May 1967. It was again revived in 1968-69 with Mirza Ibrahim as its President and Kameez Fatima of the Karachi Dock Workers as its Secretary.

We turn now to the main features of the labour policy introduced by the military government soon after it came to power in order to understand their attitude towards the working classes in the country.

- (1) Nearly all major industries were declared "essential industries" in which strikes were banned. These included railways, post, telegraph, telephone, water, electricity, ports and defence-related organisations. Also a long list of industries was announced which were declared "essential industries" for the time being and included cement, electrical equipment, vegetable oils, ceramics, iron and steel, mines, paper, petroleum, machinery, sugar, leather and leather goods, pharmaceuticals, cotton textiles and jute manufactures.

Besides this the central and provincial governments were given the power during a period of emergency to declare road, air and water transport and food and beverage related industries as "essential".

- (2) In case of industrial disputes the Government would appoint officials to act as arbitrators, to investigate the causes and to try to bring about an agreement between the two parties through negotiations. Only if such arbitration failed, and the government official gave a certificate to both sides to this effect, could they go to a labour court.
- (3) Permanent labour courts were established which consisted of three members. The chairman was a retired judge of the High Court or District Court. The other two members were representatives of labour and management but they had only advisory powers.

- (4) Before the workers could go on strike a number of pre-conditions were imposed and if these were not met the strike was declared illegal. These conditions were as follows:
- (a) before going on strike the administration was to be given 14 days notice;
 - (b) during the period of negotiations there could be no strike action;
 - (c) if negotiations failed and one of the two parties got a certificate to go to a labour court then again there could be no strike action.

As a result of these measures for all practical purposes the right to strike was denied workers and the industrial and labour policy made it quite clear that industrial growth in Pakistan in the early sixties was to be accomplished by suppression of trade union activity and the rights of workers.

Where the workers did go in for direct strike action these strikes were declared illegal and the state machinery was brought into play and workers arrested. In other cases employers brought in their "thugs" to break up strikes and beat up workers - in most cases with the blessing of and under the watchful eyes of the administration. In the labour courts, the workers were no match for the employers who could afford the best legal advice; moreover the courts themselves were heavily biased against the workers. The labour representatives on these courts were in most cases trade union "leaders" who had been won over by the administration or the employers to serve their interests.

Despite these efforts of the State to suppress the workers they were only successful in the early years of the sixties. The number of strikes, which had fallen drastically in the early years after the imposition of martial law, more than doubled during 1963 and 1964, as can be seen from table 5. One important reason for this was the removal of martial law in 1962 and hence a gradual weakening of the authority of the military government which led to a decline in the "fear" created by the authorities. Also since no strike activity had taken place in earlier years there was a build-up of discontent amongst the workers.

The discontent of the workers with the existing state of affairs increased after 1965 when a disastrous harvest resulted in wheat shortages and the prices of essential commodities showed a sharp increase. It was this factor which turned out to be the immediate cause of the railway workers' strike in Lahore which started on 31 January 1967 and is considered an important milestone in the working-class

Table 5: Number of strikes from 1958-67

Year	Number of strikes	Number of workers involved
1958	93	89 954
1959	29	32 493
1960	42	25 749
1961	54	26 303
1962	121	69 482
1963	215	218 601
1964	228	243 943
1965	152	105 608
1966	170	177 309
1967	203	344 679

Source: Government of Pakistan: Pakistan Labour Gazette (quarterly), various issues.

movement. As a result of the strike of the railway workers the entire railway system in West Pakistan came to a halt within 24 hours of the start of the strike. The Government made desperate attempts to placate the workers and were able to win over the trade union "leaders" who announced on 2 February that the strike had been called off and that the workers would return to work. The workers, however, refused to act on the call of their "leaders" and decided to continue the strike as a result of which railway communications continued at a standstill. On 3 February the railway administration declared a lock-out of all the Lahore Railway Workshops and the army was ordered to take charge of the situation. On the same day the army fired at the striking workers in Lahore and Sukker as a result of which a number of workers were killed and injured. There soon followed a mass arrest of workers including the prominent leaders, and the striking workers were forced to return slowly to work.

The railway workers' strike was a failure in terms of its immediate aims, but it had very important repercussions for the future of Ayub's government. It was the first time that the Government had faced such a militant response from the workers and the manner in which it was suppressed made the Government even more unpopular.

There were, however, a number of other important factors which were to signal the downfall of Ayub's government. The boom in industrial investment, made possible

through large doses of foreign aid, was slowing down after the decline in foreign aid inflows from western countries as a result of the September 1965 war with India. Also Ayub's economic policies had resulted in increasing inter-regional and individual income disparities. The industrial labour force had seen little increase in its real wages (table 6) despite the high rate of industrial growth during this period. All these economic factors, together with the political bankruptcy of Ayub's government, led to the mass popular uprising in the autumn of 1968 and in which the workers played a very important part.

These ten years of Ayub's government had seen the workers' rights being eroded but despite all the unfavourable conditions the number of trade unions and members showed a significant increase (table 7). But as in the earlier period the increase in trade unions membership was not necessarily an indication of strength and in the last chapter we discuss in detail why, mainly as a result of opportunistic leadership and infighting amongst different factions, such a situation arose.

3. 1968-72: upsurge and militancy

The four years between 1968 and 1972 represent an important and distinct phase in the history of the working-class movement in the country. The workers played a major part both in the downfall of Ayub's dictatorship in March 1969 and in bringing to power the Peoples Party government in West Pakistan at the end of 1971.

The major feature of the labour movement during the period of anti-Ayub agitation was that the workers resorted to direct action not only in the form of meetings, processions and strikes but in many cases actually took over complete control of the factories and in some cases "gheraoed"² the factory owners and management in the factory premises and forcefully kept them there until they agreed to the workers' demands. Although the demands of the workers were mainly in terms of "economic" benefits, and the workers did not directly participate in the "political" struggle against the Ayub government, their actions played a major role in the ultimate collapse of that government.

The important changes which took place in the labour movement during the period 1968-69 were as follows:

- (1) As the workers struggled for their economic rights through strike and other direct action they felt the need to organise themselves and this led to a very large increase in the number of trade unions which, for example, in Punjab alone almost doubled from 350 to over 600 between 1969 and 1970.

Table 6: Index of real wages of large-scale manufacturing sector

1959-60	100.00
1962-63	91.21
1963-64	92.94
1964-65	105.42
1965-66	109.30
1966-67	104.85
1967-68	105.73
1969-70	116.17

Source: Hamid (1974), p. 51.

Table 7: Number of trade unions and membership 1959-68 (All Pakistan)

Year	Number	Membership
1959	618	347 522
1960	708	350 604
1961	723	398 723
1962	789	417 248
1963	831	448 735
1964	898	402 322
1965	965	512 225
1966	1 010	522 161
1967	1 039	521 181
1968	1 041	512 912

Source: Government of Pakistan: Pakistan Labour Gazette, various issues.

- (2) The workers no longer relied upon the legal procedures which had been laid down by the Government to solve industrial disputes but resorted to direct confrontation with employers either by taking over the factories or by "gheraos" of owners and management. Given the fact that such action by the workers was widespread and that other groups were resorting to violence, prominent amongst them the students, the state machinery found itself unable to deal with this situation and to come to the rescue of the owners and managers.

- (3) As a result of direct action workers were able to force factory owners and managers to accept their demands and this increased the confidence of the workers in the actions which they had taken.
- (4) During the course of this struggle the workers in many cases discarded their old leadership which warned them against recourse to direct action and in many cases actively opposed it. In its place emerged a new and younger³ leadership in which the workers had confidence and which had played a prominent role in the movement. This new leadership was to play an important part in shaping the new direction of the labour movement in Pakistan.
- (5) There emerged during this period a new spirit of unity amongst the working classes in the country and this was reflected in the joint action in support of other workers and other groups struggling for their rights during mass agitation. Examples of such action were many, but to give a few on 17 April 1968 all workers went on strike in response to an appeal made by the newly found Joint Labour Front in West Pakistan and for two hours electricity supplies were cut off for the entire Province. In Karachi, in response to an appeal made by the teachers of the city who were on strike, the workers of Karachi went on strike for four days in sympathy with their demands. When the workers employed by Packages Limited, Lahore, went on strike they were actively supported by the entire population living in the Kot Lakhpat area where the factory was located.

The major goal of the workers during this struggle was an improvement in their working and living conditions and though they were not directly associated with any political party they could not remain isolated from the political process which was unfolding around them. In West Pakistan, especially in the Sind and Punjab, the Pakistan Peoples Party was gaining popular support and was in the forefront of the struggle. The manifesto and slogans of the Peoples Party with its principal aim of abolishing feudal and capitalist modes of production and replacing them by socialist ones began to attract the workers and they started to join its ranks. A number of workers began to participate actively and help organise the Peoples Party especially in working-class localities.

The manifesto of the Peoples Party contained a number of promises to improve the lot of the workers. Amongst them were:

- (a) the workers would have the right to participate in trade union activities in all industries;

- (b) the rights of the workers would be safeguard in accordance with the conventions of the International Labour Organisation;
- (c) the major industries would be nationalised and the workers have a share in the total profits earned by the industry;
- (d) workers would be directly associated with management in the running of factories;
- (e) the Government would guarantee basic amenities to the workers in the form of housing, food and clothing;
- (f) there would be an increase in the basic salaries of the workers so as to enable them to live a "respectable" life.

The first phase of the movement came to an end in March 1969 when martial law was declared. Ayub Khan was replaced by Yahya Khan as President of Pakistan. The constitution was abrogated and all political activity was banned. On 5 April 1969 the martial law government passed an order stating that no worker could in future be dismissed illegally in order to stop the management from throwing out workers who had been prominent in the struggle against the management. A labour Conference was convened by the martial law regime on 4 May 1969 and as a result of its deliberations a new labour policy was announced the main features of which were:

- (a) a minimum wage was fixed for the industrial labour force. This was Rs.160 in Karachi, Rs.125 in other industrial areas and Rs.115 in non-industrial areas for unskilled workers;
- (b) right of association of workers and employees and implementation of the ILO Convention relating to the freedom of association and protection of the right to organise and bargain collectively;
- (d) unions to be elected as collective bargaining agents having exclusive rights to (a) raise demands; (b) undertake bilateral collective bargaining; (c) call for strikes; (d) nominate workers' representatives on work councils. There was no precondition of registration of unions for this purpose.

The most important implications of the new labour policy were firstly the fixing of a minimum wage, secondly the recognition of the collective bargaining status of a representative trade union, and thirdly the restoration of the right to strike.

The aim of the martial law government had been mainly to blunt the militant stance of the workers and to try to placate them. However, once the policy was announced the demand for its immediate implementation became widespread and led to unrest and agitation amongst the workers. The martial law government then retreated. Air Marshal Nur Khan, the architect of the new labour policy, was replaced and the labour policy for all practical purposes was abandoned in that the government made little effort to implement it.

When the ban on political activity was lifted and national politics became polarised the working class increasingly supported the Peoples Party and played an important role in its victory in the 1970 elections. When the military government tried to test the strength of the Peoples Party in the early months of 1971 a one-day general strike was announced throughout West Pakistan which was completely successful and in many industrial towns, especially Lyallpur, the workers physically took over factory premises.

The coming to power of the Peoples Party government in December 1971 was regarded by most workers as a victory in their struggle against the oppressive capitalist system; it was their "own" government. The workers gave considerable importance to organising themselves and formed trade unions in almost all factories. At the same time they resorted to direct militant action to realise their demands by not only going on strike but by pressurising management through coercive action.

The first few months of the Peoples Party government saw the peak of militant action by the workers. The state machinery found itself at a loss to deal with the situation. The Government was extremely busy trying to consolidate itself and allowed this state of affairs to continue on the industrial front. The police were not certain how they should act as they had never before faced a situation in which workers associated themselves directly with the government in power. The result was that the workers enjoyed almost complete freedom to act as they wished and in some cases, as in Kohinoor Factory⁴ at Kala Shah Kaku near Lahore, they actually threw out the management and began to run the factory themselves. The same thing happened in a number of factories in Karachi. There was hardly a factory in the country where workers did not put forward their demands and resort to meetings, processions, strikes, demonstrations and "gheraos" to have their demands met.

Till now the management had rarely accepted the trade unions in the factories as the workers' representatives which could bargain directly with them. During this period the workers forced management to accept trade unions as their bargaining agents and to come to an agreement with them without interference from the Labour Department or taking the matter to other official bodies. The management in most cases agreed to the workers' demands and, although later they refused to acknowledge them, the initial victory of the workers increased their confidence in direct action as a means of getting their demands met.

A sample of the nature of the workers' demand and their success in getting them accepted by management, based on newspaper reports, are shown in tables 8 and 9 and reflect the high success rate during this period.

By the middle of 1972, however, the Peoples Party had firmly entrenched itself in power and it soon became quite clear that it was not going to bring about any radical transformation in the economic order. The workers had falsely identified their hopes with what they believed was a "revolutionary" party. The militant mood of the workers was not in consonance with the scheme of things which the Government had in mind. The manner in which the Government stemmed the militancy and upsurge of workers was more brutal than every known before. The entire force of the state machinery, the police as well as the militia, was brought out against the workers.

The police action against the striking workers on 8 June 1972 in the SITE area of Karachi is generally regarded as the point at which the Peoples Party government decided to clamp down on the workers. The workers had gone on strike because of the refusal of management to give a share of the profits as had been laid down by the new labour laws. On 7 June 1972 the owners of Feroze Sultan Industries refused to pay the striking workers and declared a lock-out. On 8 June Section 144 was declared in that area and according to the workers, although they did not damage any property nor were they near the factory site but assembled away from it, the police opened fire on them killing a number of workers. This was followed a few weeks later by the police firing on workers in the Landhi industrial area of Karachi. Similar incidents also took place in Lahore and Multan and signalled the end of the period of upsurge and militancy amongst the workers.

4. 1972-77: retreat and decline

On 10 February 1972 while announcing the new labour policy, President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto stated that "since 20 December, martial law notwithstanding "gheraos and jaloas"

Table 8: Number and nature of demands made by workers¹
(sample)

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Higher salaries	28	19	26	20	156
Amount of bonus	7	11	5	4	24
Personnel	56	32	69	37	32
Hours of work/holidays	9	9	69	67	9
Others	32	85	64	68	114
Total	132	156	233	196	335

¹ Based on newspaper reports during this period.

Source: Musthaq Ahmed (1976), p. 30.

Table 9: Success of workers in getting demands met¹
(sample)

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Total demands made (Nos.)	132	156	233	196	335
Extent of success (%)	18.9	-	-	53.1	93.7
(i) Completely successful (Nos.)	25	N.A	N.A	104	314
(ii) Partially successful (Nos.)	2	N.A	N.A	-	1

¹ Based on newspaper reports during this period.

Source: Mushtaq Ahmed (1976), p. 30.

seem to have become the order of the day. This unruly and rowdy practice, negative in its purpose, anarchistic in its approach, nihilistic in its results has been endured regrettably by the Government and the people for over seven weeks ... Now I want to make it clear that the strength of the street will be met by the strength of the state".

The period of labour militancy was to be replaced by a set of rules which were enunciated in the new labour policy. The main features of this policy were:

- (1) Workers' representatives would be associated with management to the extent of 20 per cent at factory level.
- (2) The share of the workers in annual profits was raised from 2.5 to 4 per cent and later on to 5 per cent.
- (3) A matter could be taken to the labour court by either party. Formerly, this could be done only if both workers and management agreed jointly. The courts' award was to be given within 30 days and not 60 days as was previously done.
- (4) It became necessary for every order of retrenchment or termination of service to state the reasons explicitly in writing.
- (5) Employers would provide free education up to matriculation for one child of each worker. The levy of 2 per cent of a worker's wage for providing him medical facilities was abolished and the existing contribution of 4 per cent for employers was raised to 6 per cent. Provision of old-age pension was to be made for all workers at a certain age.
- (6) No credibility was to be given to demands accepted by management under the "gherao" movement.

An important change was introduced regarding the registration of trade unions. Earlier the workers had found it extremely difficult to get their trade unions registered. According to the new policy, regardless of the number of workers that supported it, a group of workers could register themselves as a trade union. The result of this was that there was a rapid increase in the number of registered trade unions during this period.

The over-all economic conditions prevailing during this period were not conducive to growth and development. It can rightly be said that if Ayub's government was initially blessed with five good years in terms of the economy, from 1960 to 1965, Bhutto's government faced an extremely difficult economic situation in the five and a half years it remained in power. The economy had recovered reasonably well after the separation of East Pakistan and growth in both industry and agriculture was beginning to pick up when the increase in oil prices set into motion an inflationary spiral and industrial stagnation - the latter largely a result of the depressed international trade situation. To make matters worse the private sector, especially

industry, failed to adjust to the economic policies of the new government and lower profitability and went on "strike" as far as new investments were concerned. The government tried to balance this situation by increasing public sector investment whose foreign exchange component was financed by foreign aid, especially from Arab countries, but whose domestic component was met mainly by resorting to deficit financing. Since most of the projects initiated by the Government were in capital-intensive industries with a long gestation period they failed to show any immediate results. The agricultural sector was subjected to bad weather conditions and floods and the increase in water supply for irrigation, expected from Tarbela, failed to materialise. The result of all these factors was that economic growth throughout this period was almost non-existent and had it not been for the large increase in export earnings from remittances from abroad the situation would have been even worse.

A government which had come to power on the promise of making great improvements in the living standards of the poorer sections of the people found itself in an unenviable position. The class composition of the party, dominated by feudal landlords, made it impossible to bring about any basic or far-reaching change in the existing distribution of wealth. The fact that there was little growth in the system meant that there was little to distribute in terms of additional output.

There was, however, no going back to the conditions of the sixties. The struggle which the workers had launched over the previous four years had placed them in a completely changed position vis-à-vis the employers. The workers were a force at factory level and it is to the credit of the Peoples Party government that the labour laws which it announced, especially in the earlier stages, helped strengthen the position of organised labour in the country even if it did not fulfil expectations. It was basically this strength of the working classes which with government support at least ensured that during this period of high inflation and general depression, the real wages of the labour in the large-scale manufacturing section increased in the seventies, and did not decline or remain stagnant as they had done in the fifties (see table 10).

The introduction of a minimum wage in 1969 had increased money wages by almost 26 per cent between 1967-68 and 1969-70. The February 1972 reforms, as discussed earlier, had extended workers' participation in management, made compulsory the payment of annual bonuses at stipulated rates, and set minimum standards for education, life insurance and medical benefits. Workers' shares in profits had doubled from 2.5 to 5 per cent. These fringe benefits, coupled with the residual effects of the 1969 minimum wage legislation, added more than 22 per cent to the earnings of workers in 1972-73.

Table 10: Real and money wages of production workers in large-scale manufacturing
(rupees per worker per year)

Year	<u>Money</u> rupees	<u>Wages</u> 1959-60=100	<u>Real</u> rupees	<u>Wages</u> 1959-60=100
1969-70	1 931	177	1 351	124
1970-71	2 094	192	1 384	127
1971-72	2 389	219	1 504	138
1972-73	2 914	267	1 679	143
1973-74	4 012	368	1 775	163
1974-75	4 953	454	1 730	159

Note: 1970-71 and) Government of Pakistan, Ministry of
1971-72) Industries. For all workers, no
indication whether cash and non-
cash benefits included.

1972-73 and) Production and non-production
1974-75) workers in cotton textiles.

Source: S. Guisinger: Wages, capital rental values and relative factor prices in Pakistan,
World Bank Staff Working Paper
No. 287 (1978).

In August 1973, the Government adopted the Employees Cost of Living (Relief) Ordinance requiring employees in both the private and public sector to award cost-of-living adjustments at a rate fixed by the Government. There were three such adjustments under the 1973 Ordinance: Rs.35 monthly in August 1973; Rs.50 in June 1974; and Rs.25 in April 1975. Thus, a worker in an industrial area outside of Karachi, earning the statutory minimum wage of Rs.125 in June 1973, was earning Rs.235 by June 1975 - an increase of 88 per cent in two years. Since consumer prices rose by approximately 65 per cent, real wages of the lowest paid workers increased substantially during this period. The wage of the average worker rose by a smaller percentage than the increase in the minimum wage, but it too, in real terms, showed an increase, as can be seen in column 5 of table 10.

Even if we were to have some doubts about the reliability of the data on real wages, especially since they are restricted to the workers of the cotton textile industry, there is little doubt that at least real wages

20
did not decline during this period. This in itself was a significant improvement on the situation of the sixties.

It is indeed unfortunate that despite the increased political consciousness of the workers and their initial support for the Peoples Party government this situation was not taken advantage of or used to build up an organisation amongst the workers. One thing which clearly emerges from the five and a half years of the Peoples Party in government is that it failed to evolve or follow a planned, well-thought-out, consolidated labour policy at national level. The result was that it failed to create any national organisation as has been done by many other political parties, for example, the Indian Congress Party has had a labour front almost since its inception.

What was the reason for this? It could be argued that the Peoples Party tried to build up an organisation but was unsuccessful in its attempts. It is true that it created spheres of influence amongst the workers. But this was done by different factions amongst the Peoples Party with the support of different Ministers and not only did these groups work independently of each other but in many cases worked against each other and there were instances of outright fighting amongst them.

The other major problem with the Peoples Party's policies was that it refused to accept any leadership amongst the trade unions which tried to retain even the slightest independence of its own. Wherever it could, the Peoples Party tried to create a leadership which was completely loyal to it. To achieve this it was prepared to go to any lengths: trying to bribe the existing leaders into following the Party line and, if this was not successful, intimidating them into submission and, where this even failed, replacing the leaders by their own people.

Trade union leaders were subjected to considerable harassment. The Government had changed the law, enabling it to disqualify the officers of a trade union participating in an illegal strike and those disqualified could not take any part in trade union activities. Similarly, cases were brought against trade union leaders who were forced to spend most of their time in police stations or in courts of law answering the charges brought up against them. Also, prominent trade union activists were dismissed from their jobs. Faced with the possibility of unemployment these leaders were forced to make concessions to the Government.

There is no doubt that as a result of these policies the trade union movement was weakened and there was considerable demoralisation amongst the working classes.

The factory owners took advantages of this situation by dismissing workers and resorting to lockouts. They did not give much importance to the trade unions and in many cases tried to by-pass them by going directly to the workers and bestowing small favours on them. The owners tried to create the impression amongst the workers that they would be successful in getting their demands met if they did not come to them through the trade unions thus complicating the relations between workers and trade union leaders.

The policies of the Peoples Party led to a hostile reaction from the working classes in the country. Soon the trade union movement found itself divided amongst those who supported the Peoples Party government and those against it. Most political groups in the country realised the importance of organised labour as a political force and many of them tried to infiltrate the unions and woo their leadership. The result of all this was that the trade union movement found itself divided amongst different factions and groups of all shades of the political spectrum - from the extreme left to the extreme right.

Besides the policies of the Peoples Party, the general recession which hit the industrial sector especially after 1974 also weakened the strength of the trade unions. Most industries, especially cotton textiles, were affected by it and this led to increased unemployment either because the factories were working below full capacity or because some factories declared lockouts. This factor especially weakened the trade union movement in Karachi which had till now been the hub of its activity. The workers, threatened with job unsecurity, tended to become cautious and inactive in trade union activity.

Table 11: Number of strikes and man-days lost

Year	No. of strikes	No. of workers involved	Man-days lost
1969	285	184 892	1 220 337
1970	304	193 807	2 747 959
1971	141	107 962	815 211
1972	779	361 149	2 018 308
1973	536	353 568	803 583
1974	370	301 753	1 433 553

Source: Pakistan Labour Gazette, Ministry of Labour, Health, Social Welfare and Population Planning.

Table 12: Number of trade unions and membership (West Pakistan)

Year	Number	Membership
1972	4 452	525 062
1973	5 345	570 202
1974	7 172	741 174
1975	8 196	694 667
1976	8 611	718 331
1977	8 332	1 050 788
1978	7 894	1 013 097
1979	6 869	984 699
1980	6 558	965 121

CHAPTER II

BRIEF HISTORY OF EMPLOYERS FEDERATIONS

As distinct from the trade union movement, which has been active whatever the drawbacks from the early fifties, employers federations were not set up till the early sixties when the Employers Association of West Pakistan came into being. It was based at Karachi and its activities were limited to industrialists located in and around Karachi.

Throughout the period of the fifties and sixties conditions had been extremely favourable for industrial development. The early entrepreneurs who took advantage of these favourable conditions were mainly traders who, after the collapse of the Korean boom, shifted their investments into the industrial sector. The high rate of profitability ensured a very safe investment climate and the peculiar system of industrial licensing and loans through financial agencies resulted in a high degree of concentration of industrial economic power, with less than 25 families controlling about half of the country's industrial assets. Ayub's government in the sixties had given a very special status to the industrialists, and government policies including labour legislation (as we have seen in the last section) were very much biased in their favour.

The industrial unrest of the late sixties, the fall of Ayub's government and the rise of labour militancy led the entrepreneurs to organise themselves so as to put up some form of united front against the workers who were pushing for higher wages, better living conditions and protection of their jobs. But, as in the case of the trade union movement, the employers also failed in their efforts to form a united body at national level.

Although the Employers Federation of West Pakistan had been founded in Karachi in the early sixties, employers of other provinces, especially Punjab and Frontier, felt the need to set up their own separate bodies. In 1969, the Punjab Industrial Employees Association was formed and amongst its founder members were Kohinoor Industries,

Packages, Servis, Ittefaq and BECO. Similarly in the Frontier Province, the Sarhad Industrial Employers Association was founded at Peshawar.

These provincial bodies wanted the Employers Association of West Pakistan to be considered representative of Sind only and wanted all three to unite to form a national body. Mian Tajammal Hussain, a member of the ILO Governing Body and a representative of the Punjab Industrial Employees Association, was one of the main proponents of this scheme.

However, the Employers Association of West Pakistan did not respond and in fact in 1974 renamed itself the Employers Federation of Pakistan. Not to be outdone, the Punjab body also renamed itself the Pakistan Industrial Employers Federation. There are today therefore three main bodies representing the employers and although two of them claim to be national bodies, in fact each one of them is mainly representative of the employers of the province, in which it is located.

The main function of the Employers Federation is to act as a pressure group on the Government so as to put forward the views of employers on important issues. An idea of their objectives can be gained from those established by the Pakistan Industrial Employers Federation located at Lahore:

- (a) to promote and safeguard the interests of Industrial Employers of Pakistan and to foster co-operation and togetherness among them;
- (b) to provide to the Industrial Employers of Pakistan with an effective venue for the exchange of views and experience with particular emphasis on application of most up-to-date methods, techniques and organisation to help minimise waste in labour and material;
- (c) to represent or intercede with the government authorities and decision-making circles in a really definite form or a really collective voice;
- (d) to convene periodical seminars on matters of mutual concern;
- (e) to dispel misconceptions or distortions about the private sector and to build up a correct image of the entrepreneur;
- (f) to nominate representatives of industrial employers as spokesmen at national and international level;
- (g) to undertake workable and rational schemes for the welfare and uplifting of labour and thus bring about a spirit of confidence and goodwill between employer and worker;

- (h) to provide a clearing-house of relevant research and development.

Although the Federation claims to serve in an advisory role in labour-management relations and the setting up of Legal Advisory Cells, in actual practice these roles are almost non-existent. Its major aims seem to be to go in delegations to the Government to either protest against legislation passed by it or to advise it regarding action which it feels the government should take on important issues of interest to the Federation. It represents the employers in the Tripartite Labour Conferences which are held from time to time by the Government.

The last decade has brought about some change in employers' attitudes regarding labour legislation and the rights of workers and the role of trade unions. Some attribute this change to the second generation of industrialists who are much better educated and trained in modern management techniques, although in many cases the older generation still takes the important decisions. There seems to be some change in attitude and employers are prepared to accept certain changes and be more realistic in their approach towards labour and trade unions.

The period of the late sixties and seventies has, however, left the employers considerably embittered. They fail to understand why their role in the country's development was downgraded and why such hostility was created against them. They feel that labour legislation passed in the seventies resulted in a complete lack of labour discipline and left them powerless. They feel that they must be given the right to "hire and fire" as the only way of ensuring that labour discipline is enforced. They are critical of the present government's half-hearted measures which they feel are not sufficient to provide them with safeguards and guarantees for their investments and to enable them to deal with the labour problems which they face.

CHAPTER III

LABOUR LEGISLATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Labour legislation is broadly divided into three categories: protective legislation, welfare legislation and industrial relations. Protective legislation is mainly concerned with influencing workers' health and safety, working conditions and tenure of employment, etc. Welfare legislation is concerned with benefits such as social security, and old-age benefits. Industrial relations is much broader in scope and consolidates almost all laws relating to trade unions and industrial disputes. In this section an attempt is made to review briefly important labour legislation in the country in a historical perspective.

The history of labour legislation in the sub-continent can be traced back to the Employees and Workers Disputes Act 1860 which provided for speedy determination by magistrates of disputes relating to the wages of workers employed in railways, canals and other public works. This was followed by the Indian Factories Act 1881 and 1911 and the Mines Act 1901 which were to provide mainly for the regulation of working hours and certain other aspects of working conditions in factories and mines.

After the First World War, the Government assumed a more active role in the field of labour legislation. The sphere of labour legislation was for the first time extended to areas of welfare and labour-management relations. As a result drastic amendments were made in the Factories Act 1911 and the Mines Act 1901. The Trade Unions Act was passed in 1926 to provide for representation of workers by their trade unions and to accord certain rights and obligations to trade unions. The Trade Disputes Act 1929 was enacted to provide for prevention and settlement of disputes between employers and workers. It provided for the referral of the dispute by the appropriate government, to a court of inquiry or a board of conciliation. The power of referral was, however, discretionary and there was no permanent conciliation machinery. The courts and boards so set up were vested

with powers under the Court of Civil Procedure 1908 and the proceedings were deemed to be judicial proceedings. Any party to the dispute under inquiry or investigation by a court or board was entitled to be represented before it by a legal practitioner.

In 1927, the Government set up the Royal Commission of Labour with J.H. Whitley as its Chairman. Important legislation enacted on the basis of its recommendation was the Factories Act 1934 and the Payment of Wages Act 1936. Amendments were also made in the Trade Disputes Act 1929 as a result of which the definition of illegal strikes was altered and a provision for the appointment of permanent conciliation offices was made. During the Second World War the Government of India promulgated the Essential Services (Maintenance) Ordinance of 1941.

After the end of the Second World War the Government found that the industrial sector was faced with enormous problems in the field of labour-management relations. The Industrial Disputes Act 1947 was enacted to regulate the settlement of industrial disputes by a specific procedure. The Act, inter alia, provided for the constitution of Works' Committees and the referral of a dispute by the Government to a one man tribunal constituted for adjudication of that particular dispute.

1. After independence

After independence, the Industrial Disputes Act 1947 as well as the Trade Unions Act 1926 and other laws were adopted by the Government of Pakistan. The Industrial Disputes Act 1947 was amended in 1956 to provide a speedy remedy to the workers and officers of trade unions for redressing grievances such as dismissal or other punishment inflicted when industrial disputes were pending. Another amendment was made to this Act in 1957 which placed restrictions on the right of strike and lockout during conciliation and adjudication proceedings.

In the year 1959 the Industrial Disputes Act 1947 was repealed by Ayub's military government and replaced by another piece of legislation known as the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959. The main aim of this legislation was to withdraw the right to strike. This was done in an indirect manner by making it incumbent upon the parties to have their disputes settled by an adjudication procedure if conciliation proceedings failed. According to sections 18 and 19 of this Ordinance, workmen could not go on strike without giving due notice to the employer nor could they do so when the case was pending before a conciliation officer or industrial court. Another section of the Ordinance provided that the conciliation officer

must start proceedings on receipt of a notice of strike or lock-out. Moreover, if a strike or lock-out was in progress, the court could prohibit its continuance. Thus there was no possibility that a strike or lockout could materialise.

Industrial courts were established for the first time in Pakistan as a result of the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959. The Government could constitute one or more industrial courts for adjudicating and determining an industrial dispute or any other matter connected with or relevant to the dispute. The court was also empowered to try and punish persons accused of certain offences mentioned in the Ordinance. The industrial courts were to comprise a chairman (who was to be a serving or ex-judge of the High Court or District Court) and two members, one from the employers' and the other from the workers' side. Any decision or award of the court was final and could not be challenged in any way by or before any judicial or other authority including the High Court and Supreme Court. A petition for special review could, however, be presented to the Supreme Court under Article 160 of the Constitution of 1950. Appeal to the High Court, was, however, conferred for the first time by virtue of an amendment to section 12(6) of the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959, effected by the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Ordinance of 1962 passed in October of that year.

The Trade Union (Amendment) Ordinance 1960 was promulgated in April 1960 and provided for the compulsory recognition of trade unions by employers. It also contained certain other amendments to the Trade Unions Act 1926. An important provision of the Ordinance was to reduce the number of "outside" officers of a union from 50 to 25 per cent of their total strength. The law for the first time provided for compulsory recognition of trade unions, but as their activities were considerably curtailed by the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959, they were unable to perform their functions.

In 1962 the new constitution was promulgated by Ayub's government and, except for certain matters reserved for the central legislature, the power to frame and enforce labour laws in a province rested with the provincial government.

In 1965 the East Pakistan Government promulgated the Labour Disputes Act and Trade Union Act. The major aim was to make it even more difficult for workers to go on strike. According to Labour Disputes Act strikes and lockouts during court proceedings, while they were pending, or during the period of operation of a settlement or award, where less than the prescribed notice was given (30 days in case of public utility services and seven days of other cases), were prohibited. Strikes and lockouts in public

utility services during conciliation proceedings were also illegal. The court could prohibit a strike in existence at the time of application to the court. The Government also could issue an order prohibiting any apprehended or existing strike at any time. Taking all the provisions together it meant that to all intents and purposes, workers did not have the legal right to strike, as in the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959.

The West Pakistan Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1968 replaced the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959. In the same manner the Trade Union Ordinance 1968 replaced the Trade Union Act 1926. Both the Ordinances were on the same lines as those promulgated by the East Pakistan Government and were mainly similar to the repealed ordinance, i.e. continued ban on the right to strike and lockouts.

2. Industrial Relations Ordinance 1969

With imposition of martial law in the country in March 1969, labour became a central issue. The new military government announced its labour policy in July 1969 and then passed the new Industrial Relations Ordinance in November 1969. An important feature of the Ordinance was that it consolidated the entire law relating to trade unions and industrial disputes. The salient features of the new Ordinance were as follows:

- (1) unfettered right of association for workers and employers;
- (2) implementation of ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 relating to freedom of association and protection of the right to organise and bargain collectively;
- (3) restoration of the right to strike and lockout after failure of bilateral negotiations and conciliation efforts;
- (4) introduction of a system of voluntary arbitration;
- (5) unions to be elected as collective bargaining agents with exclusive right to (a) raise demands; (b) undertake bilateral collective bargaining; (c) call for strikes; (d) nominate workers' representatives on work councils. There was no precondition of registration of unions for this purpose;
- (6) introduction of the check-off system for trade unions certified as collective bargaining agents;
- (7) protection of office bearers of trade unions against victimisation during the period of registration and pending of disputes;

- (8) creation of three distinct and separate services for the registration of trade unions, mediation and conciliation, inspection and enforcement of labour laws and strengthening of the labour administration;
- (9) workers' participation in management at various levels and forums;
- (10) introduction of a minimum wage.

The basic change brought about by the introduction of this Ordinance was that it restored the right to strike for the workers. The Government retained the right to prohibit strikes in only eight public utility services (ports, hospitals, fire-fighting services, watch and ward and security services, railways and airways, postal and telephone services, any system of public conservancy or sanitation and the generation or supply of electricity, gas or water to the public).

In the previous Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1968, the Government could prohibit any strike if it was satisfied that it was in the public interest. There was no such clause in the 1969 Ordinance. Similarly according to the 1968 Ordinance, a notice of six weeks had to be served before strike action could be taken. This period was reduced to 21 days in the new Ordinance. Also according to the new Ordinance the registrar had to register the trade union within a period of 15 days from receipt of the application if the trade union had complied with all the requirements. It was also no longer necessary for a trade union to be registered, to have a minimum membership of 10 per cent of the total strength of the workers employed in an establishment of the industry concerned or not less than one hundred workers employed in such establishment, whichever is less. In the new Ordinance the term "worker" had been liberalised to include postal, telephone and telegraph, railway employees and those industrial workers employed by autonomous corporations.

The new Ordinance introduced the concept of a referendum in an establishment where there was more than one registered trade union. The registrar, within a month of the date of receipt of a written request, was to hold a secret ballot to determine the representation of each trade union in the establishment or industry. As a result of such a secret ballot, the registrar would declare the union or federation which had obtained the highest number of votes to be the Collective Bargaining Agent.

The 1969 Ordinance also changed the tripartite composition of the industrial courts and these courts were to be presided by officers of the status of a

District Judge or Additional District Judge. The right of appeal to the High Court was withdrawn and conferred on a single Labour Appellate Tribunal for the entire province of West Pakistan and after the dismemberment of one unit a separate tribunal for each province.

3. New labour policy 1972

In April 1972 the Peoples Party government announced the Labour Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 1972 which made amendments to almost all the existing labour laws including the West Pakistan Employees Social Security Ordinance 1965; West Pakistan Industrial and Commercial Employment (Standing Orders) Ordinance 1968; Companies Profits (Workers Participation) Act 1968; Industrial Relations Ordinance 1969; and the Workers Welfare Fund Ordinance 1971.

The following were the main features of the new labour policy:

- (1) Workers' participation in the management of industry would be 20 per cent at the factory level.
- (2) In specified industrial units workers would have authority to appoint an auditor to be paid by the management to inspect accounts, records, stores, etc.
- (3) Workers' share in annual profits under the Companies Profits (Workers Participation) Act was increased from 2.5-4 per cent. On increasing the productivity, an additional 10 per cent of increased profits would go to workers.
- (4) Each shop or department of a factory would have a shop-steward, to be elected by secret ballot.
- (5) Labour courts would pronounce decisions within 20 days for individual cases and 30 days for collective issues (and not 60 days as before).
- (6) Works' councils would now deal with all matters that could go before labour courts.
- (7) Either party, workers or employers, could take a matter to the labour court.
- (8) Three days' strike notice would be sufficient provided it was so decided in a secret ballot by the general body of workers.
- (9) Lower supervisory levels in banks would be included in the definition of "workmen" to give them the benefit of collective bargaining.

- (10) Every order of retrenchment and termination had to state reasons explicitly in writing.
- (11) Payment of bonuses would be compulsory and linked to profits.
- (12) Labour under contractors would get the benefit of the application to them of the Payment of Wages Act 1936 and Industrial and Commercial Employment (Standing Orders) Ordinance 1968.
- (13) The workers welfare fund for housing workers under the Workers Welfare Fund Ordinance 1971 would be activated. Committees would be set up to examine payment by employers of higher contributions than the legal minimum.
- (14) Free education up to matric for one child of each worker would be the responsibility of the employer.
- (15) The workers' contribution of 2 per cent under the social security scheme would not be levied. Instead the employers' contribution of 4 per cent would be raised to 6 per cent.
- (16) Provision for old age pension was made for all workers.
- (17) Compulsory group insurance for workers against death and injury while off duty was introduced.
- (18) The social security scheme would be gradually extended to domestic servants.
- (19) Laws relating to safety measures and workmen's compensation against death and injury was revised.
- (20) Increased rates of compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act 1923 was provided.
- (21) Group benefit schemes were introduced as an incentive to workers to increase productivity.
- (22) Equitable distribution of employers' contributions were ensured between workers in capital-intensive and labour-intensive undertakings.
- (23) Infringement of certain provisions of labour laws will be cognisable, though bailable.
- (24) Measures to promote the growth of workers' movement on progressive lines would be undertaken.
- (25) A quasi-judicial body would be set up to promote genuine trade unionism at the trade level, to ensure

representative character of unions, to help in the formation of federations of unions, industry-wide and at national level, and to deal with cases of victimisation and unfair labour practices.

- (26) In due course, it was intended to peg wages to prices, but immediate increase in cash wages has not been made.

Amongst the reforms introduced by the 1972 Labour Policy, the most important was that the concept of termination simplicitor or simple termination was abolished and it was made obligatory for the employer to give at the time of termination, dismissal, discharge, etc., written statement giving the reason for the action taken, irrespective of the nature of employment of the worker, i.e. permanent, temporary, apprentice or probationer.

Another important change was that the Workers Compensation Act 1923 was amended to increase compensation and coverage. This compensation was further increased by the Labour Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 1977 to Rs.12,000 in case of death and Rs.17,000 in the case of permanent total disability.

The Payment of Wages Act 1936 was amended in the 1972 Labour Policy to cover employees of contractors and this was extended in February 1977 to workers employed by all classes of contractors.

The West Pakistan Industrial and Commercial Employment (Standing Orders) Ordinance 1968 was also amended by the new Ordinance to provide for a group incentive scheme, compulsory group insurance and payment of bonus.

Till 1972 there was nothing to stop an employer from closing down the whole of his establishment and presenting his employees with a fait accompli. This threat could be used against volatile unions and outspoken employees. To remedy this situation Standing Order 11A was inserted in the Ordinance making it mandatory for the employer to obtain prior permission before the closure of the whole of the establishment.

The Social Security Ordinance 1965 was also amended in April 1972 and contributions to it were made the sole liability of the employer whereas previously one third of the contribution was paid by the employee. Also the workers were provided with health cover at the employer's expense.

On 20 December 1975, the Government announced further measures which increased the power of the Collective Bargaining Agents (CBA) and it was made mandatory for the employer to negotiate and consult only with the representative of the CBA. It was declared an unfair labour practice

for the employer to negotiate or enter into an agreement with any other registered trade union at the cost of the CBA. Also the CBA was entrusted with the responsibility to participate in the Joint Management Board which was to comprise senior executive or directors of the establishment.

The functions of the Management Board were as follows:

- (a) improvement in production, productivity and efficiency;
- (b) fixing of job and price rates;
- (c) planned regrouping or transfer of workers;
- (d) laying down the principles of remuneration and introduction of new remuneration methods;
- (e) provision of minimum facilities for such of the workers employed through contractors as were not covered by the laws relating to welfare of workers.

4. National Industrial Relations Commission (NIRC)

Amongst the significant reforms introduced by the 1972 Labour Policy was the addition of Section 22A to the Industrial Relations Ordinance 1969. This section envisaged the creation of a NIRC with the following functions:

- (a) promotion and formation of the federations at national level and the adjudication and determination of industrial disputes in which an industry-wide trade union or a federation of such unions is a party.
- (b) registration of industry-wide trade unions or a federation of such trade unions and federations at the national level;
- (c) registration of trade unions with membership in more than one province;
- (d) powers to punish and prevent unfair labour practices.

One of the major aims of the Commission was to create and develop a comprehensive and authoritative collective bargaining machinery. To what extent has it been successful in undertaking this task?

The NIRC has been vested with a wide range of judicial, administrative promotional and educational functions. In actual fact it has during the past years concentrated mainly on its judicial and administrative functions rather than on its promotional and educational role. It has seen its role more in deciding disputes and in policing the industrial

relations legislation than in influencing labour relations through assistance, promotion, advice, encouragement and education. It has made little contribution to the parties in working out agreed solutions, mediating rather than adjudicating labour disputes, promoting collective bargaining and unionism and advising on workers' education.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONS

Over the last 30 years there has been a large increase in the number of registered trade unions and their total membership - especially during the period of the early seventies. To what extent has this led to the strengthening of the trade union movement in the country? The benefits which they have been able to win for themselves both in terms of welfare measures and the recognition of their right to collective bargaining through labour legislation have been discussed in the first two chapters. In this chapter we will limit ourselves to the organisational structure of the trade unions at different levels as they exist in the country and examine the important factors which have contributed both to strengthening and weakening the movement.

Amongst the most important weaknesses of the trade union movement in Pakistan is the very deep division which exists amongst the different factions which constitute it. Because of this division there does not exist any strong trade union organisation at either national or provincial level which can claim support of the majority of the workers. Even at industry and firm level the movement is divided amongst a large number of factions. There are a number of reasons for this situation.

The first is the form which the rivalry amongst the different unions at the firm or plant level has acquired. This rivalry could have been considered healthy for trade union activity if it had operated in a democratic framework. Unfortunately in most cases this infighting has crossed all norms of democratic behaviour and has even developed into armed conflicts. After one group or union wins the right of being the collective bargaining agent, it takes an extreme position against those who have lost. They may be physically prevented from entering the factory premises. Efforts are made to have them dismissed from work. In some extreme cases this rivalry has even led to the murder of the leader of rival groups. In April 1974, Abdur Rehman the leader of the Muttahada Mazdoor Majlas i Amal, a powerful

union in Kot Lakhpat (an industrial area in Lahore), was murdered by members belonging to a rival group, some of whom have been sentenced to death by the Courts (for details of this incident and factors which led up to it see Mushtaq (1976) or Pakistan Times (April-May 1974).

Another problem is the lack of continuity in the trade unions at the firm/plant level. It exists only in a few prominent establishments. In most cases there is considerable uncertainty and a new referendum can put a new trade union in power and hence a completely new leadership.

Another factor responsible for alienating the trade union leaders from the workers is the corruption existing amongst the elected leadership and especially the collective bargaining agents. The moment they are elected they stop doing any work. They misuse transport and other available facilities especially in the case of establishments in the public sector. They also take bribes in order to give jobs to people wanting employment in their establishments. In the private sector they are susceptible to bribes by the employers and are prepared to trade "good behaviour" for higher allowances, etc. made payable to them.

Another problem which arises is that the trade unions have difficulty in keeping the interest of the workers alive in their activities except during periods of elections, negotiations for demands or strikes. Otherwise they mostly remain inactive and workers take little or no interest in their trade unions. The result is that leadership gets alienated from the workers. In most establishments union subscription to the CBA is paid by cheque-off and is deducted from the wages of the workers. Although this has had the advantage that a regular flow of funds is available to the union it has also meant that trade union leaders have lost contact with workers which they had to maintain when they personally collected dues from all members.

1. Office bearers and leadership

Personalities play the most crucial and important part during elections of office bearers, and leadership normally revolves around one person - either the president or the secretary - and ordinary workers recognise and associate the trade union and its activities with him. This was the case during the period of upsurge and militancy in trade union activities (i.e. 1968-72). In many cases the presidents or secretaries were also invited to become office bearers of unions in other firms and establishments. Over the last period this trend has markedly declined and leadership is local and confined to one factory only.

A study on trade union leaders (Mitha, 1979) based on a sample survey carried out in Lahore city provides interesting information on the educational level, background, occupation and attitudes of these leaders (see appendix: table A1 to A10).

The study of 50 trade union leaders showed that they had a higher level of education than the average worker. Thirty-eight per cent had passed the matriculation examination, 16 per cent the intermediate and 10 per cent were above intermediate. Sixteen per cent had studied less than five classes but were literate and 12 per cent were completely illiterate (table A1).

In terms of rural/urban background, 46 per cent were from rural areas meaning that they were born and had spent their childhood in rural areas. The high percentage reflects the very large number of first generation workers from the rural areas (table A2).

As to the occupation of the trade union leaders, only 10 per cent were fully engaged in trade union activity. Thirty-two per cent were white-collar workers and the rest (70 per cent) were almost equally divided amongst skilled and unskilled workers (table A3).

As regards membership of political parties only 18 per cent were members of any major political party showing that most of the trade union leaders are not active members of any of the political parties (table A4).

All the trade union leaders covered in the study believed that the right of collective bargaining was one of the main objectives of trade union activity. Forty-six per cent also believed that trade unions should have other objectives besides the right of collective bargaining (tables A5 and A6).

As regards what these other objectives should be, 40 per cent believed that they should work for a change in the socio-political conditions and propagate a political ideology and 20 per cent believed in getting representation in government and in the major political parties (table A7).

Ninety-six per cent of the trade union leaders believed that trade unions should support justifiable demands of other labour groups. About the form this support should take, there were considerable differences in views. About 20 per cent believed that it should consist of resolutions and speeches while about 15 per cent believed that it should be in the form of funds and about 10 per cent in terms of press statements and legal aid (tables A8 and A9).

When asked about how necessary improvements can be brought about in our society, 76 per cent of the trade union leaders believed that it would come through modifications in the existing social structure and 24 per cent believed that it would come through revolution (table A10).

2. Demands

The demands put forward by the workers have changed over the years depending upon the over-all economic and political conditions prevailing in the country, the existing labour laws and the strength of the trade union movement.

During the period of the Ayub regime (1958-69) and especially the period of the anti-Ayub movement the major demand of the workers was for the restoration of the right to strike. The other major demands put forward were in regard to increased wages, hours of work, transport and housing facilities, medical allowances, reinstatement of dismissed workers and recognition of trade unions (see tables 8 and 9 of Chapter I).

During the period of the Bhutto government, since minimum wages had been stipulated by legislation, the major demands of the workers were for payment of bonuses and facilities provided by the social security scheme. The major problems faced by workers in the implementation of the social security scheme were obtaining medicines and the non-responsive and at times callous attitude of the government doctors.

Mitha (1979, p. 54) has given the views of trade union leaders on the major factors which cause labour unrest.

According to the trade union leaders the major causes of labour unrest (40 per cent) are poverty, inadequate wages and unemployment. Over 20 per cent believed it to be caused by exploitation by the management.

In recent years trade union power has declined given the over-all economic depression which has led to large-scale retrenchments and dismissals.

3. Modes of struggle

The modes of struggle which the workers have employed are mainly of two kinds. The first is following the established legal procedures, i.e. mediation, then intervention of labour officers, then moving to labour courts and then appeals against the decision of the labour courts which lie either with the Appellate Courts or the National Industrial Relations Commission. The second is pressurising

Table 13: Major causes of labour unrest

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty, inadequate wages, unemployment	35	38.9
Exploitation by management	19	21.1
Disparity, class-consciousness	8	8.9
Resentment against unplanned and indecisive economic policy, particularly ill-planned nationalisation	7	7.8
Exploitation and suppression by government	6	6.7
Lack of dignity of labour	6	6.7
Exploitation of labour by political parties	3	3.3
Capitalist control on government	2	2.2
Frequent periods of martial law	2	2.2
Poor leadership of labour	2	2.2

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 54.

management through pamphlets and posters, gate meetings, public meetings, processions and demonstrations, go-slows, tool-down strikes, token strikes, strike action and gheraoes, i.e. locking in the management until it agrees to the demands put forward by workers.

Trade unions in Pakistan have generally not been able to sustain long strikes. The reason for this has been the lack of organisational ability as well as the financial problems which the workers face during such periods.

Managements have resorted to all kinds of strong-arm tactics to break up strikes. It is common for them to employ gangsters to intimidate workers. Also a large number of workers come from adjoining rural areas. Factory workers get in touch with the local "Chaudhries" (leaders) and "badmashes" (gangsters) to threaten the striking workers.

The management also uses the influence of the police and the local administration to break up strikes. After the strike has gone on for some time, the vacillating elements amongst the workers who want to go back to work are prevented from doing so by the trade union through a show of force and strength. In this case, the police and district administration retaliate and the workers are escorted back to work.

4. Membership

There is no regular policy of enrolment of members in trade unions. Only when the trade union comes into existence is enrolment carried out as it is a legal requirement for submitting an application for the trade union to be registered. There is also no procedure for the renewal of membership.

Trade unions function with the general support of the workers and there is no tradition of card carrying members. Different trade unions make lists of their members only when a referendum is being carried out to elect the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA). Once the CBA is recognised the union receives funds which are deducted from the wages of the workers.

Workers also tend to form sub-groups amongst themselves. Workers from the same area, district or "baradrai" (caste) tend to stick together. Workers from the Frontier Provinces who are working in Sind and Punjab also tend to group together. Where workers come from adjoining villages the local politics of the area also influences them. During strikes, as mentioned earlier, management may have the workers beaten up by the evil gentry of the village to which they belong.

Elections for the officers of the trade unions are rarely held. The unions revolve around individual personalities and most of the officers are nominated. Only when a rival faction develops and challenges the existing leadership is an election held.

5. Federation

As has been pointed out earlier, one of the major weaknesses of the trade union movement in Pakistan is the utter confusion and disunity which exists at the national level. In recent years there have been further splits into factions amongst the existing federations. There are dozens of federations each claiming to be a national organisation. In fact the influence of these federations is often limited to one town, industry or union. For

instance Mirza Ibrahim of the Pakistan Trade Union Federation (Ibrahim Group) has the control of the Railway Workshops workers in Lahore. Bashir Bakhtiar of the Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions controls only the Water and Power Development Authority employees mainly based in Lahore. Kaneez Fatima, leader of the PTUF (Kaneez Fatima Group), controls the Karachi Shipyards workers.

There are major industrial towns, for example, Faisalabad, the major textile centre in the country, where no federations exist. In each textile factory there is one individual who controls the union and its activities.

CONCLUSION: THE STATE OF LABOUR RELATIONS IN PAKISTAN⁵

The development of labour relations in the past 30 years of Pakistan's history has been greatly influenced by the over-all changes in economic, political and social conditions through which the country has passed. During this period Pakistan, which started with almost non-existent large-scale manufacturing, has had a fairly impressive growth rate in this sector (approximately 8.5 per cent per annum during the period 1950-80) and industry now contributes almost 15 per cent of the gross domestic product.

In viewing the present state of labour relations in the country we should concentrate on three broad areas: the trade union situation, the management situation and the procedures which are in existence for the settlement of industrial disputes.

The successful functioning of any industrial relations system depends on a strong and stable trade union movement which can, on the one hand, defend the interests of the workers and, on the other, make certain that agreements and commitments are adhered to on the workers side. Pakistan has about 700,000 workers who are trade union members and more than 8,000 registered trade unions together with a large number of trade union federations and confederations. Its biggest weakness is that there is no representative trade union organisation, however loosely knit, which could speak for labour as a whole with authority at national level. The lack of such a representative body, for example, makes it impossible for institutions like the National Tripartite Labour Conference to function properly, mainly because the labour side is not represented by a limited number of leaders from a few strong and representative national trade unions.

The other major problem with which the trade union movement is faced is the multiplicity of trade unions at

enterprise level. In order to combat the adverse effects of this multiplicity, the Government has introduced the concept of exclusive bargaining agents who are determined by the secret ballots every two years. However, as we have discussed earlier, disputes amongst rival trade unions, which at times develop into armed conflict, act as a major deterrent to the development of a healthy trade union movement at factory level.

The general attitude of management towards trade unions plays an extremely important part in the development of a smooth-functioning industrial relations system in Pakistan. Unfortunately the very concept of trade unionism is not very popular amongst most Pakistani employers. The industrialist class, most of whom were originally traders, is the product of very favourable conditions which were created for them during the fifties and sixties. In many ways they are not prepared to face the changed conditions of the seventies and still look back at the period of protective markets, favourable exchange rates, loans at very low interest rates and guaranteed investment and weak trade unions without the right to strike that existed in the sixties.

The devaluation in the early seventies, which removed the subsidy given to the industrial sector, and the general profit squeeze with which it was faced, together with fears of nationalisation, did much to shake business confidence. This also coincided with the granting of far-reaching trade union rights which began with the Industrial Relations Ordinance of 1969 and were expanded by the New Labour Policy promulgated in the spring of 1972. This was followed by a rapid mushrooming of trade unions, presentation of aggressive claims and in some cases even acts of violence in connection with labour disputes.

Some of these tensions could certainly have been avoided if management had adjusted to the changed conditions, and management at the enterprise level had taken proper initiatives to introduce effective and far-sighted industrial relations practices and forward-looking personnel management policies.

One of major problems has been that employers have not delegated any real authority and power to personnel managers. In most cases solutions agreed between labour and personnel managers have to be again taken up with top management for ratification as the latter are not prepared to abide by the concessions agreed to by the personnel managers. There is considerable scope for training management in the fields of industrial relations and personnel policies and practices. Such training could cover matters such as the drawing up of a personnel management policy and its implementation, establishment of

an effective grievance and complaint procedure, setting up of consultation bodies, working out efficient recruitment and dismissal procedures and the setting up of machinery to deal with discipline.

As in the case of the trade unions there is also the need for an effective employers' organisation to represent employers at national level and negotiate on their behalf and make commitments in collective dealings. This would also ensure an adequate representation of employers' interests at the National Tripartite Labour Conference where at present the Government has to invite some 100 to 120 employers. Also at industry level there are no organisations on the employers' side to negotiate with trade union federations representing workers in the industry.

At present labour relations in Pakistan are centred on the enterprise. The major disadvantage of this system is that it is confined mainly to the large-scale enterprises employing a large labour force and hence leaves outside its scope the small and medium-scale units. This leaves a very wide gulf between enterprise level bargaining, where the strength of trade union action lies, and the National Tripartite Labour Conference where major policy decisions are expected to be taken. The gap between these two levels is very wide and there is a considerable need to create an intermediate industrial relations level which is situated between the enterprise and the National Tripartite Labour Conference. The establishment of such industry-wide labour relations structures could go a long way in improving labour relations in the country.

What about the future?

A Labour Commission set up by the present Government submitted a detailed report at the end of 1979 but the Government has not yet announced its new labour policy. The main point of interest is to see to what extent the present Government will continue to grant the rights given to workers and the procedures laid out for the settlement of disputes in the Labour Policy announced in 1972. The key questions seem to revolve around three points: firstly, the right to strike, secondly, the procedure for dismissing workers and, thirdly, the contributions made by the employers for social security and health cover.

The employers consider the present legislation very much biased against them and allege that it has contributed to labour indiscipline and low productivity and that they must be given the right to "hire and fire" as a pre-requisite for improvement in labour relations at industry level.

The Government, on the other hand, is keenly aware that labour problems are only some of the many problems with which the industrial sector is faced and even if labour legislation is changed to suit the industrialists there is no guarantee that new investment will be forthcoming, given the low profitability and generally unsettled political conditions in the country.

On the other hand, strengthening the position of the industrialists at the expense of the labour force could create unrest amongst the workers and create a law and order problem which the Government can ill afford.

In the circumstances, therefore, it appears that the status quo will be maintained and the Government will not alter the existing labour laws in any radical way.

APPENDIXTable A1: Education of trade union leaders

Education level of trade union leaders	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	6	12
Literate/primary	8	16
Middle	4	8
Matric	19	38
Intermediate	8	16
Above intermediate	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 23.

Table A2: Rural-urban background of trade union leaders

Rural-urban background of trade union leaders	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	23	46
Urban	27	54
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 24.

Table A3: Occupation of respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Skilled labour	19	38
White-collar workers	16	32
Unskilled labour	9	18
Trade unionist	5	10
Others	1	2
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 28.

Table A4: Membership of political party

Membership of political party	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	9	18
No	41	82
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 32.

Table A5: Formally declared objectives of your trade union

Formally declared objectives	Frequency	Percentage
Collective bargaining only	37	74
Collective bargaining + improving industrial relations	5	10
Collective bargaining + promotion of labour unity	4	8
Collective bargaining + increasing production	3	6
Collective bargaining + education of labour	1	2
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 33.

Table A6: Should a trade union have objectives over and above these?

Desirability of other objectives	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	46
No	27	54
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha, (1979), p. 34.

Table A7: If yes, what should these objectives be?

Extra objectives	Frequency
To work for a socio-political change and propagate a political ideology	9
To work for representation in government and in policies through political parties	5
To educate labour	4
To work for the nation	4
To work for unity of labour	3

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 35.

Table A8: Should trade unions support justifiable demands of other labour groups?

Support for other labour groups	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	96
No	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 81.

Table A9: If yes, what form should this support take?

Forms of support	Frequency	Percentage
Resolutions/speeches/ meetings within factory premises	25	18.5
Funds	19	14.1
Pressure on management through table talk	17	12.6
Press statements	16	11.9
Legal aid	14	10.4
Pressure on Labour Department	11	8.2
Moral support	10	7.4
Demonstrations, speeches in public areas	8	5.9
Pressure on Government through representatives or through letters	7	5.2
Sympathetic strike	5	3.7
Hunger strike	1	0.7
Circular	1	0.7
Court arrest	1	0.7

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 82.

Table A10: How can necessary improvements be brought about in our society?

Change in society	Frequency	Percentage
Modifications in the existing social structure	38	76
Revolution	12	24
Total	50	100

Source: Mitha (1979), p. 84.

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NOTES

¹ Research Series No. 49 deals with the Sudan; No. 66 with Sri Lanka; No. 69 with Nigeria, No. 70 with Senegal.

² The word literally means to "encircle", but here means to "confine" the management in their offices until they agree to the workers' demand.

³ Younger both in terms of age and experience in trade union activity. For instance leaders like Usman Baluch, Abdur Rehman, Tariq Latif, Gulzar Chaudhry emerged during this period.

⁴ The largest rayon plant in the country which was taken over by the Government in 1972.

⁵ This sector relies heavily on a paper by Johannes Schregle: Labour relations in Pakistan: some major issues (Geneva, ILO, Feb. 1977; Mimeo).

I STRATEGIC FACTORS IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEMS
FACTEURS STRATEGIQUES DES SYSTEMES DE RELATIONS
PROFESSIONNELLES

- RS 1 The metalworking industry. Milton Derber.
1976, vii + 113 pp. E 15 Sw. frs.
- RS 2 The shipping industry in Canada. John J. Fuchs.
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- RS 3 The shipping industry in Japan. H. Sasaki.
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- RS 25 The shipping industry in Sweden. Sigvard Rubenowitz,
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- RS 26 The shipping industry in the United Kingdom.
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- RS 53 Industrial relations in Israeli shipping (1948-1975).
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- RS 62 The construction industry in Austria. Gertraude
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- RS 63 The construction industry in Canada. Gérard Hébert.
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II DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELDS OF HUMANISATION OF WORK AND
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DEVELOPPEMENTS DANS LES DOMAINES DE L'HUMANISATION DU
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- RS 4 Alternative forms of work organisation: improvements of labour conditions and productivity in Western Europe. Reinhold Weil.
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- RS 6 The French approach to the humanisation of work. Yves Delamotte.
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- RS 8 Democracy at work and perspectives on the quality of working life in Scandinavia. E. Thorsrud.
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- RS 9 Les méthodes de production en groupe et l'humanisation du travail: le dossier des pays industrialisés. John L. Burbidge.
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- RS 10 Group production methods and humanisation of work: the evidence in industrialised countries. John L. Burbidge.
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- RS 11 The quality of working life: trends in Japan. Shin-ichi Takezawa.
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- RS 12 La qualité de la vie professionnelle: évolution au Japon. Shin-ichi Takezawa.
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- RS 13 Les positions des syndicats français et italiens face à l'humanisation du travail. Yves Delamotte.
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- RS 14 The attitudes of French and Italian trade unions to the humanisation of work. Yves Delamotte.
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- RS 15 Assessing the quality of working life: the US experience. Stanley E. Seashore.
1976, vii + 11 pp. E,F 5 Sw. frs.
- RS 16 Evaluation de la qualité de la vie de travail: l'expérience des Etats-Unis. Stanley E. Seashore.
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- RS 17 L'organisation du travail et les relations professionnelles dans l'industrie italienne de la construction mécanique. Matteo Rollier.
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- RS 18 The organisation of work and industrial relations in the Italian engineering industry. Matteo Rollier.
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- RS 33 Social aspects of work organisation: implications for social policy and labour relations. Selected papers and proceedings of an international symposium (Moscow, 15-18 February 1977).
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- RS 50 Les aspects sociaux de l'organisation du travail. Un bilan provisoire. Yves Delamotte.
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III WOMEN, WORK AND SOCIETY

FEMME, TRAVAIL, SOCIETE

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Research symposium on women and decision-making: a social policy priority. (Geneva, 17-19 November 1975)

Colloque de recherche sur la femme et la décision: une priorité de politique sociale. (Genève, 17-19 novembre 1975)

- RS 19 Rapport de synthèse. Françoise Latour da Veiga-Pinto.
1976, v + 22 pp. F,E 8 fr. s.
- RS 20 A synthesis report. Françoise Latour da Veiga-Pinto.
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- RS 21 The traditional division of work between the sexes, a source of inequality. Ester Boserup, Mary Chinnery-Hesse, Sattareh Farman-Farmaian.
1976, vii + 32 pp. E 8 Sw. frs.

- RS 22 Women at work: in the labour force and at home.
La femme au travail: dans la vie active et au foyer.
Eva Alterman-Blay, Aruna Asaf-Ali, Zsuzsa Ferge,
Denise Lecoultre, Andrée Michel, Morag M. Simchak,
Souad Vivien.
1976, vii + 120 pp. E/F 15 Sw. frs.
- RS 23 Psychological, social and political obstacles to
decision-making. Les obstacles psychologiques,
sociaux et politiques à la prise de décision.
Riitta Auvinen, Elzea Aventurin, Perle Bugnion,
Dorothea Gaudart, Eliane Roques.
1976, vii + 101 pp. E/F 12 Sw. frs.
- International symposium on women and industrial relations.
(Vienna, 12-15 September 1978)
- Colloque de recherche sur la femme et les relations
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- RS 54 Women and industrial relations. Framework paper and
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Hiromasa Susuki.
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1980, viii + 218 pp. E/F/G 25 Sw. frs.
- Set of 3 documents (RS 54, 56, 57): 50 Sw. frs.
Jeu de 3 documents (RS 55, 56, 57): 50 Sw. frs.

IV WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT

LA PARTICIPATION DES TRAVAILLEURS A LA GESTION DES ENTREPRISES

LA PARTICIPACION DE LOS TRABAJADORES EN LA GESTION EMPRESARIAL

- RS 28 La participation des travailleurs à la gestion des entreprises en France. L. Greyfié de Bellecombe.
1977, vii + 28 pp. F,E 5 fr. s.
- RS 29 Workers' participation in management in Israel - Successes and failures. Amira Galin, Jay Y. Tabb.
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- RS 30 Workers' participation in management in Poland.
M. Blazejczyk, A. Kowalik, M. Trzeciak, J. Wacławek under the direction of Z. Rybicki.
1978, vii + 21 pp. E 6 Sw. frs.
- RS 31 La participación de los trabajadores en la gestión empresarial en España. Juan García-Nieto París.
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- RS 32 Workers' participation in management in the Federal Republic of Germany. Friedrich Fürstenberg.
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- RS 34 Workers' participation in management in France.
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- RS 35 Workers' participation in management in Spain.
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- RS 58 Workers' participation in management in Great Britain.
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V TOWARDS SOLIDARITY CONTRACTS
VERS DES CONTRATS DE SOLIDARITE

- RS 36 La question de l'espace et la population sous l'angle de la solidarité. Alfred Sauvy.
1978, vii + 26 pp. F 6 fr. s.
- RS 37 An economic concept of solidarity. Its application to poverty and income distribution policy in the United States. Sheldon Danziger, Robert Haveman.
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- RS 38 Le contrat de solidarité appliqué aux pays les plus touchés par la crise. Mario Bettati.
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- RS 39 Solidarity contracts as possible instruments for the attainment of better health for all.
O.W. Christensen, B.M. Kleczkowski, P. Macuch, C. Montoya-Aguilar.
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- RS 40 Contrat de solidarité et paysanneries du tiers monde. I. Un contrat de solidarité avec les paysans du tiers monde. Jacques Chonchol. II. Peasant settlements in Panama. A practical example of the concept of a solidarity contract. José M. Espino González.
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- RS 41 Recherche africaine et contrat de solidarité.
Paulin J. Hountondji.
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- RS 42 Le contrat de solidarité comme moyen d'aménagement de l'aide alimentaire. Thérèse Pang.
1978, vii + 30 pp. F 6 fr. s.
- RS 43 L'autonomie: fondement de l'édification du nouvel ordre économique international.
Jokica Hadzi Vasileva.
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- RS 44 International trade. I. International negotiations and the concept of solidarity: a GATT perspective. Peter Tulloch. II. Le principe de solidarité dans la politique internationale des matières premières. Hanz Zwiefelhofer.
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- RS 45 Foreign commerce and solidarity contracts. I. The Integrated Programme for Commodities as a contract of solidarity. I.S. Chadha. II. International negotiations and the concept of solidarity: a GATT perspective. Peter Tulloch.
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- RS 46 Autonomie, besoins essentiels et nouvel ordre économique international. I. L'autonomie: fondement de l'édification d'un nouvel ordre économique international. Jokica Hadzi Vasileva. II. Le concept de besoin essentiel et le nouvel ordre économique international. Elzea Aventurin.
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- RS 47 Towards a social contract on a worldwide scale: solidarity contracts. Guy Ankerl.
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- RS 48 Pilot study on social criteria for development co-operation. International Institute for Labour Studies.
1981, ix + 163 pp. E 20 Sw. frs.

VI MULTINATIONAL ENTERPRISES AND LABOUR

ENTREPRISES MULTINATIONALES ET LES PROBLEMES DU TRAVAIL

- RS 51 Relations between management of transnational enterprises and employee representatives in certain countries of the European Communities.
Rober Blanpain, Tom Etty, Alan Gladstone, Hans Günter.
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- RS 52 Relations entre la direction des entreprises transnationales et les représentants des travailleurs dans plusieurs pays de la Communauté européenne. Roger Blanpain, Tom Etty, Alan Gladstone, Hans Günter. 1979, ix + 79 pp. F,E 13 fr. s.
- RS 60 The labour relations of United States multinationals abroad: comparative and prospective views. Duane Kujawa. 1980, vii + 23 pp. E,F 6 Sw. frs.
- RS 61 Les relations professionnelles dans les entreprises multinationales des Etats-Unis à l'étranger: comparaisons et perspectives. Duane Kujawa. 1980, vii + 25 pp. F,E 6 fr. s.

VII INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

- RS 49 Industrial relations and the political process in the Sudan. Ahmed Hassan El Jack, Chris Leggett. 1980, v + 48 pp. E 8 Sw. frs.
- RS 66 Industrial relations and the political process in Sri Lanka. U. Kariyawasam. 1981, vii + 41 pp. E 8 Sw. frs.