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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

PAPER FOR THE CONFERENCE ON LABOUR STATISTICS

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July 1968

NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE OF LABOUR
INFORMATION DOCUMENTATION
V.S. C. I. N.L.L.
NOIDA

ACC. No. L-133
DATE

25-7-68

PAPERS FOR THE CONFERENCE

ON
LABOUR STATISTICS

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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR

Section of Commission's Questionnaire
relating to Labour Research and Information

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212. Most of labour statistics are a bye-product of labour legislation. They suffer, therefore, inter-alia from the limitations arising out of lack of uniformity in the concepts, coverage and frequency of collection. The time-lag in their publication, non-response from primary units, inaccuracy of returns, changes in industrial classification are further difficulties in making labour statistics more useful. What steps should be taken to remedy the situation? Is the implementation of the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 the answer?

213. There is a feeling that the practice of entrusting the administration of labour laws to different officials, the statutory requirements of maintenance of different registers and sending of different filled-in returns under these Acts, result in a good deal of unproductive work and unnecessary duplication. If this feeling has a basis, what steps should be taken to improve the situation?

214. Does the all-India Consumer Price Index Number currently compiled reflect adequately price changes affecting urban working class? Should consumer price index numbers be compiled for every region of the country for the purposes of wage fixation? What principles should be followed in compiling the 'all-India' and regional indices?

215. Data presently collected and compiled in respect of work-stoppages (strikes and lockouts) mostly consist of (a) number of work-stoppages, (b) number of workers involved, (c) number of man-days lost, (d) total wages lost in rupees, and (e) total production lost in rupees. Are they adequate for measuring industrial unrest in the country? If not, what other aspects of industrial unrest require quantification?

216. At present statistical data are collected only in respect of work-stoppages arising out of industrial disputes. Is it necessary to collect similar information on work-stoppages due to reasons other than industrial disputes?

217. The current emphasis in the collection of labour statistics is on data which will help in understanding the economic aspects of workers' life. Social and sociological aspects have been comparatively neglected. What are your suggestions for filling up the gap? For better comprehension of labour problems which particular aspect of these statistics would you emphasise?

218. Statistical data (employment, unemployment, consumption expenditure, etc.) are being collected in respect of rural population annually by the National Sample Survey. Would it be feasible to make these data available separately for rural labour for each State/region? What other statistics would be required for framing an operational programme?

219. Are the present arrangements for research and studies in the field of labour adequate to meet the requirements of policy-making in labour and economic matters ?
220. What are your suggestions for improving the quality of labour research ?
221. What is the present state of labour research undertaken by employers'/workers' organisations ?
222. How should the trade unions be encouraged to strengthen their research activities ?
223. How should labour research be promoted in universities and research organisations ?
224. Are the present arrangements for associating the research personnel outside Government for a deeper analysis of data available with Central and State Governments adequate ? What steps should be taken to strengthen this association ? Should co-ordination of research work done by different agencies be achieved ?
225. What is the extent to which the existing information on labour matters is being put to use ? Who are the main users ? Give a critical assessment of the utility of the existing information.
226. Are the existing arrangements for publicising the research activities of the various agencies adequate ? What has been the role of the press in such publicity ? What improvements, if any, would you suggest ?
227. How do trade unions/employers' organisations inform the public of their activities ? To what extent do they succeed ? (See also 2.31)
228. It is often said that while industrial conflict gets more than its due share of publicity, industrial harmony does not. Do you agree with this view ? What are the reasons for this ?
229. What role has the press played in educating the public on labour matters and with what results ?
- Would you suggest any improvement ? If so, how should this be brought about ?
230. What role has the press played in shaping decisions on industrial disputes ? Has it helped or hindered the promotion of just and good industrial relations ?

Replies received from Labour Bureau, Simla
to Section X of the National Commission on
Labour's Questionnaire relation to Labour
Research and Information

Question No.212 Most of labour statistics are a by-product of labour legislation. They suffer, therefore, inter alia, from the limitations arising out of lack of uniformity in the concepts, coverage and frequency of collection. The time-lag in their publication, non-response from primary units, inaccuracy of returns, changes in industrial classification are further difficulties in making labour statistics more useful. What steps should be taken to remedy the situation? Is the implementation of the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 the answer?

Answer

It is desirable that all the labour statistics are collected under one single Act, namely, Collection of Statistics Act, 1953. However, the difficulties of collecting labour statistics, under Collection of Statistics Act would be that it may not be feasible to collect all types of labour statistics such as statistics relating to maternity benefit, shops and commercial establishments, workmen's compensation, etc. as they are being evolved due to the implementation of the Acts. Moreover, under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953, Director, National Sample Survey is the only statistics authority who has been entrusted with the work of collection of all types of labour statistics. So unless ~~an~~ one central agency for the collection of all types of labour statistics is created, it appears difficult to collect different types of labour statistics required through the National Sample Survey.

As regards non-response, inaccuracy of returns, time-lag, etc. it may be stated that the Committee on Improvement of Labour Statistics appointed by the Government of India in 1958 examined these questions in detail and suggested ways and means to improve the quality and content of the statistics. The Committee made a number of recommendations - the important amongst them were training of the staff of the State Directorates dealing with the labour statistics, financial assistance to State Directorates, field-checking of labour statistics, appointment of Liaison Officers in each State, etc. In order to give effect to these recommendations, schemes were framed and included in the Third Five Year Plan Schemes of the Labour Bureau, Simla, which are being continued during the Fourth Five Year Plan also. It is hoped that fuller implementation of these Schemes would result in improvement in the quality of the data. The Government of India has, however, recently decided that the Regional Offices in the States need not be opened.

Question No.213 There is a feeling that the practice of entrusting the administration of labour laws to different officials, the statutory requirements of maintenance of different registers and sending of different filled-in returns under these Acts, result in a good deal of unproductive work and unnecessary duplication. If this feeling has a basis, what steps should be taken to improve the situation ?

Answer It is felt that the collection of all types of labour statistics may be entrusted to one agency at the State level such as 'Bureau of Economics and Statistics' in the various States and the other State authorities - Chief Inspectors of Factories, Labour Commissioners, etc. may be left out completely to look after the implementation of the various provisions of the Acts. Similarly a Central Agency may also be created for the complete collection and publication of labour statistics at the Central level.

Question No.214 Does the all-India Consumer Price Index Number currently compiled reflect adequately price changes affecting urban working class ? Should consumer price index numbers be compiled for every region of the country for the purposes of wage fixation ? What principles should be followed in compiling the 'all-India' and regional indices ?

Answer (a) The Interim series of all India working class Consumer Price Index Number, on base 1949 = 100 is a weighted average of 27 individual series of index number for centres (statement I enclosed) spread throughout the country. These component series are built up on the basis of family budget enquiries conducted at different times, some far ago as three or four decades. Out of these 27 constituent series of index numbers, 15 are compiled by the Labour Bureau and the remaining 12 by various State Governments. Except the 15 Labour Bureau series which have a common base period (1949 - 100) and are compiled on a uniform method, the other series do not have a common base period. Moreover, there is no uniformity in the method of their compilation. The 27 centres were selected on a purposive basis. Only those for which already established index series were available and which could be fitted into the Interim series of All-India index were selected. As such, these 27 centres do not form a representative sample of urban areas nor of industrial centres. Moreover, the weights assigned to different centres are factory employment of various States distributed to the centres in proportion to the centres employment. The weights should have been aggregate consumption expenditure of working class population in various States which is the procedure followed in constructing the new series of all-India Consumer Price Index Numbers on base 1960 = 100.

However, perhaps this was not quite feasible when the interim series of all-India Consumer Price Index (Base 1949 = 100) was constructed. These limitations have to be kept in view while considering the Interim series of all-India index. It is, therefore, likely that the all-India index may not properly reflect the price changes affecting urban working class. Despite these limitations, the fact remains that this all-India index is the only convenient and suitable tool available for wage adjustments at the national level.

In view of the aforesaid limitations of the all-India index on base 1949 = 100, the Labour Bureau has been compiling a new series of all-India Working Class Consumer Price Index Number on base 1960 = 100 (statement II showing the centres included in the all-India index on 1960 base enclosed). This is based on the Labour Bureau series of index numbers for 50 centres on base 1960 = 100. These have a common base period, the weighting diagrams used are based on Family Budget Enquiries conducted in 1958-59 on uniform lines, and are compiled on uniform and scientific methods approved by the Technical Advisory Committee on Cost of Living Index Number, appointed by the Government of India. The new series of all-India index, on base 1960 = 100, compiled on the basis of the 50 series of index numbers, can, therefore, be expected to reflect the price changes experienced by industrial workers including urban working class population more or less realistically. The new all-India index is likely to be published very shortly, and this will replace the Interim all-India index on base 1949 = 100. It will, therefore, be more appropriate to consider the new series of all-India Consumer Price Index Numbers on base 1960 = 100 for purposes of wage adjustments in industries of all-India nature.

(b) At present regional indices are not being compiled, though State indices for agricultural labour on base 1960-61 are being compiled and published by the Labour Bureau. For industrial workers, only centre indices and all-India index are available. The concept of a regional index is not much meaningful. The working class population to be covered by such an index cannot be properly defined, as the working class at a few centres may not adequately represent the categories at regional level. Further, in many of the areas where there are hardly a few centres it is of no use to compile a regional index because such an index would not reflect changes in the prices paid by working class in the region. Hence unless ~~are~~ enough centres and these are reasonably representative of the population group in the region, the regional index will not serve the purpose intended for. In such a region, working class at centres with relatively higher levels of cost of living would not accept a regional index for obvious reasons. The taxation and economic policies of the State Governments are not uniform throughout the country. Further there is no uniformity in respect of distribution of cereals, etc. which affect cost of living very much. As such, centres in more than one State would preferably not be clubbed together for arriving at the regional index. Restricting the scope of the region to the area of a State might also reduce the utility of such an index. Moreover, it is doubtful

if there are regional groups of employments which would justify regional index for purposes of wage adjustments. In view of all these, the idea of a regional index appears to be not worthwhile. Instead centre index will be a better indicator of price fluctuations experienced by the index population at a particular centre.

(c) The all-India index should be based on indices for representative centres in the country with reference to the population group covered. The centres should be selected keeping in view the industrial importance of the centres and the need to give representation to all important industries. The new series of all-India index on base 1960 = 100 have centres selected from each State (then existing) giving due importance to the type of industries in existence. Thus, out of the 50 centres, 32 are factory centres, 8 mining centres and 10 plantation centres. All these centres more or less realistically represent the centres of industrial importance in the country. The next important principle to be kept in view is the allocation of weights among the centres. For the New Series on base 1960 = 100 weights for each centre have been assigned on the basis of total estimated monthly expenditures for all working class families assigned to each centre. In other words, weightage for each centre should be given not on the basis of employment (as in the case of the all-India index on base 1949 = 100) but aggregate consumption expenditures of working class families in the State as a whole through the representative centre in a particular State.

Question No.215 :- The Statistics of Industrial disputes resulting in work stoppages being collected at present are quite adequate and conform to industrial requirements. However, these statistics suffer from some drawbacks such as inadequate collection in some States due to lack of statutory powers, wrong reporting, etc. In order to overcome these defects, it is proposed to collect these statistics statutorily under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 and Collection of Statistics (Work-Stoppages resulting from Industrial and Labour Disputes) Rules under this Act have been framed and sent to the State Governments for adoption.

Question No.216 :- We agree that statistics relating to closures due to reasons other than industrial disputes may also be collected. In this connection it is stated that the statistics of closures in factories are being collected by the different State Authorities and furnished in the monthly labour news to the Labour Bureau, Simla. A paragraph on this item on the basis of the available information is included in the monthly Indian Labour Journal. However, this information is incomplete as it is based on the returns received from few States. The information about other sectors is not available and attempts made by the Bureau to collect the statistics failed due to lack of statutory powers with the States to collect such statistics.

...../

Question No.218 :

1. Feasibility of additional analysis

(A) Consumption Expenditure :

1. The data on consumption expenditure collected by the National Sample Survey are being tabulated separately for rural labour in the 18th round. There should be, therefore, no particular difficulty in preparing additional tables on the basis of some schedules already collected by the National Sample Survey, if some classificatory item is introduced at the collection stage (as was done in the 18th round). It may be pointed out that instead of annual tabulations, these tabulations could be made at regular intervals because the consumption expenditure pattern does not change materially from year to year. Perhaps, a five yearly interval would be adequate.

2. However, it may be pointed out that for considering the feasibility of the collection the following aspects will also have to be taken into account: -

- i) The appropriate definition of the term "Rural Labour",
- ii) The adequacy of the size of the sample thrown up,
- iii) The necessity for flexibility and simplicity of schedules to take care of the regional differences in the pattern of consumption and the average capacity of the informants to supply the data qualitatively,
- iv) The need for further strengthening and improving the machinery for collection to reduce errors in "investigation".

3. (i) The definition of rural labour household adopted for the 18th and 19th rounds of the National Sample Survey (1963-64 and 1964-65) was :

"Labour Household" A household will be classified as a labour household depending on its major source of income. For this purpose, the following sources of income will be considered :-

- (a) Wage-paid manual labour (agricultural and/or non-agricultural),
- (b) paid non-manual employment, and
- (c) self-employment (own-account work and/or employment as unpaid family workers).

...../

The household will be classified as a labour household if its major source of income is from the first of these three categories; that is, if wage paid manual labour contributed more to its income in the 365 days preceding the date of survey, than both paid non-manual employment and self-employment taken individually."

It was seen in the 18th round of the National Sample Survey (1963-64) that the above definition covered 5,296 households. The rural labour households in turn constituted roughly 26% of the total rural households.

Under the above definition only those households are covered for 'rural labour' survey, whose 'over 33.3 per cent' of income is from wage-paid manual labour. The identity of genuine rural labourers can be lost if any member of the household happens to be making a predominant contribution to the total income of the household from other sources of income, e.g. paid non-manual or self-employment. The definition also overlooks the possibility of exclusion of some rural labourers due to the absence of proper or enough opportunities for employment on wages. It can be that the earnings through wage-paid manual labour may be less than 33.4 per cent, because opportunities for such employment were not available in adequate measure. Thus, it is necessary, that the definition of rural labour is reviewed and appropriately revised.

It is often argued that 'in conditions of high pressure on land it would not be realistic to treat an underemployed cultivator household as a non-labour household. Thus the income criterion adopted so far for identifying rural labour households does not fit in well with the situation in the diverse conditions obtaining in rural areas'. It is in this context that Labour Bureau has adopted the following definition of rural labour household for Intensive Type Studies:-

"A household will be treated as a rural labour household if at least one of its members reports wage-paid manual labour as one of his activities during the period of 12 months preceding the date of enquiry."

(ii) As already pointed out in (i) above, the number of rural labour households covered in the 18th round of the National Sample Survey, was 5,296, and the State-wise breakdown of this figure was as follows :

...../

State	No. of Sample Households	State	No. of Sample Households
Andhra Pradesh	597	Maharashtra	481
Assam	118	Mysore	231
Bihar	757	Orissa	236
Gujarat	201	Punjab	147
Jammu & Kashmir	22	Rajasthan	140
Kerala	403	Uttar Pradesh	443
Madhya Pradesh	397	West Bengal	444
Madras	584	Delhi	17
Himachal Pradesh	Nil	Manipur	8
Tripura	60	Total	5,296

It will be seen that the coverage in the various States was apparently, not as representative as it would have been. What would be the adequate size will, however, have to be determined after considering appropriately the inter and intra-regional variations in the estimates.

(iii) and (iv): The Bureau has conducted many enquiries in the field of family budgets, among the organised industrial workers such as factory, mine, and plantation workers. The Bureau took the help of the National Sample Survey for similar enquiries among the rural population. But in view of the experience in the recent past, it is felt that there is need for extra care, especially as the National Sample Survey has a multiplicity of schedules to canvass in each round and it is likely that the needed emphasis for the labour schedules may not be possible.

(b) Employment, Unemployment etc.

The information on these topics, among others, was collected in the 19th round of the National Sample Survey, and it is felt that collection of work-time disposition data is very difficult in a multi-purpose survey like the National Sample Survey. The Bureau is proposing to conduct certain Intensive Type Studies among rural labour households in the near future. The exact content of the nature of data to be collected and the feasibility of their collection can be better determined in the light of the experience of Intensive Type Studies. The feasibility, in this context, will be determined on the basis of :

- (1) What are the changing factors needing measurement ?
- (2) What is the degree of response and time involved in the collection ?
- (3) What differences exist due to regional factors and whether there is a discernible all-India pattern in them ?

II. Needs of operational programmes :

The needs for statistics for an operational programme are (a) theoretical and (b) practical. It is presumed that the operational programme is primarily for providing fuller employment to the rural population.

(a) The Statistics to be collected will be mainly for measurement of (i) unemployment and (ii) under-employment both visible and disguised. For measuring the 'visible' under-employment, data upon intensities, availability for additional work etc. will have to be collected, while for disguised under-employment, the data on wage-rates, earnings, and other conditions of work will have to be collected to yield data on pockets of low wages, low earnings, marginal conditions of existences, etc.

(b) The practical limits of collection of data will be assessed in the Intensive Type Studies being launched by the Bureau. The response and quality of data, in view of the educational and social level of the informants, is not likely to be either uniform or very reliable in the beginning and would need to be periodically assessed. It is, however, felt that besides sample surveys, studies in various directions to cover (a) achievements of various schemes, (b) shortfalls and the reasons therefor including bottlenecks, personnel and administrative and other hurdles, will have to be made. It is felt that the "Type Studies" in certain villages will throw light upon the various aspects to be studied for formulation of effective operational programmes.

Question No.219 The arrangements for research and studies in the field of labour have been made by a number of agencies viz. Labour Bureau, the State Labour Departments, Universities and Institutes. Some of the workers' and employers' organisations are also known to have created small research cells to carry out studies on problems of labour interest. Some of the Central Government Departments are also carrying out studies inter alia on labour problems.

Although these agencies have been organising field investigations conducting specialised studies and research on labour problems and collecting and compiling basic statistical data required for the formulation of labour policies, yet there can be no denying the fact that the quality of research in the

field of labour economics requires improvement. There still exists many gaps in basic knowledge as well as in the development of concepts and definitions and tools and techniques of measurement and evaluation. There is also little collaboration among research agencies.

With the fast changing pattern of economic and social life in the country, labour problems have increasingly attracted our attention. The Government have realised the urgency of the matter and have set up National Labour Research Institute which is an independent public body under appropriate legal authority to undertake and promote research in the labour field. Till, however, the Institute is well established all the existing agencies engaged in pursuance of labour research have to make concerted efforts in disseminating useful data for the formulation of a sound labour policy as also for tackling specific problems arising from time to time.

Question No.220 : The following suggestions are offered for improving the quality of labour research :

- 1) The universities and social science institutes should enlarge their output of skilled research workers and provide for the higher training of those who have to conduct and supervise both fundamental and applied research.
- 2.) Institutes of labour management and workers' and employers' organisations should afford opportunities to members of their technical staff to work for refresher periods in labour research training centres and universities.
- 3) Efforts should be made to bring about closer relations between research workers engaged in diverge social fields and to interchange them between academic and administrative agencies.
- 4) All scientific knowledge should as far as possible be preserved and made available to labour research workers so as to enable them to derive an acquaintance with the dominant themes and to rework, if necessary, certain unclarified issues on the basis of new hypothesis.
- 5) Research agencies should be encouraged to take an increasingly larger share in the critical evaluation of labour laws as effective instrument of social change.
- 6) The emphasis hitherto has been on statistical surveys for tackling the problems of labour and the use of Observation Method in Labour research is unfortunately very much neglected in India. While the statistical studies survey the broad stream of social life, the personal documents and informal converstations bring out the individual qualities, attitudes and values.

The Observation Method helps to grasp the flow of life and not a static position as revealed by the questionnaire method. The use of observation method in labour research should be developed increasingly.

7. A serious shortcoming of labour research in India is that it does not meet the test of adding in all probability to existing knowledge and contributing to the development of a general theoretical framework. There is a great need for additive rather than discreet studies because only through additive findings we could develop a body of integrated social facts and scientific knowledge from which a sounder and more comprehensive theoretical structure can be built up.

8) Conscious effort must be directed to such areas of research which will extend the scientific basis for judgement and prediction concerning the institutional impact upon labour problems in general and industrial labour market and communities in particular.

The detailed recommendations of the eight-man Committee headed by Dr. W.K.R.V.Rao set up by the Planning Commission in 1965, to make a survey of the current state of social science research in the country, if now available, may also be considered.

Question No.223 : The question of trained personnel and of high scientific ability are vital to the development of labour research. Although there does not exist any irremediable shortage of research workers of high competence in the more standardised tasks yet a very high proportion of the potential ability is not available either owing to lack of training in research workers. In these circumstances the universities and social science institutes should enlarge their output of skilled research workers and provide for the higher training of those who are to become responsible leaders in both fundamental and applied labour research.

/social research methods or due to limited openings for trained

Question No.224 : The present arrangements for associating research personnel outside Government for a deeper analysis of data available with Central and State Governments do not appear to be adequate. Unfortunately there exists in India little contact between Central and State Governments and outside research personnel in the field of labour research. Nor is there much collaboration among research agencies. It hardly needs pointing out that many labour problems cannot be adequately studied without the collaboration of several social scientists. Therefore, association of research personnel from each of the social fields whose techniques and knowledge bear upon the labour problems is essential in the planning as well as in their execution. Furthermore unless cooperative planning and effective dissemination of the results of research in the field of labour take place there will be duplication of effort, non-comparability of results and loss of opportunity to achieve scientific progress. It is,

therefore, highly desirable to bring about closer association between research workers outside Government for a deeper analysis of data available with Central and State Governments and coordinate research work done by different agencies. For strengthening the association of Government research agencies and others, it is necessary that there should be exchange of technical personnel engaged on labour research between these organisations. The Government may also increasingly sponsor suitable research projects to be undertaken by highly skilled social scientists in the country and provide necessary assistance in the form of grants-in-aid.

STATEMENT I

Constituent Series of the Interim Series of all-India Index on base 1949 = 100.

State Series

Labour Bureau Series

1. Ahmedabad
2. Bombay
3. Sholapur
4. Jalgaon
5. Nagpur
6. Hyderabad
7. Madras
8. Bangalore
9. Mysore
10. Trichur
11. Kanpur
12. Calcutta

1. Delhi
2. Ajmer
3. Jamshedpur
4. Monghyr
5. Dehri-on-sone
6. Cuttack
7. Berhampur
8. Gauhati
9. Silchar
10. Tinsukia
11. Ludhiana
12. Akola
13. Jabalpur
14. Kharagpur
15. Howrah.

STATEMENT II

(Refers to Question No.214(a))

Constituent series of the All-India
Working Class Consumer Price Index
Series on base 1960 = 100.

Centre.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Gudur | 26. Sholapur |
| 2. Guntur | 27. Ammathi |
| 3. Hyderabad | 28. Bangalore |
| 4. Digboi | 29. Chikmagalur |
| 5. Doom-Dooma | 30. Kolar-Gold-Field |
| 6. Labae | 31. Barbil |
| 7. Mariani | 32. Sambalpur |
| 8. Rangapara | 33. Amritsar |
| 9. Jamshedpur | 34. Yamunanagar |
| 10. Jharia | 35. Ajmer |
| 11. Kodarma | 36. Jaipur |
| 12. Monghyr | 37. Jaipur Kanpur |
| 13. Noamandi | 38. Saharanpur |
| 14. Ahmedabad | 39. Varanasi |
| 15. Bhavnagar | 40. Asansol |
| 16. Srinagar | 41. Calcutta |
| 17. Alleppy | 42. Darjeeling |
| 18. Alwaye | 43. Howrah |
| 19. Mundakayam | 44. Jalpaiguri |
| 20. Balaghat | 45. Raniganj |
| 21. Bhopal | 46. Delhi |
| 22. Gwalior | 47. Coimbatore |
| 23. Indore | 48. Coonoor |
| 24. Bombay | 49. Madras |
| 25. Nagpur | 50. Madurai. |

ANDHRA PRADESH

COMMENTS ON LABOUR BUREAU'S PAPER BY THE BUREAU
OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS: GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA
PRADESH;

Question

No.
212

The Bureau of Economics and Statistics Andhra Pradesh, also generally agrees with the Labour Bureau's view that all labour statistics should preferably be collected under one comprehensive Act and by one Central Agency. With this end in view, the scope of various statistical returns now prescribed under the collection of Industrial Statistics Act 1953, should be widened as to collect the maximum quantity of Labour Statistics, leaving only such type of labour statistics as would flow in, consequent to the implementation of certain acts such as the Workmen's Compensations Act etc., to the regular Labour Department as pointed out by the Labour Bureau.

As an instance of how the scope and coverage of the existing statistical returns may be enlarged, the Bureau suggests that Part II of the Annual Survey of Industries (A.S.I.) return which provides for collection of some labour statistics at present may be enlarged so to accommodate more labour statistics. Alternatively, a separate return covering exclusively, employment and labour statistics may be prescribed for collection of Labour Statistics.

As regards the agency to collect the labour statistics, the Bureau agrees with the Labour Bureau and feels that the collection, compilation and publication of labour statistics should be centralised with effective co-ordination between the Labour Department and Bureau of Economics and Statistics.

The Bureau shares the hope of the Labour Bureau that with the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Improvement of Labour Statistics, there will be improvement in the timeliness and accuracy of the labour statistics. However, the Bureau feels that a revision of various statistical returns prescribed under the collection of Statistics Act 1953, and under the normal labour Acts should be undertaken in right earnest, avoiding duplication and bringing a qualitative change in the concepts, definitions etc. These aspects will not be covered by the mere extension of collection of Statistics Act to the labour statistics.

Question

No.
213.

The Bureau feels that there is a great executive and operational convenience if the officers who administer labour legislation themselves collect the labour statistics and pass them on to the State Statistical Bureau for processing and publishing statistics. The responsibility for collection should be fixed on the labour department while that for compilation and publication on the Statistics Department. Some of the statistics should, however, be collected under the enlarged scope of A.S.I. returns as suggested above.

The submission of various statistical returns under various labour acts involves a good deal of work in the factories. But this is unavoidable since these statistics are meant for better administration of the Acts. There is every need to revise the existing returns with a view to minimise the statistical work of factory managements.

Question

No.
214

The Bureau shares the expectation of the Labour Bureau that the New Series of Index Number based on 50 centres, will be more realistic and useful as its weighting diagram is based on consumption expenditure of the Working classes at the selected Centres:

The Bureau, however, does not agree that the concept of a regional index is not much meaningful as is held by the Labour Bureau. On the other hand, the evolution of a Regional or Zonal Index Number is desirable. In practice, several difficult and tricky problems are cropping up in the absence of such regional or Zonal index numbers.

The various difficulties pointed out by the Labour Bureau are neither new nor are insurmountable. The concept of a Regional or zonal Index Numbers has, in fact, more practical uses than an All India index number and if constructed, will be no less meaningful than the new series of All India Index Number proposed to be released, based on only 50 centres in a country of continental proportions such as India. In fact, regional index numbers covering a compact and homogenous areas will be much more realistic and useful than an All India Index Number.

The specific difficulties pointed out by the Labour Bureau may be met with as follows:

(1) NON-HOMOGENITY AND NON-REPRESENTATION OF WORKING CLASSES AT SELECTED CENTRES VIS-À-VIS THE REGION AS A WHOLE:

The dissimilarity of working population need not present much difficulty. If necessary, more than one regional index can be evolved within a State.

(2) INADEQUACY OF THE SELECTED CENTRES:- A few more centres may be selected to make the regional index more broad based and representative.

(3) NON-APPLICABILITY OF REGIONAL INDEX TO A CENTRE WITH EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH COST OF LIVING:-

The Labour Bureau says that the regional Index may not be applicable to a centre in the region with exceptionally high cost of living and the working class population therein may not agree to such application at all. But it is to be noted that if there is such a centre in the region, it will have already been selected as one of the centres for price collection work in view of its importance and high cost of living. Normally, the index constructed in respect of City Centres is made applicable to the City itself which forms a separate zone by itself. The Regional index may be applied to the regions other than the City Centre. There can, therefore, be no question of non-applicability of the regional index to such a centre whose influence and weight should be reflected in the regional index.

(4) DIFFERENCES IN TAXATION AND ECONOMIC POLICIES:•

If the suggested regions are made co-terminous with existing state boundaries, these difficulties can be resolved.

(5) NON-UNIFORMITY IN RESPECT OF DISTRIBUTION OF CEREALS ETC:-

Such dissimilarities are liable to be over emphasised. However, these features do not vitiate the value of a regional index number.

(6) NON-EXISTANCE OF REGIONAL GROUPS OF EMPLOYMENT:•

It is not correct to say that even within the State boundaries regional groups of employment do not exist. In Andhra Pradesh for instance, there is a fair degree of homogeneity in the character of industrial employment which is agro-based.

In view of the above considerations, the Bureau feels that the construction of Regional Index Numbers is both feasible and desirable. There is also over increasing demand from various quarters in the State for working out such regional index numbers. If the regions are based on homogeneity of price fluctuations within a given area and are made broadly to synchronise with the State boundaries, there should not be any special technical difficulties. The only restraining consideration is the large expenditure involved in extending the weighting diagram and in the selection of more centres in a region.

The Bureau also feels that it is possible to compile the All India Consumer Price Index Numbers on the basis of Statewise numbers, the latter being compiled as a weighted average of the various State and Central Government series of indices compiled in the respective States, instead of working out the All-India Number based on individual centres selected on a purposive basis, as is done at present.

Question

No.
215

The present break up of data on labour disputes appears to be adequate to gauge the industrial interest if any in the country. The Bureau agrees with the Labour Bureau's views that it is necessary to collect even this data statutorily under Collection of Statistics Act 1953.

Question

No.
216

The collection of data relating to closure of establishments due to reasons other than industrial disputes does not seem to serve any specific purpose. Nor are such statistics likely to be complete or accurate. It is perhaps better to concentrate on the perfection of the data now under collection.

Question

No.
217

The collection of statistics on the social and sociological aspects of workers' life on a regular basis involves considerable effort and expenditure not commensurate with the utility of such statistics. For a long time to come, statistics bearing on the economic aspects of a Worker's life should continue to dominate labour statistics. If necessary, ad-hoc sample surveys can be initiated at regional levels at suitable intervals. Emphasis may be laid on literacy, community taboos and practices, family planning, recreational activities, housing etc.

Question

No.
218

A schedule (1.03) on incomes of labour households and another, (10.1) on employment, unemployment and indebtedness of rural labour households were canvassed during the 18th (1963-64) and 19th (1964-65) rounds respectively. If required, these data can be used for rural labour population for the years concerned.

As regards the regular annual enquiries conducted in the rural sector covering consumption, employment etc. the selection of households was not confined to rural labour only but for all the households. Hence the number of rural labour households in the sample will be meagre and as such it may not be feasible to furnish the data for rural labour households separately.

As regards the definition of a rural labour house-hold, the Bureau feels that the income criterion adopted by the National Sample Survey is a fairly realistic one. The alternative definition of rural labour house-hold suggested by the Bureau on the basis of any one member of the family having done some manual labour during the period of 12 months preceeding the survey, is too sweeping and runs the risk of including many genuinely non-labour house-holds.

Under employment and disguised unemployment add to the load of dependents but do not throw enough characteristics as to allow us to accommodate them in a strict Rural Labour House-hold Survey. It may be that in conditions of high pressure on land, it would not be realistic to treat under employed cultivator household as a non-labour household. But it will be equally unrealistic if an attempt is made to bring in under employed cultivator household as a labour house-hold on par with wage earning manual labour house-holds.

The definitions suggested by the Labour Bureau of a rural labour house-hold for its Intensive Studies is therefore too inclusive and runs the risk of shifting the emphasis away from a genuinely labour household.

Question

No.
219 to
222

The present arrangements for research and studies on labour problems are confined to the State Labour Departments and the labour Bureau, Simla. Some universities, Central Government departments and some employers Organisations are also known to be carrying on some research work, though in a limited way on labour problems of current interest.

The Bureau, however, agrees with the Labour Bureau's view that despite the above existing facilities for research, the fact remains that the quality of research on labour economics requires improvement and that many gaps exist in the basic knowledge as well as in the development of concepts and definitions and tools of techniques of measurement and evaluation and that there is little coordination among various research agencies.

.....contd.....

The Bureau emphasises the need to initiate research in the State Statistical Bureau and Universities. Encouragement should be given to the efforts to establish regional research Institutes on labour intelligence. These institutions of research cells should draw up, well in advance the topics for research in the field of labour.

The Trade Unions also can set up Research Cells which can be partly financed by the Government of India.

In this context, a reference to the recent developments in the field of industrial relations may be made. 'Gheraos' became common in certain States and statutory condonation for such methods was also sought to be given. Topics of such current interest should be taken up by research institutes and they should high light the consequences of such methods in the field of industrial relations.

Question

No. 220 The Bureau generally agrees with the various suggestions made by the Labour Bureau.

Question

No. 223 The Bureau generally agrees with these views.

Question

No. 224 The Bureau agrees to these proposals.

Question

No. 225 The existing information on labour economics is widely used in a variety of ways such as Government publications, Reviews on Economic situations, Research journals, Social Sciences Institutions, and for enumeration of policies. The chambers of Commerce and Trade Union Organisations are also frequently using the data. As pointed out above, University Research Personnel and researchers from other Organisations have yet to make effective use of the data available with the Government Departments within the limitations of official secrecy.

Question

No. 226 The premiere Journal in the country bringing out current Research on Labour Problems is the monthly labour journal of the Labour Bureau, Simla. Other State Departmental publications are of a routine nature and do not seem to bring out any basic research work. The press is meant for lay public and hence, is also not in a position to publish information on current research on labour problems. Hence there appears to be need for bringing out more journals highlighting current research work on labour.

Question

No. 227 The press has adequately published the militant to activities of trade Unions such 'Gheraos' etc. in the recent 230. times, thus, highlighted the national loss which resulted from such activities.

To be fair to the Trade Unions, it is necessary

that the press should also give due publicity to the external activities of Trade Union Organisations. In this regard, the Trade Unions themselves should take initiative to feed the press with such information.

The Statutory conciliation machinery in the States should also give due publicity to their conciliation activities.

ASSAM

Comments on Labour Bureau's Paper by the
Director, Department of Economics and
Statistics, Government of Assam.

212 :- On improvement of labour Statistics, some steps (training) have already been initiated by the Labour Bureau, Government of India. These steps are yet to make full impact at the State level. Nevertheless if the programme is continued, improvement of Labour Statistics can be achieved in the near future. To expedite the process of improvement however, the Government of India is to initiate and organise the training not only at the all-India level but also at the State and, if possible, District levels, so that correct use of concepts, definition, coverage, etc. can be achieved at the primary reporting stages.

The collection of Statistics Act 1953 is a comprehensive piece of legislation on Industrial Labour Statistics, as under Sec.2(b)(xi) it can include all 'commercial concerns' that have not been enumerated in this section. The subjects on labour covered in sec.3(c) are also more or less exhaustive. But all items included in this Act particularly on the subject relating to labour have not yet been implemented. As a result, implementation of the Collection of Statistics Act has not yet become very helpful in achieving improvement of Labour Statistics. Further this Act has not yet been extended to all commercial concerns. It has upto now covered in some States all big establishments and a sample of small industrial units only.

213 :- It is a fact that the same industrial unit is to submit returns more or less of the same nature to different authorities in the State, such as Chief Inspector of Factories, Chief Inspector of Boilers, Labour Commissioner, Director of Statistics etc. This has increased the work load of the units at the clerical and computers' level. This can be avoided if at the State level all Labour Statistics are collected in one proforma suitably evolved for this purpose and entrusted to one organisation for collection on statutory basis. The relevant information from this consolidated returns should be made available by the collecting authority to the respective departments relating to the labour administration.

214 :- The current All India CPI Nos (Base 1949= 100) reflect by and large the price changes effecting urban working class but not as adequately as desired due to the defects as mentioned by the Labour Bureau in their reply to this question.

The proposed all-India CPI Nos (Base 1960=100) are expected to reflect price changes adequately for the country as a whole. But this proposed index will not be very helpful to State Government for the purpose of wage fixation of the employees falling under their jurisdiction. In Assam,

5 centres (4 plantation and 1 industrial) have been taken. It is not proper to apply index of the plantation centres for wage adjustment of the urban industrial/factory working class. For industrial workers of Assam only one centre has been taken. As price fluctuation in different places within the State has not yet become uniform it will be improper to apply the CPI No. of one industrial centre for all urban workers of the State. It is thus considered that regional series should be compiled and for this purpose, the selection of centre for the family surveys should be so made as to make it possible to compile regional series and if possible industry-cum-State series. For this purpose, centre and State should collaborate not only in family budget surveys, but also in actual compilation of the regional series.

215 : The Department of Economics and Statistics Government of Assam used to collect so far data on industrial disputes on voluntary basis. Recently the Government of Assam has formulated Rules under the collection and statistics Act to collect these data on statutory basis. It is, therefore expected that the collection of data on industrial disputes should be improved in the State of Assam.

216:- Collection of data on work stoppages due to causes other than the industrial disputes is necessary in order to measure the volume of unemployment (involuntary) created by such work stoppages.

217: Social and sociological aspects are interrelated with economic aspects of workers life and influence the living condition and economic position of a labour household to a great extent. Periodical type study on labour households giving particular emphasis in general and technical education, leisure hours, housing condition, ceremonial activities, etc. may be taken up at different types of industries.

218 : The N.S.S. organisation is now annually collecting data on employment, unemployment, consumption expenditure of the rural labour household. In 19th and 20th rounds of N.S.S. Survey (1964-65, 1965-66) data on employment, unemployment including rural labour households were collected, But the tabulation of these data is yet to be completed. In the 18th round of N.S.S. (1963-64) data on consumption expenditure of rural labour households were collected and tabulated. Results of this survey are available for the State of Assam. For proper study of rural labour, at least working condition, housing condition, educational facilities and leisure hours should be periodically surveyed on regional basis, by the Government of India with proper concepts definitions and coverage as pointed out by the Labour Bureau.

219 :- With the increase in complexity and importance of labour problems, research and studies in this field have also assumed added importance. Unfortunately facilities for research and study on this subject are not available commensurately. The position in this respect is not at all bright in the States. So it is considered that the present arrangement for labour research is not adequate at least at the state level.

220 : For improvement of labour research on each region/ State, labour research institutes manned with experienced and qualified persons are to be established.

221 : At present employer/workers' organisation carry little labour research work in this state. Only the I.N.T.U.C. of Assam branch carries some research in order to strengthen the case of the worker in various wage fixation committees and boards.

222 :- Trade Unions as they exist at present should not be entrusted with labour research works. In Assam except I.N.T.U.C. most of them possess inadequate resources to undertake such work.

223 :- Universities should be given grant for specific type of works, and research institutes should be organised under the Labour Ministry.

224: At present persons outside the Government are hardly associating at least in the State of Assam for deeper analysis of labour statistics available with the Government. In this State of course young research workers sometime contact the Government for materials of their research. To encourage these workers it is considered reasonable that scholarship should be offered for research to outsiders in the University or research institutes.

225 : In the state of Assam the price data and C.P.I. Nos are used by various trade unions, Government, and important employers in plantation and factory industries. These data are mainly used for wage fixation. Composition of family expenditure is also needed occasionally by the Government and by employer to assess the amount of consumption goods lifted by the employees from various sources. Other important data used by the Government are those relating to industrial unrest.

BIEAR

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the
Director, Statistics and Evaluation,
Government of India.

Question No. 212:- As regards creation of a central agency for the collection of all types of Labour Statistics it is suggested that the A.S.I. (Labour Statistics) Wing of the N.S.S. be suitably strengthened by transferring, if necessary, the existing statistical staff of the Labour Department. Besides this, if the work load increases further, even a Regional office of the Statistics Authority would be desirable. A de-centralisation of the schemes at present with the Labour Bureau, Simla appears necessary for development of Labour Statistics at Regional Level.

Question No. 214:- The new series of All India Index number (1960=100) is compiled on the basis of data for 50 centres and the aggregate figures are utilised for wage adjustments. Even if the method of aggregation is accepted, it will be desirable to utilise the regional Index nos. for wage adjustment in a particular area rather than utilising the All India aggregated Index number.

In para (c) of the answer it is desirable to include (i) Hatia and (ii) Barauni- the two important industrial complexes of this state in the existing list of industrial centres.

Question No. 215:- Loss in production due to go-slow attitude of the workers would be a useful measure.

Question No. 216:- An estimate of the Loss in production due to non-utilisation of full capacity, and due to demonstrations etc. will also be desirable.

The revised definition of Rural Labour Household has been suggested in the note, but it is feared that the reference period of 12 months is an un-usually long period. Suitable notification is essential otherwise almost all the households in the rural areas will be classified as labourers.

As regards difficulty in the collection of work-time disposition data through N.S.S., it may be suggested that recall lapses can be reduced if the reference period is short, viz, a week or a fortnight.

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GUJARAT

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the
Director, Bureau of Economics and Statistics,
Government of Gujarat.

Q. 212.

In our view, the collection of all the labour statistics under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 can be an answer to the problem. It is however agreed that it will be an onerous task for the Director, National Sample Survey who is the only Statistics Authority under the Act to collect different types of labour statistics through the National Sample Survey. Further the authorities implementing various labour legislations require statistics for the enforcement and the assessment of the working of the Acts. In the circumstances the better course would be to authorise various implementing authorities to collect the required statistics under the Collection of Statistics Act and to leave the Director, National Sample Survey to collect statistics on other aspects of industries. There should be a central agency at the State level to co-ordinate the statistical activities of the authorities implementing the Acts within the frame work of the Collection of Statistics Act and publish consolidated statistics at State level. Likewise there should be a central agency at central level to advise and guide the State agencies and publish consolidated data at the central level.

As regards non-response, inaccuracy of returns, time-lag etc., it is felt that the defects of the nature are largely due to lack of trained and qualified personnel for compilation of statistics in the primary units. In order to overcome this aspect it is suggested that the agencies reporting personnel in labour statistics for which the should be concerned implementing authorities should organise necessary training classes for the training of staff in primary units through their staff who should be trained at Labour Bureau, Sirsa. The provisions relating to punishments should also be implemented in cases of non-response. It will also be necessary to examine other steps for delay in compilation, and publication of data including strengthening of staff for compilation, computation and supervision of the collection and compilation work. Implementation of the other recommendations of the Committee on Improvement of Labour Statistics should also be considered.

Q. 213.

Submission of returns and maintenance of registers are required by various implementing authorities for the

implementation of the provisions of the Acts. It is therefore felt that the implementing authorities should not be left out from the collection of statistics. However for avoidance of maintaining various registers and submission of different filled in returns it is suggested that the central agency at all-India level which should be the Labour Bureau, Simla, should evolve a single register which would comprise two main parts namely (i) General information consisting of the data common to all the implementing authorities and (ii) specific information required by specified authorities.

The forms of returns should be comparable with the proposed register. The reporting agencies may be asked to send returns containing general information to all the implementing authorities including the central agencies at the state level. On the other side the specific information may be sent to the concerned implementing authorities as well as the central agencies at the state level. The state level agencies in turn would send the consolidated data to the agency at all India level. As the work pertains to labours statistics, the agency at state level should be the office of the Commissioner of Labour and the State Bureau of Economics and Statistics may provide technical guidance to the state level agency.

Q. 214.

The new series of all India Working Class consumer Price Index Number on base (1960 = 100) can be expected to reflect the price changes affecting industrial workers including urban working class population more or less realistically and will be appropriate for purposes of wage adjustment at all-India level. In order, however, that the changing pattern of consumer expenditure is properly reflected in the budget, family budget enquiries should be taken up at intervals of every five years or in the alternative, consumer expenditure schedule in the N.S.S. canvassed to adequate number of industrial labour households by special separate expansion of the sample.

As regards compilation of regional indices, it is felt that in view of the back ground given by the Labour Bureau, it would not be worthwhile at present to prepare regional indices. However while revising the new series which are based on the consumption pattern obtaining in 1958-59, the feasibility of selecting more centres in a broad-based manner so as to facilitate the operation of regional and All India indices may be examined.

Q. 215.

The present available statistics regarding work stoppages fairly reflect the position as regards industrial unrest in the states where collection is adequate.

In order to overcome drawbacks in other states, there is need to collect these statistics statutorily under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 in all the States. Statistics relating to certain other forms of expression of grievancies like gherao, go-slow, hunger-strike etc., should also be brought under the purview of the Act.

Q. 216.

Work stoppages due to reasons other than industrial disputes arise out of several reasons like shortage of power (coal, electricity etc.) shortage of raw materials, natural calamities and so on. Collection of data by causes in respect of such work stoppages under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 should also be considered.

Q. 218.

I. Analysis of N.S.S. Data on rural labourers.

A) Consumer Expenditure:

The consumer expenditure schedule, regularly canvassed by the N.S.S. has been perfected to a great extent and it should not be too difficult to organise and suitably tabulate the data to yield results for rural labour households particularly. The present sample size may be inadequate for precise estimates at all India level, and is totally inadequate for generating regional estimates. There is a case for building up regional level estimates as there is likely to be inter-regional variations to a significant extent in the different parts of the country and for this purpose, a supplementary sample could be canvassed at periodic intervals in the N.S.S. rounds. Concepts and definition of "rural labour" can definitely be revised appropriately if need be, to generate meaningful results.

B) Data on Employment etc.

The data collected by the N.S.S. so far on this subject have not yielded very useful results

chiefly because of the ramifications of the problem itself. It is more a question of extent of under-employment both visible and disguised. Therefore there is urgent need for conducting intensive type studies in the first instance.

II. Need for other statistical data.

Apart from the intensive type studies on under-employment suggested above, there is need for an operational programme to secure optimum utilisation of the rural labour potential keeping in view the needs of the sub-sectors of agricultural activity as well as the differentials in manpower requirements for cultivation of different crops. Therefore statistics of such criteria will first have to be evolved by detailed examination of available data.

Q. 219.

At present the arrangements for research and studies relating to the studies of this nature are inadequate to meet the requirements for policy makers. In this respect, the National Labour Research Institute requires to be developed as early as possible. The institute can take up co-ordination of activities of different agencies in field on a priority basis.

Q. 220.

The suggestions given by the Labour Bureau cover most of the aspects in the matter and merit consideration.

Q. 223.

The university output should generally meet the quantitative and qualitative needs of the nation. Over and above this, the expert knowledge of teachers in the universities should be utilised to the maximum possible extent by giving adequate grants on the specific projects assigned through the National Labour Research Institute in consultation with appropriate state authorities.

Q. 224.

Arrangements for associating the research personnel outside Government for a deeper analysis of data available with Central and State Governments require to be expanded and strengthened. It is therefore suggested that a specific grant-in-aid should be allotted

to those institutions/persons which agree to undertake studies requiring deeper analysis of the data available with the central and State Governments. There should be a group of experts from Government and other research institutions for studying and suggesting research projects.

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2. 212

2. 220

2. 223

2. 224

HARYANA

Comments on Labour Bureau's Paper
by the Economic and Statistical
Adviser to the Government of Haryana.

Question No.212

Since most of the labour statistics in India are a bye-product of labour legislation enacted at the national level, the collection of these statistics under another Central Act, viz., 'The Collection of Statistics Act, 1953' as recommended by the Labour Bureau may not serve any useful purpose. The drawbacks in labour statistics like the lack of uniformity in the concepts, coverage, frequency of collection, time-lag in publication and non-response from primary units, etc. can be effectively tackled by entrusting the collection of labour statistics to one Central agency like the agency of Director of Labour Bureau, Government of India. He should also be made responsible for evolving out common concepts and for ensuring uniformity in the scope and coverage of these statistics and their timely publication. At the States' level, the work of compilation of these statistics should be handled by the statistical sections in the offices of the Labour Commissioners. The Labour Commissioners will also act as the Liaison Officers between the Central and States Governments in the work of collection of labour statistics. The existing arrangement, more or less, conforms to the arrangement suggested above. There seems, however, a need to concentrate further on the following:

- i) The staff, both at the Central and States' level, should be adequate enough to deal with the workload involved.
- ii) The staff should be properly trained. Apart from the training of the staff at the Central and States' level, steps should also be taken by the Labour Departments in collaboration with the Labour Bureau to train the staff dealing with labour statistics in important industrial establishments at the important industrial towns of the country.

Question No.213

There seems, no doubt, a good deal of duplication and overlapping of functions of different officials concerned with the implementation of various Acts. For example, under the Shops Act, Labour Inspectors/Wage Inspectors/Factory Inspectors and Shop Inspectors are all required to conduct inspections and submit various returns. Obviously, this is very much annoying for the shop keepers since it causes them un-necessary inconvenience. There is, therefore, an urgent need to study all the forms and returns prescribed under various Act so that duplication could be avoided and only those essential items are retained which are put to some actual use for analysis.

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Question No.214

(a) The representativeness of any Consumer Price Index Number ultimately depends on the extent to which it can measure the change in price actually paid by the particular category of consumers. It, inter alia, presupposes (i) a clear cut and precise definition of the particular category of consumers, (ii) basket of goods and services being generally consumed by that particular category of consumers, and (iii) an accurate evaluation of those goods and services. Generally speaking, the more compact the area, the more concentration of a particular category of consumers and the more accurate evaluation of goods and services, the more representative will be the index number. In the case of the all-India Working Class Consumer Price Index Number with base 1960 compiled on the basis of the index series of 50 centres, can give, only roughly, the price-change experienced by the industrial workers, as the exact magnitude of this price-change will be some what hypothetical in the sense that such a price-change will not strictly relate to the working population at any of the centres. However, this index will still be useful for purposes of policy formulation at all-India level, keeping in view the above limitations.

We do not agree with the Labour Bureau that it will be appropriate to use the all-India Price Index Number for the purpose of wage adjustments in industries of all-India nature. We are of the opinion that as far as the wage adjustment is concerned, this should be governed by index number of the particular centre. For instance, the ordnance factories, located in the various parts of the country, quite remote from one another, can hardly be governed by all-India Index Series for the purpose of wage adjustment as the local conditions vary significantly from centre to centre.

(b) As far as the desirability of compiling the index numbers on regional basis for the purpose of wage fixation is concerned, here again it seems that the centre-wise indices will be more realistic than the regional indices.

(c) We endorse the views of the Labour Bureau given in para. 'C' at page 3 of the note.

Question No.215

We agree with the Labour Bureau that the data presently collected and compiled in respect of work stoppages (strikes and layouts) is fairly adequate for measuring industrial unrest in the country.

Question No.216

We also agree with the Labour Bureau that statistics relating to closures due to reasons other than industrial disputes, should also be collected, as power failures, retrenchment and lay off, acute absenteeism, law and order situation, and sympathy strikes, etc. also seem to play a significant role in work stoppages.

Question No.218

We do not agree with the Labour Bureau that the data collected by the National Sample Survey on employment, unemployment, consumption expenditure, etc. in respect of rural population can easily provide data for rural labour for each State/Region. The reason for this being inadequacy of the size of the sample and the non-availability of any clear cut definition of the term 'rural labour'. For obtaining any worthwhile estimates for rural labour alone, we have to canvass data on a much larger sample size with a clear cut definition of the term 'rural labour'.

Operational needs:

Apart from the data on employment, un-employment and consumption expenditure, there is a need to collect the data on wage rates, earnings, hours of work and other conditions of work, etc.

Question No.219 & 220:

We agree with the views express by the Labour Bureau.

Question No.223:

We feel that labour research in Universities and research organisations can be promoted by (i) granting fellowships, (ii) by organising seminars on labour problems; and (iii) by entrusting specific labour projects to the Universities or research institutions.

Grants-in-aid should also be provided to the Universities and other research organisations as and when necessary by the Central and State Governments.

Question No.224

We endorse the views of the Labour Bureau.

Jammu and Kashmir

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the Director
of Economics and Statistics, Government of Jammu & Kashmir

In the note prepared by the Labour Bureau, Simla it has been suggested that collection of all sorts of labour statistics should be entrusted to a single agency like Statistical Bureau. It is however felt that it would be desirable if the Labour Commissioner continues to do the work which he is doing at present. For this purpose there should be well equipped Statistical Cell in the Office of the Labour Commissioner. Assigning of this work to the Bureau of Economics and Statistics is likely to delay collection of data as it may not bring forth adequate cooperation from the officers of the Labour Department.

It would be desirable to compile productivity and wage indices for different sectors of the economy. This is being suggested bearing in mind the general impression of the masses that wages have over taken the productivity during the last a few years.

The Labour Bureau is publishing data with much less time lag as compared to some other agencies. Nevertheless attempts are to be made to reduce time lag further at least in respect of price indices. For instance the Indian Labour Journal containing consumer price index for industrial workers for the period ending December, 1967 has become available in March, 1968. The Labour Bureau may therefore like to examine as to whether reduce the time lag, it would be desirable to issue statistical tables separately in case the compilation of Labour Journal takes time.

All sorts of consumer price indices, e.g. for working class and middle income group should be compiled and published by the Labour Bureau.

(Sd.) J.D. Keser

Director

Evaluation & Statistics

KERALA

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the Director,
Bureau of Economics & Statistics, Kerala

QUESTION NO. 212

Most of the labour statistics are by product of labour legislation. The implementing authorities are charged with the collection of these statistics. The implementing authorities are mainly concerned with the implementation side, and are more interested in statistics required to assess the stage of implementation of various provisions of the labour enactments in the individual units. Naturally they may not pay much attention to the aspects of uniformity in concepts, coverage and frequency of collection.

As regards nonresponse, inaccuracy of returns, time lag etc. I may point out as follows:-

Nonresponse:-

Majority of the factories are small units where the proprietor looks after the managerial and ministerial side completely, and there will be no person to assist him in these branches. Consequently, no proper accounts will be maintained, especially in service industries where work is done for charges. To remedy this defect, there should be continuous persuasion to keep proper accounts. Also there should be a machinery to watch the flow of returns and pursue the matter. If there is persistent efforts to obtain the returns, the amount of nonresponse will be negligible.

Inaccuracy:-

Inaccuracy can be minimised by giving proper training to the primary reporting agencies such as clerks in factories units. Also at present the figures furnished by the units are taken as correct and there is no attempt to cross-check the data with the records maintained in the factories. There should be some arrangement to verify at least a small sample of the returns every year. The persons charged with this work can give proper instruction in filling up the returns to the concerned persons in the primary units when he visits the units.

Time lag:-

This is mainly due to inaccuracy in the returns, delay in the submission of the returns and inadequacy of compiling staff.

The answer to these problems lies in the setting up of a full fledged statistical wing which may be located in the office(s) of the Implementing Authority. The technical control of this unit may rest with the State Statistical Bureau who will lend the necessary staff also. When the collection is thus centralised duplication of the returns can be minimised and also uniformity in concepts can be ensured.

The implementation of the Collection of Statistics Act 1953 is not an answer to this problem. The Statistics Authority under the collection of Statistics Act 1953 is the Director, N.S.S. and he is not connected with the implementation of the various labour Acts. So the Implementing Authorities in the States will have to depend on the N.S.S. for statistics they require or will have to collect the data independently. For efficient day-to-day administration the latter course will have to be adopted, resulting in an unjustifiable multiplications of the returns. What is desirable is a Central Research Unit to advise the different States in regard to concepts etc., and not a central unit such as the N.S.S. for collection of returns.

QUESTION No. 213:-

It is felt that the collection of all types of labour statistics may be entrusted to one central agency at the State level such as Bureau of Economics and Statistics and there should be a full fledged wing of the Bureau for collection of labour statistics working under the administrative control of other state authorities such as Chief Inspectors of Factories, Labour Commissioner etc. A parallel organisation may be created at the Centre for research and for the collection and publication of the labour statistics from the different states. Also there should be periodical conferences of the Heads of the Labour Statistics Wing's in the different states. This would undoubtedly help to ensure uniformity in concepts and practices adopted in the different states.

QUESTION NO. 215:-

The details on industrial disputes now being collected are adequate. It is proposed to make the collection of these data statutory. With proper strengthening of the machinery for the collection, many of the defects now found in the data could be rectified.

QUESTION NO. 216:-

Statistics relating to obsures due to reasons other than industrial disputes may also be collected. It is essential to collect the data for closures due to power cuts etc.

QUESTION NO. 218:-

It is felt that the sample size of the N.S.S. is not large enough to measure the changes from year to year at the state level. So the annual data may not yield the required materials especially so, when the sampling error is large.

MADHYA PRADESH

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by
the Director of Economics and
Statistics, Madhya Pradesh.

Question No. 212. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Madhya Pradesh, begs to differ from the views expressed by the Labour Bureau in reply to this question included in Section X of the Questionnaire issued by the National Commission on Labour. The utility of Labour Statistics would lie in their regular and timely availability at smaller intervals than at present for immediate analysis of the maladies which need prompt attention. This purpose cannot be served by prescribing a single big proforma under the collection of Statistics Act 1953 for submission once or twice a year to a Central authority.

There are certain types of labour data which ought to be available with greater frequency and promptness whereas the collection of some data with lesser frequency would not make much difference. What is actually required is a certain degree of compulsion for the regular and timely submission of the returns to the authority/authorities prescribed under different legislations. It can perhaps be done by inserting a clause in all labour laws making non-submission of correct returns in time a penal offence. The penalty should not be cancellation of registration or imposition of a very nominal fine but something more deterrent such as a term in jail or heavy fines. It ought to be a part of the essential duties of those (field staff of the offices of Labour Commissioner, Chief Inspector of Factories etc.) administering or enforcing various labour laws to see that the cases of non-submission of returns prescribed under different Acts are immediately brought to the notice of the authority which might be made responsible for the collection, compilation, processing and publication of the data. Such a step would do away, to a considerable extent, with non-response, in-correctness of information, delays in submission of returns etc.

Whatever action might be taken to improve the collection of labour statistics, it ought to be ensured that sufficient authority vests in the Labour Departments and State Statistical Bureaus of the State Governments to deal with recalcitrants effectively. Investing all powers in a Central authority (like the Chief Director, National Sample Survey, under the Collection of Statistics Act) does not help the State Governments in any way. It only makes their task more difficult and less honourable.

The Labour Bureau, Government of India, can, however, continue to be the coordinating and the

Central Labour Statistics compiling authority as at present.

Question No. 213.

The feeling expressed in the question might be true to a certain extent especially when the data furnished are so inaccurate, inconsistent and usually delayed as to be of any utility. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics Madhya Pradesh is of the opinion that the powers of collection, compilation, processing and publication of all types of labour statistics should be the duty of the State Statistical Bureaus but the State Statistical Bureau should be adequately assisted in the job of collection of data with the minimum time lag by the agency responsible for the enforcement or implementation of different labour laws. If the amendment in different labour laws suggested in answer to Question No. 212 above is carried out, the problem would get automatically solved to a great extent. It ought, however, to be the duty of the State Statistical Bureau itself to check that the returns have been received from all units concerned within the prescribed time limit and to ensure that all data duly compiled are made available to those connected with the implementation of the different labour laws within the shortest possible time. It can be possible if carbon copies of the returns are sent simultaneously to the Chief Inspector of Factories or the Labour Commissioner etc. and to the State Statistical Bureau by the units concerned.

Question No. 214.

This Directorate agrees to a considerable extent with the views expressed by the Labour Bureau in their reply to this Question, but the need for preparing consumer Price Index Numbers for working Classes and Middle Classes for a larger number of centres than at present in each State is overwhelming.

Question No. 215.

The data presently collected and compiled in respect of work-stoppages are inadequate for an accurate assessment of the causes of industrial unrest. The precise nature of disputes is very often not reflected by the type of data collected and published. It would perhaps be helpful if detailed information in respect of all disputes resulting in work stoppages is collected in the form attached herewith as Appendix I and efforts are made in the direction suggested in reply to Question No. 212 above to ensure submission of correct, regular and timely returns on the subject. Since industrial peace is vital to all labour legislation, and machinery devised to enforce them, the data pertaining to industrial disputes should be available with more promptitude and regularity than at present.

Question No. 216.

The views expressed by the Labour Bureau are consistent with the views of this Directorate.

Question No. 217.

It is an accepted principle of Industrial Psychology that the Worker's attitude to work and his reaction to the work situation is no less governed by the conditions of his living than the conditions of work at the plant level. It is, therefore, necessary that studies on the social and sociological aspects of the workers are taken up on a continuing basis by the State Statistical Bureaus, Labour Institutes, Organisation of employers and employees, enlightened employers, Universities etc. These studies would bring out, for example important clues to the factors which distract a worker from his work, cultivate criminal instincts in many of them and often compel many of them to lead a more or less immoral and diseased life much to the detriment of their efficiency at the plant level. Full scale sociological studies of the workers inside and outside the factory need be taken up atleast in such units which have had a history of industrial unrest.

Question No. 218.

The comments of the Labour Bureau are all right.

Question No. 219.

The comments of the Labour Bureau are all right. There is, however, a suggestion that the Labour Institutes or other Organisations which are engaged in research and studies in the field of labour ought not to indulge in theoretical acrobatics only but should arrange for such studies to be undertaken by only those who have had enough first-hand experience of industrial life and been in close touch with the workers, their leaders and managements.

The question of giving some financial assistance by the Centre to the institutions - Government, quasi-Government or private - qualified to take up well-meaning studies also needs to be considered.

Question No. 220.

The views of this Directorate on the questions are consistent with those expressed by the Labour Bureau.

The questions of giving financial assistance to serious researchers, bringing about closer contacts between those concerned with enforcement of labour laws and the research workers, offering facilities to researchers to observe things at close quarters within the factory (by employers) and

outside (by trade unions and employers wherever feasible), holding annual conferences on Labour Research to which all institutions and research workers engaged in labour research may be invited, bringing out a monthly or quarterly journal giving, in brief, an idea of the studies being taken up or results of the studies taken up by different agencies can perhaps be considered for making further improvements in the field of labour research.

Question No. 221.

Not much can be said by this Directorate on this issue but the work being published is obviously not much or of much significance.

Question No. 222.

The trade unions owe allegiance to some ideology and look at things from that angle. The studies likely to be taken up by the Trade Unions can, thus, be helpful only if they are unbiassed and impartial and do not aim at projecting their point of view. The sociological and other aspects of the worker's lives can perhaps be studied with greater accuracy by the Trade Unions than by outsiders (as the workers would be more frank with the trade union workers/employees) and they can be encouraged to take up such studies.

Question No. 223.

The views of the Labour Bureau are all right, our comments on the replies to question Nos. 219 and 220 may also please be seen.

Question No. 224.

Please see our comments on question No. 223.

Question No. 225.

The existing information on labour matters is being used by :

- (1) Governmental agencies concerned with policy making, enforcement of labour laws, and publication of data;
- (2) Individual researchers and research organisations;
- (3) Employers' and Employees' organisations to strengthen or back their cases/ demands wherever feasible.

Much of the utility of the data would depend on its comprehensiveness and reliability. Unfortunately, the Labour Statistics in India are neither comprehensive nor very reliable. The time-lag in their publication is also considerable

which further reduces their utility.

Question No. 226.

The present arrangements are not very satisfactory. Our comments on Question No. 220 may please be seen.

Question No. 227.

Through Press Conferences, Press releases, posters and hand bills and their own publications/journals. Sometimes the use of microphones to broadcast their views to the public at the height of tension is also made. The public in general is apathetic till the inconveniences caused by the attitude of employers or employees in cases of disputes pinch them hard. They then take sides even on the basis of very flimsy information.

Question No. 228.

Yes it is very true because it is disputes which largely make news not peace. But something ought to be done by giving some sort of award to such trade unions as help in maintaining peaceful relations during a year and to such industrial units as maintain peaceful industrial relations through a year to encourage the trade unions and employers. Such awards should be given wide publicity for boosting up morale.

Question No. 229.

If the Press could afford to be impartial and if it reported things after getting properly informed of the issues involved, their criticism would be more healthy and constructive. Where a particular Press was controlled by some vested interests it can only be expected to twist facts to suit its needs. Improvement is, thus, no doubt needed but it can perhaps be achieved by appealing to the Press to be impartial and objective in reporting or by censoring the news of disputes, threatened or real.

Question No. 230.

Its difficult for this Directorate to assess without undertaking special studies on the subject.

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A P P E N D I X - I

PROFORMA IN WHICH INFORMATION REGARDING INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES MAY BE COLLECTED FROM DIFFERENT UNITS, STATES AND EVEN FOR DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES:

	No. of Disputes	No. of workers involved	No. of mandays lost	Value of loss in produc- tion	Wages lost by workers
	1	2	3	4	6
I. <u>Wages and Allowances</u>					
(a) Demand for an increase in wages.					
(b) Protest against wage reduction.					
(c) Protest against delay in payment of wages.					
(d) Demand for a Dearness Allowance/ or Any Other Allowance.					
(e) Demand for an increase in Dearness Allowance/ or other allowance.					
(f) Protest against reduction in Dearness Allowance/ or other allowance.					
(g) Others.					
<hr/> Total Disputes for wages and allowances:					
II. <u>Bonus</u>					
(a) Demand for a Bonus.					
(b) Demand for a Higher rate of Bonus.					
(c) Demand for early payment of Bonus.					
(d) Protest against delay in payment of Bonus.					
(e) Demand for payment of Bonus in a lump sum.					
(f) Other reasons.					
<hr/> TOTAL : Disputes for bonus:					

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

III. Personnel.

- (a) Protests against Transfer.
- (b) Protests against maltreatment.
- (c) Protests against alleged partiality in promotion etc.
- (d) Protests against Retrenchment.
- (e) Protests against Suspension.
- (f) Protests against Dismissal :
 - (i) for Inefficiency
 - (ii) for Undesirable Activities
 - (iii) for Indiscipline
 - (iv) for any other reason
- (g) Other reasons.

TOTAL:-IV. Leave, Hours and Conditions of Work

- (a) Demand for a Holiday
- (b) Refusal of leave
- (c) Protest against Working conditions.
- (d) Protest against higher workload
- (e) Demand for a Reduction in the hours of work.
- (f) Protest against Rationalisation.
- (g) Other reasons.

TOTAL:V. Miscellaneous

- (a) Protest against non-recognition of Trade Unions.
- (b) Sympathetic strikes.
- (c) For observance of some day e.g. May day.
- (d) For Political reasons.
- (e) Others.

TOTAL :-GRAND TOTAL:

Comments on Labour Bureau's questionnaire by the
Director of Statistics, Govt. of India.

Annexure

Question No.212

Comments: The provisions contained in Section 3 of the collection of Statistics Act, 1953 are adequate to collect all labour statistics in respect of commercial concerns, industrial concerns and factories and in particular any of the matters specified under items (i) to (xiii) of Section 3(c) of the above Act. However the implementation of the provisions is confined to the collection of statistics under the collection of statistics (Central) Rules, 1958, on limited number of items such as man days worked, absenteeism, labour turnover, manhours worked, earnings and social security benefits, in so far as they relate to labour employed in the factories covered under the Rules. Again there is considerable time lag in the availability of even the data on limited items as the collection is done on an annual basis. It would facilitate availability of timely and reliable data on all aspects of labour, if the collection of statistics be made on a Quarterly basis and on a broader coverage basis. The work of collection of statistics if entrusted to the State Statistical Bureau, the time lag, non response, inaccuracy etc., could be minimised.

Question No.213:

Comments: I am in full agreement with the views of the Director of Labour Bureau.

Question No.214:

Comments: I generally agree with the views of the Director of Labour Bureau in regard to the compilation of Consumer Price Index Numbers. But in regard to the proposal to publish the new series of all India index numbers with 1960 as base it may be necessary to obtain the concurrence of the State Government before they are published and the responsibility for compiling and maintaining the index numbers for the four centres in this State should vest with the State Government.

Questions 215 and 216:

Comments: The Ministry of Labour, Government of India have framed Model Rules for collection of statistics on work stoppages resulting from industrial disputes and due to causes other than industrial disputes. The rules, when finalised and implemented would meet the requirements.

Question 217:

Comments: Besides implementing the relevant provisions contained in Section 3(c) of the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 for collection of data on social and sociological aspects of labour, it would be useful to supplement the statistics collected by ad-hoc studies at State level on specific problems on sociological aspects of labour.

Question No.218:

Comments: Data on consumer expenditure population, births, deaths, etc., for rural areas are collected by the National Sample Survey. There is no provision in the consumer expenditure schedule to classify the households as labour households and others. Further collection of data on rural employment and unemployment is not done in each round. At the National Sample Survey Programme Advisory Committee Meeting held in New Delhi on 28th and 29th February, 1968, it was proposed that a pilot study be conducted to examine the concepts and definitions relating to Labour force in rural areas in the 23rd round. If this item is included in the National Sample Survey on a regular basis, it may be possible to compile data on rural employment and unemployment every year. As regards consumption pattern of rural labour households, it would be possible to frame estimates on consumer expenditure if classificatory code such as R.L. (Rural Labour Household) and non R.L. (Non Rural Labour Household)

is recorded in the schedule. 2 to 3 households are covered for schedule 16 for each village and only a few can be classified under R.L. Households. For reliable estimates, however, State Sample data alone may not be reliable unless these are pooled with the Central Sample Data.

Question 219 to 230: No comments.

sk 11668

(Sd.) C.D. Nandugopal
11.6.68

Director, Statistics.

MAHARASHTRA

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the
Director, Bureau of Economics & Statistics,
Government of Maharashtra.

Question No. 212.

It is a fact that most of the labour statistics that is now available are the bye-product of administration. The tabulated information on labour and industry are published in the administrative reports for the working of the main legislative Acts i.e. the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1922, the Factories Act 1948, Payment of Wages Act, 1936, State Maternity Benefit Act, etc. It is also an accepted fact that these statistics suffer from certain limitations. The important ones are described below:-

After looking to the returns that are dealt by this office, I feel that the major limitations arise from the inaccuracies of the returns filed by the Primary Units. As far as the uniformity of the concepts, coverage, and frequency of collections and the time lag in the publications, I am of the view that the deficiencies are somewhat exaggerated. For example, the different concepts that are used under these returns are fairly and precisely defined by the Labour Bureau, Government of India, and are now given in a consolidated form in the training Manual on labour statistics prepared by the Labour Bureau, Simla. As regards the coverage and non-response, it is noticed that during past four years the coverage of the Form 27 and Form IV varied between 80 to 86 per cent and 71 to 80 per cent respectively of the corresponding numbers of working factories. The latest available publications i.e. the 'Indian Labour Year Book' and the 'Indian Labour Statistics' furnish data for 1964 and this cannot be said to be unduly big time lag taking into consideration the large number of primary units from which data are collected and the decentralised system of data collection. Information is presently collected by the states and is supplied to Labour Bureau, Simla, which publishes the All India figures. The question of improvement of labour statistics was referred to a Committee appointed for it in 1958 by Ministry of Labour and Employment which has examined these problems in fair details and made certain recommendations. According to that Committee one of the main reasons why defects and delays occur in the submission of the returns is that the staff in the primary units charged with

the responsibility for maintaining and furnishing statistics is not of the requisite calibre and is unable to handle the work efficiently. This of course does not apply to the bigger establishments where qualified staff is employed. It has therefore suggested "to train certain number of trainees among the staff of the Chief Inspector of Factories and other authorities in the state who should be sent out to the various places for holding brief training courses for the staff of the primary units". It is understood that such a training course is already initiated by the Labour Bureau, Sirsa, and presently the noninces of the State Department are trained.

As far as this office experience goes, it is seen that the real problem in improving the quality of the labour statistics is to increase the accuracy and consistency in the returns filed by the primary units. Training the staff of the Labour Department which in turn is expected to train the personnel in the primary reporting units is necessarily a long term programme which may yield good results provided the number of such trainees is adequate and the co-operation from the primary units is also encouraging. It is, therefore, felt that in addition to this training programme some more steps should be taken by the collecting authorities at their level to improve the quality of the labour data. This can be done within the scope of the present Acts under which the information is collected and it is not necessary to take recourse to the collection of Statistics Act, 1953. My suggestions in this respect are as follows:-

In a state like Maharashtra where the number of primary units is very large i.e. about 10,000, training of the personnel from the primary unit will be a colossal job and will involve considerable time. Moreover, quite a large number of small units have only part-time Accountants and Clerks whose response to the scheme may not be upto expectations. What perhaps will help effectively, will be the strengthening of the statistical staff in the C.I.F.'s office which should be entrusted to undertake thorough and exhaustive scrutiny of the returns as well as to ensure full response and coverage from the reporting units. What is presently experienced is that the returns that are received are not thoroughly scrutinised or checked nor has it been the practice of pointing out the conceptual as well as compilation mistakes that are usually found in the returns. Returns of the factory should be thoroughly checked and the discrepancies and inaccuracies should be communicated to the primary units.

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The inspecting staff of the C.I.F. office, which it is understood covers about 90 per cent of primary units every year, should make it a point to check these returns and explain the points during their visits and insist upon the primary units to send the reconciled returns in time. If the primary units once gather the impression that the returns filed by them are subject to close scrutiny and are referred back and that the submission of such reconciled data is followed up vigorously, there will be considerable improvement in the quality of the information. The statutory aspect of the submission of such data as per the rules and definitions should also be emphasised during such inspection by the inspectorial staff. Thus, what can be done immediately is to start a feed back process by which the quality or rather the lack of it is brought to the notice of the factory concerned so that an improvement next year can be expected in its return. Collecting statistics as a by-product of the administration has many advantages and utilities. The obvious advantage being that the cost of the collection is the minimum and the information flows automatically with administrative measures taken by the Department. Discontinuing of these returns and collecting statistics under the collection of statistical Act, 1953 will entail huge costs as it will perhaps require an independent statistical organisation or wing to conduct the surveys and collect the data. Moreover some such information on the Labour Turnover, Absenteeism, Hours of work, and Earnings and Housing construction by employers for workers is already collected through A.S.I. under the collection of statistics Act, 1953. Only enquiries on certain important aspects of the labour conditions which are not adequately covered under the present administrative returns should be collected under the collection of statistics Act, 1953. It is not clear from the terms of reference of the Commission whether other two categories of workers viz. workers in the smaller units of the unorganised industries sector and those that are employed in the various commercial establishments usually covered under the Shops and Establishments Acts are also covered under the scope of the present enquiry.

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What has been stated above pertains mostly to the industrial workers covered under the different industrial legislations in the organised factory sector. Very little is known about the employment or the working conditions of the workers in the smaller establishments in the non-factory sectors. As these units do not come under the purview of any Act and are spread and diffused widely, information on working and other conditions can only be collected through periodical sample surveys. Some arrangements for conducting such periodical surveys for this sector of the labour force is perhaps necessary.

Similarly a significant proportion of working force is employed in the commercial establishments generally covered under the Shops and Establishments Act. The position of statistics in this respect is also far from satisfactory. The coverage as well as the implementation of the Act is neither complete nor uniform. Very little is known about the earnings and other conditions of the persons employed in the various shops and establishments. Under this Act, in this state some forms and registers are prescribed to be maintained by the employers in which details regarding the employment, hours of work, leave etc. are covered. But no information is tabulated in meaningful and consolidated forms. No idea about the coverage, accuracy or consistency of the data is available. Some sort of follow up programme is necessary. Since the coverage of the Acts is limited to certain urban areas only, to have a complete picture a sample survey may be necessary. Since the response of the trading and commercial community cannot be taken for granted recourse to collection of statistics Act, 1953 may also be necessary in this respect.

Question No. 213.

Since this office is not concerned with the administration of the various Labour Laws, it is not in

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a position to say much about it. But the problem of duplication and multiplicity of the returns that the primary units are required to file and maintain can be tackled by rationalising the forms and registers that are maintained by them. These should be so framed as to contain in precise manner all the necessary data that is required by different agencies. Moreover, better and effective coordination of all such agencies collecting the information can also be attempted to reduce the duplication.

Question No. 214.

I agree with the views that the interim series of All India Consumer Price Index Number on the base 1949=100 does not properly reflect the price changes affecting working classes and therefore needs a revision.

I think that the main purpose of such an All India series is to reflect the changes in the prices of commodities entering the consumption pattern of the urban working classes at the All India level. But since the Consumer Prices in different centres tend necessarily to have a heavy local bias, its validity for wage adjustments even for the so-called industries at the national level is very much doubted. It is also very difficult to define the industries as 'the national-level industries'. I, therefore, feel that even if the present series is improved and revised on technically more sound basis, (on technical grounds) its use for wage adjustments cannot be said to be valid.

From the above approach it also follows that technically there cannot be any serious objection for compilation of the regional indices say, one index for a state to serve as an indicator to reflect the changes in the urban working class consumer prices in a particular state. The basis for the weights as suggested in the Labour Bureau's note is quite sound and is acceptable.

Question 215 and 216:

I broadly agree with the views expressed by the Labour Bureau.

Question No. 217.

I agree that along with the economic aspects of workers life statistical information on social and

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sociological aspects should also be collected for better comprehension of labour problems. For this particular aspect I would suggest that statistics regarding the housing and sanitation, availability of schooling facility, transport from and to the place of residence and work etc. may also be collected. Presently some information on housing construction by the employers for their workers is being collected under the A.S.I. Now what is emphasised is that the housing conditions in general of the working class in different industries in different places may also be studied to throw light on their present conditions.

Question No. 218.

Under National Sample Survey, statistical data on household consumption are collected regularly every year in respect of rural population. Information on employment and un-employment in the rural sector is, however, not collected annually, as there are conceptual as well as operational difficulties in evaluating the extent of rural unemployment. As far as the household expenditure is concerned it will be feasible to make the data separately available for the rural labour for each region or the state provided the sample size and consequently the financial provision for collection is increased. It is also felt that the problems of agricultural labour are necessarily different in nature from that of the industrial workers in the urban areas. Relevant information on the agricultural labour may be collected periodically say, once in five years by special enquiries, since it will be difficult to have any yearly enquiry sensitive enough to bring out changes in the various characteristics so dispersed and heterogeneous stratum as that of rural labour. Collection of year to year information for the various aspects of wage rates except perhaps an index of the rural labour may not be necessary.

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M Y S O R E

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the Director,
Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of
Mysore.

Question No. 212:

The Labour Statistics which follow by the enforcement of Labour Legislations will have to be necessarily collected as per the provisions of the different Acts. The defects in the present Labour Statistics arising out of lack of uniformity in the concepts, coverage, frequency etc., could be avoided, if all the Labour Legislations, where collection of Statistics are involved, are scrutinized by the Central Statistical Organisation at the Centre and the State Statistical Bureaus in the States. The Statistics which have to be collected on a simple basis may be collected by one single agency under the collection of Statistics Act - 1953.

Question No. 213 :

As the officers entrusted with the administration of Labour Laws, have to maintain Registers for watching the adherence of the provisions made in the Law, it is essential that these data are recorded by the administrative officials. This cannot be considered as an unproductive work, but a basic record of the implementation of the labour laws. However, there should be a separate section to cull out these data from these records and prepare such other derived tables with the help of the Statistical Assistants. If another Central Agency is entrusted merely with the collection of the statistics, the data collection would not proceed smoothly as the officers in charge of collecting statistics will have no hold on the informants. If any administrative action has to be taken, the process of approaching the same administrative officials will have to be followed. This would mean additional delay.

Question No. 214 :

It is felt that the Consumer Price Index numbers should be compiled for different regions in India. It would be inappropriate to compile one all-India figures, though the All-India Price Index Numbers reflect the price changes affecting the urban working class, on the whole, it is very difficult to reconcile the figures in respect of the regions within the country. This would bear the analogy of finding the average depth of the river while trying to cross the river. The indices will have to be constructed separately for the regions so as to reflect the price changes affecting urban working class. It may not be necessary to have an All India Index, which would not be very useful for any purpose except for that of a statistical purpose.

Question No. 215:

The collection of statistics of Industrial Disputes should in our view be a part of the duties of the officers enforcing the Industrial and Labour Disputes Act. It has been pointed out that the collection of Statistics in some States have some drawbacks due to lack of Statutory power etc. The remedy lies in providing the statutory powers and responsibility of getting the returns should be with the Industrial and Labour Dispute officers so that the real utility of the data collected could be more appreciated by them than for the mere sake of collecting these statistics.

Question No. 216 :

The Statistics relating to closure of the factories due to the reasons other than industrial disputes may also be collected by the Chief Inspector of Boilers and Factories.

Question No. 217 :

It is felt not necessary that the data on the social and sociological aspects of the workers supplied has to be collected on a regular basis, as the case studies by socialologists or Research workers could undertake themselves at different periods of time. To have understanding of the Labour problems, it might be necessary for the different Labour Unions to have a unit to deal with the sociological and social aspects of the labour problems.

Question No. 218 :

The data thrown out by the National Sample Survey would be available separately for rural labour for each state. The data on the mobility of human labour will have to be assessed for framing a operational programme.

Question No. 219 : No comments.

Question No: 220 :

The investigation of labour problems will have to be statistically designed and the data collected, interpreted properly so that the collections drawn from the samples, which would hold good for the whole population as such.

Question No: 221 : No comments.

Question No: 222 : No comments.

Question No: 223 . : No comments.

Question No: 224 : No comments.

Question No: 225 :

These Labour Statistics are reproduced in the annual State Statistical Abstracts and the Statistical outlines which are published. Though there may not be organisations and individuals who directly utilise this information, but a large body of entrusted persons do make use of these statistics to prove their point of view.

Question No: 226, 227, 228 and 230 : No comments.

O R I S S A

Comments on Labour Bureau's paper by the Director, Bureau of Statistics and Economics, Orissa.

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Section 10 of the Questionnaire relating to Labour Research and Information.

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Question No. 212 and 213 :

Most of the labour statistics are a bye-product of labour legislation. They suffer, therefore, inter alia, from the limitations arising out of lack of uniformity in the concepts, coverage and frequency of collection. The time-lag in their publication, non-response from primary units, inaccuracy of returns, changes in industrial classification are further difficulties in making labour statistics more useful. What steps should be taken to remedy the situation? Is the implementation of the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 the answer?

213. There is a feeling that the practice of entrusting the administration of labour laws to different filled in returns under these Acts result in a good deal of unproductive work and necessary duplications. If this feeling has a basis, what steps should be taken to improve the situation.

Answer:-

Most of the Labour Statistics in Orissa are now being collected by the Chief Inspector of Factories and the Labour Commissioner. The Work-Mens' Compensation Act. It has been found that there is a good deal of duplication as some of the returns collected by the Labour Commissioner are also being collected by the Chief Inspector of Factories. Besides there are too many returns which are now being collected by the C.I.F. and the Labour Commissioner. As a result, the information so collected had to suffer from the limitations arising out of non-uniformity of concepts, coverage and frequency of collection. Besides difficult periodicity of returns viz., fortnightly, monthly, half-yearly and annual returns results in good deal of non-response, inaccuracy of returns, changes in industrial classification which makes difficult to make proper use of the statistics collected.

∟ Bureau collects re- turns on Ind- ustrial Dis- puts and

In addition to this collection of various returns which are more-or-less, voluntary results in large percentage of non-response. The collection of statistics Act, 1953 and the powers vested there-under can solely be exercised by the Chief Director of N.S.S. Since the provisions envisaged under the Act cannot be exercised by the authorities who are actually responsible for the collection of the returns, the provisions made there-under remain mostly infructuous and ineffective. It is, therefore, felt that the powers vested under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953 should be decentralised so that the respective state authorities will be able to evoke the provisions whenever required. Besides a detailed study of the various reports and returns prescribed under various Acts and Rules and by different agencies have to be examined and the number of Returns are to be minimised.

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Question 214 :

Does the all-India Consumer Price Index Number currently compiled reflect adequately price changes affecting urban working class? Should consumer price index numbers be compiled for every region of the country for the purposes of wage fixation? What principles should be followed in compiling the 'all-India' and regional indices?

Answer :

The consumption pattern generally undergoes a change in a period of 5 to 10 years. As such the centres where price changes are likely to be more violent and rapid than in the less developed areas, the industries located in the less developed areas will also be required to pay high wages even though the price situation at the centres do not warrant it. Unnecessary rise in wages is likely to hamper or affect productivity in the smaller units. Besides the consumer price index series should not be the only criterion for wage-fixation. For fixing up the wages the productivity of the unit should also be taken into account.

Question 215 :

Data presently collected and compiled in respect of work stoppages (strikes and lockouts) mostly consist of :
(a) number of work-stoppages, (b) number of workers involved, (c) number of man-days lost, (d) total wages lost in rupees, and (e) total production lost in rupees. Are they adequate for measuring industrial unrest in the country? If not, what other aspects of industrial unrest require quantification?

Answer :

Yes.

Question 216 :

At present statistical data are collected only in respect of work-stoppages arising out of industrial disputes. Is it necessary to collect similar information on work-stoppages due to reasons other than industrial disputes?

Answer :

Information on work-stoppages due to reasons other than industrial disputes may be collected annually through the National Sample Surveys along with the Annual Survey of Industries.

Question 217 :

The current emphasis in the collection of labour statistics is on data which will help in understanding the economic aspects of workers' life. Social and sociological aspects have been comparatively neglected. What are your suggestions for filling up the gap? For better comprehension of labour problems which particular aspect of these statistics would you emphasise?

Answer :

The Labour Investigation Committee appointed by the Government of India conducted an ad-hoc survey on wages, earnings, employment, working and social conditions of labour in particular of industrial labour. The labour Bureau also conducted towards the latter fifties, a survey on the labour conditions of industrial workers in respect of certain important industries. With the implementation of the industrial programmes in the State various changes of far-reaching significance have taken place. There has been even several legislative measures to improve the working and living conditions and a number of schemes have been launched for this purpose. With the enactment of Industrial Disputes Act and appointment of Industrial Tribunals there has been more changes in the wage structure and wage conditions of the workers in most of the industries. Since the enquiry conducted by the Labour Bureau is limited to certain important industries and the survey do not reveal the conditions of labour in the organised and the un-organised sector by States, it is felt that a comprehensive enquiry of the conditions of labour as well as their problems may be undertaken by state Bureaus to help the respective state Governments in formulating effective policies on the various labour problems encountered in the respective states.

Question 218 :

Statistical data (employment, unemployment, consumption expenditure, etc.) are being collected in respect of rural population annually by the National Sample Survey. Would it be feasible to make these data available separately for rural labour for each State/region.? What other statistics would be required for framing an operational programme?

Answer :

The survey conducted on employment and unemployment through the National Sample Surveys, do not usually throw estimates by state or regions partly because of inadequate sample size and forming of strata on different considerations which do not facilitate for throwing state level estimates. Besides in the rural areas part-time workers per day as otherwise the estimates of employment will be considerably inflated as it happened during the First A.L.E.

In the First Agriculture Labour Enquiry, the criteria for classification of the Agricultural labour households was employment and in the second Agricultural labour Enquiry the criteria was income. No norms interms of hours worked was fixed during the first A.L.E. for measuring the employment situation but data were collected according to the intensities with which the work was done. Thus lack of uniformity in size, definitions, fixation of norms wages etc. according to the different prices (retail and whole-sale) differences in the imputational procedures, adoption of different designs makes difficult to have comparable estimates under the two enquiries. While formulating the subsequent enquiries these factors may have to be reconciled in order to have better comparability and precision in the estimates.

Question 219 and 220 :

Are the present arrangements for research and studies in the field of labour adequate to meet the requirements of policy making in labour and economic matters.

220. What are your suggestions for improving the quality of labour research.

Answer :

The problem of labour research today is lack of decentralisation and coordination. This creates a lot of difficulties while formulating policies on labour and other related economic matters at the state level. It is, therefore, felt necessary to organise suitable research cells in various state Bureaus to undertake research in the field of labour employment and manpower.

Question 221 :

What is the present state of labour research undertaken by employers/workers organisations?

Answer :

No research work is being undertaken by employees or workers organisations in this state.

Question :

How should labour research be promoted in universities and research organisations?

Answer :

The problem of labour research has not been given adequate emphasis in the universities and research organisations. With the implementation of Five Year Plans and the growth of industries it is necessary to have a closer study of the various labour problems so as to maintain industrial peace and prosperity in the state. This necessitates inclusion of labour research in the syllabus of the universities and study of the same in greater detail at the post-graduate level. The field of research should be properly coordinated between research organisations and the universities. Grant of scholarships by the universities for research students and suitably augmenting the staff in the various research organisations would help in the growth of labour research at different levels. At the state level the responsibility of coordination of labour research in the various organisation and universities may be entrusted to the State statistical Bureaus which would be able to guide, organise and undertake research work at the State level.

UTTAR PRADESH

Comments on Labour Bureau's Paper by the
Director, Economic Intelligence and
Statistics, Government of U.P.

Q.No. 212: The creation of another centralised agency will not meet the object. It may only add to the multiplicity of agencies engaged in collection of data, causing more inconvenience to the agencies submitting returns. The basic defects intended to be removed are lack of uniformity in concept, coverage and frequency of collection. One of the ways to set right the situation may be to review the Acts under which statistics are being thrown up and to amend them wherever necessary with a view to achieving the desired uniformity.

Q.No. 213: Entrusting to State Statistical Bureaus the unified charge of collection of all types of labour statistics at the State level would not appear to be desirable as they will perhaps require additional staff without the Labour Commissioner being in a position to spare any of their existing staff, which is engaged in the implementation of Acts. In addition, the Labour Commissioner may require some of the information so collected for the purpose of implementation of Labour Laws at short notices and if another agency is charged with the responsibility of collection of such information, he may not be in a position to get it with as quick a frequency with which he may like to have it. If we are to steer clear of the duplication involved, State Statistical Bureaus may not be burdened with the collection of such statistics. A rationalization of various returns furnished by the factories is certainly called for so as to eliminate over-lapping and duplication.

Q.No. 214: It is agreed with the Labour Bureau that the new all-India index with base 1960 is broad-based in regard to both weighting diagram and representative character of centres covered and should serve the purpose better.

If the term 'Regional Index' has been used in the all-India context and regions are intended to comprise group of States, we need have only State index and regional index need not be prepared.

I agree with the Labour Bureau that in compiling any consumer price index, the principle of allocating weights among the centres on the basis of consumption expenditure of working class families is more rational and realistic than the principle of basing the same on factory employment.

Q.No. 215: I agree with the views expressed by the Labour Bureau in this regard.

Q.No. 216: I agree with the Labour Bureau that it would be useful to collect statistical data on work stoppage due to reasons other than industrial disputes. Such reasons may be sickness, leave, political factors such as complete stoppage of work in all spheres (Bandhs) etc.

Q.No. 217: It would be useful to take up for study social aspects such as health, education and housing of workers' life and their impact on the efficiency of labour. Ad-hoc special surveys may be undertaken for this study.

Q. No. 218: Data on consumer expenditure have not been collected under National Sample Survey separately or exclusively for rural labour as such, although in some rounds information has been separately collected for agricultural labour households. Separate information for rural labour households can be had only after proper stratification of households before drawing an adequate sample from the category of rural labour households. Even the data which may be collected under National Sample Survey may not be amendable to separate tabulation in respect of rural labour households unless proper stratification is done at the stage of selection of households. With regard to the proper criterion for identifying rural labour households both the concepts have some good points in common and which one of them should be chosen for adoption should really depend upon the object in view and the object may differ from one user of the data to another. I would suggest that it would be desirable to adopt the concept as indicated by the Labour Bureau subject to the different categories of households classified according to income from wage employment expressed as percentage of total income:

- (i) Zero
- (ii) 1 - 24
- (iii) 25 - 49
- (iv) 50 - 74
- (v) 75 - 99
- (vi) 100

The above procedure will serve the purpose of Labour Bureau as well as other users.

As far as type studies for gauging the problem of employment and unemployment are concerned, they may serve only a limited purpose in regard to their diagnostic use, while diagnostic studies are by no means less important, estimates of employment and unemployment are important in themselves and type studies may not be able to provide such estimates. This objective can only be secured through properly designed sample surveys, which may be undertaken by State Statistical Bureaus.

Operational programme has to aim at the measures necessary for amelioration of conditions of agricultural labour. Statistics needed in this sphere should relate to the measurement of unemployment and underemployment. It will further be useful to have information regarding estimates of output per person and of availability of power, trained labour and arrangement for the storage of raw material, so much needed for intensifying the setting up of agro-industries for the betterment of the conditions of rural labour. Studies on this aspect can be undertaken by Labour Bureau.

Q.Nos. 219 & 220. Lack of coordination and of concerted action has been the bane of research activities in the field of labour. Research could be promoted and coordination among Universities, Government agencies and Workers' Organisations brought about through research grants extended by Government. With the establishment of the National Labour Research Institute, we can develop it as a rallying point for the much needed research coordination.

Q.No. 221: No comments.

Q.No. 222: No comments.

Q.No. 223: No comments.

Q.No. 224: I agree with the views expressed by the Labour Bureau.

WEST BENGAL

Comments on Labour Bureau's Paper by
the Director, State Statistical Bureau,
Government of West Bengal.

Q. 212: Full implementation of the collection of Statistics Act 1953 would, no doubt, go a long way to cover the various aspects of labour statistics. In view of what has been stated by the Labour Bureau in this regard, part II of the A.S.I. Schedule may be taken out to be dealt with by the Central Agency for the collection of all types of labour statistics. In the alternative, that Schedule should be enlarged to include important items now left out and N.S.S. reorganised so that all these data are not only collected properly but also analysed regularly and timely.

In respect of the labour of the decentralised and unorganised sectors, however, particular attention should be given for collection of their statistics, if necessary by evolving a new machinery.

It has also to be examined if there is any scope, for simplification and improvement of the various forms and returns intended to supply statistical information presently required to be submitted by different concerned bodies.

Q. 213: The suggestion of the Labour Bureau that collection of all types of labour statistics at the State level may be entrusted upon one agency like the Bureau of Economics and Statistics is worth considering. It is, however, not clear as to why creation of a central agency has been proposed when already the Labour Bureau is functioning as the central agency in this sphere. Again, functions of the proposed central agency are not quite clear. That agency should only function as the body for the country as a whole, at the same time, coordinating the functions of the State bodies.

Q. 214: The All-India Consumer Price Index number with base 1949 = 100 does not reflect adequately price changes affecting urban working class. The reasons have been amply discussed by the Labour Bureau. But without knowing the basis of selection of the 50 centres for the new series with base 1960 = 100, it is also difficult to say that this series is expected to reflect the price changes, more or less, realistically. So far as West Bengal is concerned, we see that centres of recently developed industrial complexes viz. Durgapur and Siliguri, amongst others are not included in the list of centres.

The necessity of regional indices, exclusive of centre indices, might be occasionally felt these days in view of the coming up of new areas in the industrial map of India and as such attempts should be made to compute indices for a large no. of regions, of course, taking into consideration such factors as socio-economic conditions, administrative compactness etc.

So far as the compilation of the all-India indices is concerned the principles adopted in the new series with base 1960 = 100 seems to be alright if the selected 50 centres represent the entire labour population of this country. It need be stated that such a series can only indicate an idea of the overall movement in retail prices of commodities in the country over a period and as such may not be very much representative for any group of consumers of a particular centre. This series may therefore be prepared and maintained every quarter of a year, which would minimise much labour and cost. So far as methodology is concerned the only point that requires to be stressed is to see that the entire region is properly represented while carrying out the family budget enquiry. Price collection should also be done in a L of representative centres dotted over the entire country.

/number

For fixation of wages, however we should have separate indices for all the individual centre. For this new centre, prices should be collected and price trends should be examined Vis-a-Vis the important centres already having their own series. Then, for an interim period, one of the existing series showing closeness, might be used for wage fixation at that centre and then arrangements made for preparation and maintenance of a full-fledged series of indices at that new centre.

Q. 215: Data specified to be collected presently seem to be adequate. But the entire machinery has to be geared up to see that all the data due to be obtained are properly collected. Of course, this is true for other spheres also.

Q. 216: Data relating to work stoppages on grounds other than industrial disputes, also should be collected as a regular feature as an indicator of the general economic position of an industry. (Closure of factories due to short supply of raw materials etc., would come under this item).

Q. 217: Labour Bureau has no comments re : this query. Many items on the socio-economic condition of the working class are included in the Schedule A (i) Part III of the N.S.S. but these are not always analysed. Studies are to be made periodically to note the changes in the attitudes of the labour population; changes in productivity of the labour is also a very important aspect to be examined from time to time. Computation of some indicators and then to maintain the same might be of immense help for comprehension of labour problems.

Q. 218: The points raised by the Labour Bureau regarding sample-size, adoption of appropriate definition deserve considerations. However, it is difficult to agree with the views of the Labour Bureau that the consumption expenditure pattern does not change materially from year to year. In view of the fast changing economy and due to various other factors like abrupt changes in the availability of important consumption articles

like cereals, the people, these days are constrained to change their consumption pattern from time to time particularly in respect of important items like food articles.

Re : sample sizes of N.S.S. we are almost sure that the same are inadequate to throw up any state estimates. So far as needs of operational programmes are concerned the Labour Bureau, it is observed, has covered all the aspects deserving consideration but in view of the vastness and multifarious characteristics of the rural labour throughout the country, some of which have been elaborated by the Labour Bureau, it is felt that only a separate central organisation like the Labour Bureau with regional offices in every state can undertake such functions properly. Intensive type studies, some involving topical interests, may well be entrusted upon Research Organisations or Academic Institutions.

Q. 219 & 220: Firstly, to have an idea about the studies and researches being done currently on labour problems, preparation of bibliographies, by topics, seems essential.

Studies made or researches done by various organisations on labour problems may not be quite inadequate at the present but absence of coordination between different concerned agencies is causing gaps in various fields of labour statistics. This can largely be avoided if the entire problem is tackled by a central body to be assisted by the State bodies. This would ensure, same concept, definition etc. throughout the country. It has to be kept in mind that the basic issues involved are the same everywhere throughout the country.

It need also be stated here that these bodies should either themselves be competent statistical organisations or should have such wings. For Type-Studies or more specific issues, which may be quite large in numbers and topicalities, various academic institutions and research bodies may be entrusted upon.

Q. 223: Apart from what has been proposed by the Labour Bureau, as has already been mentioned above, the Government bodies dealing with labour statistics should sponsor specific projects to be carried out by the Universities and research organisations providing finance, if necessary. Problems of local or regional characteristics can best be studied in this manner.

Q. 224: The observations made by the Labour Bureau deserve serious consideration but formation of workinggroups to look into different problems, represented by research personnel from different concerned bodies may be helpful for operating various programmes in a coordinated way.

CENTRAL STATISTICAL ORGANISATION
MAN-POWER RESEARCH DIVISION

Replies to Questionnaire issued by the
National Commission on Labour.

Question Nos. 212 & 213

Quite a good deal of labour statistics are collected as a bye-product of labour legislation but there are also certain statistical information which are collected otherwise such as employment and unemployment data by the National Sample Survey (NSS), prices data for construction of consumer prices index numbers etc. Most of the statistics collected as a bye-product of the legislation are required to be obtained from various establishments and not from households. Apart from the labour legislation, returns collected under certain other legislations also contain information on labour aspects. An instance is the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) return under the Collection of Statistics Act, 1953. The points made out in the following paragraphs are restricted to the data collected in respect of factory sector as this is an important sector where a variety of returns are called for by different agencies. Once certain amount of rationalisation is brought about in respect of data relating to manufacturing activity, similar practice could be extended to other branches of economic activity like Trade and Commerce, Transport etc.

One of the points which has to be looked into is about the concepts, definitions, classifications, coverage and frequency of collection which are not always uniform in all cases. For instance, the limit of earnings is Rs. 400/- per month under the Payment of Wages Act, while it is Rs. 500/- per month under the Industrial Disputes Act. It is true that the purpose of the two legislations are different but still it is not clear as to why the restriction on the upper limit of earnings should be there in the Payment of Wages Act. Possibly data currently collected in respect of factories under the Payment of Wages Act can perhaps be done away with, as the ASI could serve the purpose. So far as data on employment in factories are concerned, the Labour Bureau obtains the same under the Factories Act, the Directorate General of Employment and Training for Employment Market Information programme and the NSS for the ASI. No doubt, there is some variation in the scope and coverage and the purposes of collection by different agencies. Even so, it is worth investigating as to whether any rationalisation cannot be brought about whereby data on the same aspect required by different agencies are obtained from an individual establishment by only a single agency who could then make available the required information to different authorities. This approach would reduce the fatigue on the respondents, ensure better response and more accurate returns and also facilitate standardisation of concepts and definitions. There is also absolutely no reason why different industrial classifications should be adopted for different types of data. The Standard Industrial Classification should be adopted by all uniformly.

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Another point that has to be looked into is about the periodicity of collection. Certain data are necessarily to be collected only on an annual basis. But data of labour turnover and absenteeism or regular wage rates required on monthly or quarterly basis need not be included in an annual return. The possibility of having only 3 types of returns- a monthly, quarterly and an annual- from a manufacturing establishment should be explored.

A requisite for effecting improvements would be to make the primary workers in charge of data collection and the respondents also understand the purpose for which particular information is collected, the concepts and definitions involved etc. The Labour Bureau has initiated action in this regard and has also brought out a Training Manual. Such work should continue.

Apart from data collection, presently statistics loses much of the utility because of delay in tabulation. Timeliness is an important factor that has to be kept in view. With improved facilities of mechanical tabulation and electric data processing equipments now available in the country, delays should be cut short. The programme should be such as to make available data from monthly returns before the close of the succeeding month, that from quarterly returns before the next quarter etc.

Resort to collection of Statistics Act, 1953 is not going to provide the solution for improvement in data. Points like those raised above will have to be attended to in order to have enduring arrangements for improved collection and tabulation of data. It is suggested that the Commission may consider appointing a Study Group to examine the matter in fuller detail.

Question Nos. 215 & 216

The aspects on which data are presently collected and compiled in respect of work stoppages appear to be adequate. But it will be useful to collect data in respect of work stoppages not merely for strikes and lock-outs, but even for other reasons such as political strikes, sympathetic demonstrations, closure due to shortage of raw material, breakdowns in machinery or supply of power, for financial reasons etc. also in order to obtain a full assessment of the effect of work stoppages.

Question No. 217

While the emphasis in the current statistics will have to be on the economic aspects of workers' life, social and sociological aspects are also important. The latter aspects can and should be covered in the Family Living Surveys organised at periodic intervals as in the case of Middle-class Family Living Survey conducted in 1958-59.

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Question No.218

Statistical data on employment and unemployment are now regularly collected in respect of urban areas by the NSS. Data in respect of rural areas are also collected but restricted to a small sample size covered for the integrated household schedule of the NSS. Different States prepare estimates for their States and sometimes for region within by combining the data of the central sample of NSS with the ir own matching State sample of NSS. Data separately for rural labour (previously agricultural labour) are collected periodically, once in five or six years. As a measure of the indicator of the unemployment situation in the country, it is perhaps adequate if data for urban areas is continued to be collected in every round. But once in a quinquennium, data should be collected from a sufficiently large sample covering both rural and urban areas to facilitate obtaining reliable estimates at least at the State-level. In such a quinquennial survey, provision could be made to separate out the labour households.

- (i) An index number of ...
- (ii) A similar index number of industrial employment;
- (iii) Monthly ...
- (iv) Information about ...
- (v) Information on the ...

The Department of Economic Affairs ...

Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry
of Finance, Government of India.

Memorandum on the questionnaire issued
by the National Commission on Labour
Labour Information

The Department of Economic Affairs notes with satisfaction that the questionnaire issued by the Commission has a separate section on "Labour Research and Information". The present state of information about employment, unemployment, level of wages and earnings in different industries and about wage differentials leaves much to be desired. Even when statutory information is collected, such as that under the payment of Wages Act, the time lag with which this information is collected and published is such as to make it practically unuseable for current policy purposes. There is an urgent need to devise index numbers of wage rates and of earnings in industry, which could be prepared even on the basis of a sample of information and published with not more than one or two months' time lag. Data are collected at present on employment in a number of industries by the Ministry of Industrial Development but they are not tabulated and published in a form which would make it possible to judge from month to month the trends in employment in different industries. While periodic surveys by the agencies such as the National Sample Survey are useful as providing benchmark information, what is lacking today is publication of two or three time-series with very little time lag which could be of help in assessing trends in wages and employment. The Commission, may, therefore, like to devise a system under which such information could be collected and published. The specific time-series suggested are:

- (i) An index number of wage rates giving breakdown of industries;
- (ii) A similar index number of industrial employment;
- (iii) Monthly statistics of average earnings in different industries published with a time-lag of not more than two months;
- (iv) Information about retrenchment and lay-off industry-wise; and
- (v) Information on the number of disputes and man-hours lost.

The Department of Economic Affairs appreciates the difficulties associated with collecting information on rural wages and employment. It is for this reason that no specific suggestions have been made for compilation of similar time series for the rural sector. For quite sometime to come information about this sector will have to be collected by periodic sample surveys.

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Xavier Institute of Social Services,
Ranchi.

Reply to Section X of the questionnaire
issued by the National Commission on
Labour.

Q.217

SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS AND LABOUR STATISTICS

(1) The collection of labour statistics should be broadened so as to include data on the social and sociological aspects of the labour force: age, literacy, number of dependents, place of origin, mobility, marital status, etc. etc., in the manner of the statistics collected, and the man-power studies made, in the USA by the US Bureau of Labour Statistics.

(2) Case studies should be undertaken to evaluate problems such as the following: the actual results of new labour legislation and rules, viz: the enforcement of the Apprentices' Act on medium and small scale industries in a particular community, the outcome of efforts to resettle persons displaced by new factories and enterprises, especially in tribal and backward areas, the outcome of efforts to abolish or curtail and control the system of contract labour, the results of the Workers' Education Programme sponsored by the Government on the intelligent participation of workers in trade unions and industrial relations.

The advantage of such case studies is that they can probe not only the formal and 'official' aspects of such dynamic changes, but also the informal changes in patterns of living, income, communications, family life, etc., which statistical studies can not yield.

These case studies should particularly be directed to the investigation of cases where new legislation has met with total or partial success, and also those where these efforts have failed to yield positive results, and where, on the contrary, they have perhaps aggravated the problems. The results of such case studies could be of immense benefit for administrators, managers and legislators, who in this way could learn from past successes and failures.

One concrete example of a problem which would require such a depth study is the way in which the tribal people in the vicinity of Ranchi, displaced by the establishment of the HFC and other factories, have not been able to make good use of the considerable sums of compensation money, paid to them, but have wasted this money away, and have been exploited by unscrupulous persons, with the result that at present, they live on the fringe of the industrial society, and have become 'refugees' in the very place where they were borne and tilled their lands. This problem is being repeated again and again, wherever a new industrial enterprise (Bokaro) or a dam (Gattelsud) is being built, because no through analysis has been made of the successes and failures of previous efforts by the government at resettling such people.

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Q.220

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LABOUR RESEARCH

(1) We believe that a drive should be made for collecting adequately the statistics which are at present being collected as by law and regulations. There are too many '-ls and 'N.A.'s in the statistics now published by the Ministry of Labour and Employment. This makes it impossible to make reliable scientific studies based on those defective statistics.

This improvement could be brought about by improving the administration of statistics collection, and if necessary by imposing penalties on industries and other organisations which do not report at all, or not in time. This applies also to the statistics on trade unions, collected by the registrars of Trade Unions.

(2) While the collection of primary or raw statistics is and will remain the responsibility of the Government, inter-pretational studies by University departments and training and research institutes should be encouraged. Such studies are at present undertaken only by certain well-established and prominent institutions in the country, especially those attached to the Central Government. We believe that such studies could also be undertaken by private or semi-governmental institutions at the State and local level. This would entail that funds be made available to such Institutions on an Ad hoc basis as is being done in developed countries. Such ad hoc projects should be undertaken in close cooperation with the sponsoring Government, financing the study. Such programmes should be initiated in the form of pilot projects, and only those Institutions should be associated in such research, as prove up to expectations and are able to deliver the goods in time.

(3) The advantage of associating University Departments and training or research institutes in that teams of specialists can work together consisting of economists, statisticians, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, etc. which would make the integrated study of certain problems possible. We believe that the present labour research is too much limited to the purely technological and economic aspects of the problems and leave out sociological and other aspects of problems which are basically human, and are of immense importance for speeding up the development of the country. The recent book Asian Drama by the Swedish Economist, Gunnar Myrdal, has pointed out that underdevelopment is to a great extent due to human attitudes and out-look on life. Kusum Nair in her book Blossoms in the Dust pointed to the same problem, with special reference to the rural population.

Q. 221

LABOUR RESEARCH AND EMPLOYERS' / WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS.

(1) As far as we know, some of the research undertaken by employers' organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce, and especially by major industries such as Hindustan Steel Ltd., are of high standard. Very few unions, however, produce any worth while material, because they do not have the funds and are not equipped with research departments and personnel to undertake such work.

We know, on the other hand, that certain well established unions would readily undertake or welcome such research, if aided by the Government, preferably through an intermediate neutral organisations

(2) There is a danger that both employers and unions tend to marshal the facts and figures in such a way as to 'prove their point', with the result that the findings of one party are questioned and rejected by the other as biased. In such an atmosphere research material and statistics will continue to be used as weapons to battle one another, rather than objective facts, on which both parties could agree.

This points to the desirability of entrusting or at least associating neutral research and training institutions in the collection of data, which would be useful to both employers and unions. One could visualise that in each major industrial centre an institution, after having proved its worth, could be designated for such a purpose.

Q.222

ENCOURAGEMENT TO UNIONS FOR LABOUR RESEARCH

(1) The first duty of the trade unions in this matter is that they keep their own records in order and duly report to the Registrar of Trade Unions the information which by law they are supposed to submit. This material should be reported to the Registrar in time, with the risk of having their registration cancelled, if they do not report in time. At present, too many unions, especially the weak ones, do report, but they send their material too late, so that it is not included in the annual reports of the Registrar, and yet their registration is not cancelled.

(2) The unions' interest in research originates or increases considerably at the time when they have a dispute with the employer or have to enter into a collective agreement, or have to fight a case in the court. As noted above, research undertaken in this situation is likely to be biased, but it nevertheless provides the starting point from where unions should be encouraged to go in for more dispassionate research, and set up their research departments. The Government should encourage such endeavours, and undertake joint research projects with the unions.

Q.223

PROMOTION OF LABOUR RESEARCH IN
UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS

(1) Any research that is to be done on a scientific basis, costs money. While major industries and employers' organisations are willing and able to spend money on research, which they feel will be relevant for their activities and future development, the unions have not the funds to sponsor such research. Therefore it will be the task of the Government at least initially, to bear the cost, or part of it of labour

research promoted by universities and research organisations for the sake of the unions. Money, invested in such a way, must be considered as an investment that will yield dividends in the long run. This has been understood in the developed countries, which now spend considerable sums on labour research undertaken by universities and research departments in cooperation with trade unions.

(2) The establishment of rapport between Government, employers, trade unions and universities or research organisations, is very important. The different parties will have to find their way in this unchartered field, and this could best be done by launching pilot projects on topics of vital interest for the community. Public opinion will have to be aroused about this matter, and this could be done by discussing the matter at the Indian Labour Conference, and by encouraging each of the States to start pilot projects.

(3) Facilities should be provided for the publication of research material by junior researchers, that is of a good standard, by giving them financial incentives. In this way these new entrants in the labour research field will be encouraged to undertake further work, and will in the process mature and become more skillful.

Q.224

ASSEMBLING RESEARCH PERSONNEL FOR DEEPER LABOUR

(1) The answers given to Questions 221, 222 and 223, provide a reply to this question. We are convinced that there should be coordination, but not regimentation. Any research to be done scientifically and dispassionately, has to be carried out in an atmosphere of relative liberty for the research workers. There should be 'no strings attached' to funds provided for research. Even if the findings, viz. in the post-mortem of certain important strikes, reveal matters which are not pleasant for one party or another, they should be accepted. In this matter only the utmost honesty together with the necessary discretion and secrecy will bring real progress. In coordinating the research work in labour matters, one should forestall the danger of over-bureaucratisation.

(2) A well-integrated programme of labour research, wherein Government, employers, trade unions, universities and training/research centres cooperate, would incidentally provide good employment opportunities for research workers, who have been trained in developed countries, and who upon returning to India find that there is no scope for exercising their talents and skills, with the result that these skills decay soon by not being used.

(3) We would like to stress once again, that in the matter of integrated labour research.

- i.- Government, employers, trade unions and training/research institutes have to work together.
- ii.- that they will learn to do so, by undertaking pilot projects of ad-hoc problems, of concern to the general community;
- iii. - that money spent on research must be considered as a long-term investment, that will yield results in the future.