

**RURAL
WORKERS'
PROBLEMS
AND
ORGANISATION**

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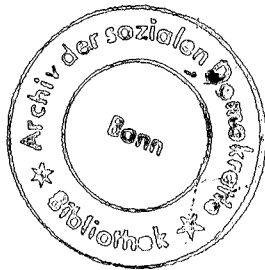
Rural Workers Organisation

POPULAR participation is a pre-requisite for successful implementation of a development programme. The development of rural areas requires the co-operation and support of all rural workers—particularly the small and marginal farmers, the tenants, the share-croppers and landless farm workers. Most of them live below subsistence level. They are the people who are in most need of assistance. But assistance which is meant for them by various development schemes, does not trickle-down to their level. The rural workers cannot help themselves as they are not organised. In a paper, prepared for discussion in 1954 Conference of the I.L.O., it has been stated :—

“While agricultural organisations in developed countries have provided the means for the rural population to participate more effectively in the development process, and have indeed often taken the initiative in promoting rural progress, such organisations have been slow to emerge in developing countries.”

Further, it has been stated in that paper :—

“The problems of the under-privileged in the rural sector and their need to associate to achieve social and economic objectives have gained particular importance in the context of the Green Revolution, which appears in many instances to have increased rather than decreased the gap between the rich and the poor in rural areas. The new developments in agriculture, whilst raising the investment potential, have tended at the same time to favour the small numbers of progressive farmers producing mainly for the market rather than the large majority of subsistence agricul-



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turists, who for a variety of reasons, find themselves unable to take advantage of the opportunities offered by improved technology. Rural workers organisations can be an effective means for redressing the balance.”

The Problem In India

India lives in her villages. According to the 1961 Census data, there were 5.67 lakh villages in the country. Even the 1971 Census figures reveal that of the 548 million persons living in the country, nearly 80 percent i.e., 439 million continue to live in the rural areas. And more than 70 percent of the population is dependent upon agriculture. And so, progress and prosperity of India depends largely on the progress and prosperity of the villages. After Independence, steps have been taken to improve the conditions of the people in the villages. But even then, there is vast majority of the rural population which is still economically very much backward. The latest position is that 40 percent of the people live below subsistence level and their monthly consumption is not more than Rs. 20. This shows that we have a tremendous task for upliftment of the rural population.

In the approach paper to the Fifth Five Year Plan, it is stated :—

“Economic development in the last two decades has resulted in an all round increase in per capita income. The proportion of the poor, defined as those living below a basic minimum standard of consumption, has slightly come down. Yet, the absolute number of people below the poverty line to-day is just as large as it was two decades ago. And these people living in abject poverty constitute between two-fifth and one-half of all Indian citizens.”

Steady Increase Of Agricultural Labour

The proportion of agricultural labourers has risen steadily from 16.71 percent of the total population in 1961

to 25.76 percent in 1971. In Table 1 and 2, daily wages of agricultural labourers and loans advanced by commercial Banks have been given State-wise. This will make the position clear.

TABLE—1

Daily Wages Of Agricultural Labourers

(Rupees per day)

| State | Men | Women | Children |
|------------------|------|-------|----------|
| Andhra Pradesh | 0.87 | 0.55 | 0.48 |
| Assam | 1.54 | 1.15 | 1.00 |
| Bihar | 0.91 | 0.74 | 0.70 |
| Gujarat | 0.87 | 0.55 | 0.50 |
| Haryana-Punjab | 1.73 | 1.40 | — |
| Himachal Pradesh | 2.47 | 1.94 | — |
| Kerala | 1.28 | 0.70 | 0.63 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 0.76 | 0.59 | 0.57 |
| Maharashtra | 0.87 | 0.55 | 0.50 |
| Mysore | 0.84 | 0.55 | 0.47 |
| Orissa | 0.80 | 0.55 | 0.51 |
| Tamil Nadu | 0.84 | 0.48 | 0.39 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 0.92 | 0.65 | 0.55 |
| West Bengal | 1.43 | 0.98 | 0.89 |
| Tripura | 1.54 | 1.15 | 1.00 |

(Source : *Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry, 1956-57*).

TABLE—2

Loans Advanced By Commercial Banks To Small Farmers And Marginal Farmers In The SFDA And MFAL Agency Areas, 1972-73.*

(Rupees in Lakhs)

| State | S F D A** | | M F A L*** | | Total | |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Short Term | Term Loans | Short Term | Term Loans | Short Term (2)+(4) | Term Loans (3)+(5) |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 1.56 | 4.62 | 5.05 | 10.42 | 6.61 | 15.04 |
| Assam | — | — | 0.34 | — | 0.34 | — |
| Bihar | 1.55 | 13.63 | 0.70 | 0.87 | 2.25 | 14.50 |
| Gujarat | — | 6.95 | 0.15 | 15.80 | 0.15 | 22.75 |
| Haryana | 8.81 | 12.60 | — | — | 8.81 | 12.60 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 0.29 | 1.12 | 1.84 | — | 2.13 | 1.12 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 0.16 | 0.66 | — | — | 0.16 | 0.66 |
| Kerala | 0.98 | 1.94 | — | — | 0.98 | 1.94 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 0.55 | 10.46 | 0.06 | 5.94 | 0.61 | 16.40 |
| Maharashtra | 0.31 | 0.56 | — | 1.45 | 0.31 | 2.01 |
| Mysore | 31.16 | 2.79 | 1.90 | 6.98 | 33.06 | 9.77 |
| Nagaland | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Orissa | 1.78 | 1.51 | 0.58 | 0.15 | 2.36 | 1.66 |
| Punjab | — | 3.85 | — | 13.25 | — | 17.10 |
| Rajasthan | 1.41 | 6.13 | 0.07 | 1.54 | 1.48 | 7.67 |
| Tamil Nadu | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Uttar Pradesh | 1.41 | 3.31 | — | 0.23 | 1.41 | 3.54 |
| West Bengal | 0.76 | 8.09 | 2.74 | 2.25 | 3.50 | 10.34 |
| ALL INDIA | 50.73 | 78.22 | 13.77 | 67.50 | 64.50 | 145.72 |

Source : Ministry of Agriculture.

* April-October 1972.

** Small Farmers Development Agency

*** Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers

Frustration

It may be mentioned that no separate statistics are maintained by the Reserve Bank of India of the extent of loans advanced in different parts of the country to small farmers. The commercial Banks have, however, been advised by the Reserve Bank of India to relax the normal margin and security requirements in favour of small and marginal farmers. They have also been advised to extend credit support for the programmes in the SFDA and MFAL areas. Fifteen commercial nationalised Banks had advanced 29 percent of the total outstandings on direct advances for agriculture to farmers with holdings of less than 5 acres by December 1970. This pace has not been kept thereafter, as the banks have been trying to reorganise their policy measures in view of the defaults of repayment in a number of areas.

The size distribution of operational holdings in the rural areas continues to be skewed in favour of bigger farmers. The 17th Round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) conducted in 1961-62 reveals that nearly 75 percent of the farmers cultivating less than 3 hectares, operated on barely 31 percent of the total agricultural land in the country. At the other extreme, 4.5 percent of the farmers, cultivating more than 10 hectares of land operated nearly 29 percent of the area. The size distribution of holdings in the rural areas under this Round has been as follows :—

| Size (hectares) | No. of Cultivators percent | Area Operated percent |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Less than 1 | 39.1 | 6.9 |
| 1 to 3 | 35.5 | 24.1 |
| 3 to 5 | 12.0 | 17.2 |
| 5 to 10 | 8.9 | 22.9 |
| 10 to 20 | 3.5 | 17.3 |
| 20 and above | 1.0 | 11.6 |

The rural areas, therefore, present a picture of preponderance of small farmers and agricultural labourers. Added to this picture is the insecurity among small farmers, who cultivate their land under systems of tenancy and share cropping. The insecurity of tenure has resulted in a large number of tenants being ousted from their land and becoming landless peasants. This creates a sense of frustration and fear among the peasants and labourers, who have no assurance or security of being permitted to cultivate the land nor of being provided with work.

Land For The Tillers Yet To Be Achieved

In the last 25 years since Independence, the Governments, both at the Central and State levels, have enacted a series of legislations to improve the tenurial conditions in the rural areas. These include (a) the abolition of intermediaries, (b) reforms of the tenancy system, (c) ceiling on land holdings, (d) resettlement of landless agricultural workers and (e) consolidation of fragmented holdings and the reorganisation of the small farm economy. The abolition of the intermediary tenures was expected to bring tenants into direct relationship with the State and make available surplus lands to the State Governments for distribution to landless agriculturists. In the bulk of the areas where zamindari, jagirdari, inamdari and other intermediary tenures existed—40 percent of the total area—legislation for the abolition of these rights was enacted during the early fifties. This was a good first step. It is claimed that as a result of the abolition of these tenures, more than 20 million tenants of former intermediary were brought into direct relationship with the State and became owners of their holdings. But the problem was much bigger. Intermediaries managed to keep their hold on the land and the objective of giving land to the actual tillers could not be realised in many places.

Evasion Of Tenancy Laws

The land reforms legislations which were enacted to benefit share croppers and small tenants were the reforms of the tenancy system. These reforms included security of tenure for the tenants and acquisition of ownership rights and the fixation of fair rents to be paid by tenants to landlords. Legal safeguards have been provided declaring all tenants non-resumable by landlords in Uttar Pradesh and in respect of tenants and bargadars in West Bengal. In Rajasthan all tenants upto a specified extent of land became non-resumable by owners. In Gujarat, Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mysore, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh resumption of land by landlords from tenants was permitted subject to certain safeguards. In Kerala the proceedings for resumption under tenancy reforms were stayed by the Kerala Stay of Conviction Proceedings Act, 1967. In most of the States, the period within which the right of resumption by landlords could be exercised had expired. In spite of this legislation in nearly all the States there were reports of evasion of the law. One of the commonest ways in which tenants were ejected from the land by landlords was by forcing them to "voluntarily surrender" their land. Even where provisions were made in the law to verify such surrenders, these provisions have been ineffective in preventing possible evictions. Studies undertaken by the different organisations have revealed that the legal safeguards of providing all tenants with security of tenure appears to have been violated in almost all the States. The second legislation to aid tenants and share croppers was that of regulation of rent. This legislation has been enacted in practically all the States in the country, but, as in the case of the legislation for security of tenure, in practice there were varieties of arrangements governing rent transactions between landlords and tenants, with the result that the tenants had invariably to pay rents much higher than those specified under the legislation. The exorbitant rent paid by the tenants and the insecurity of tenure inhibited them from undertaking improved prac-

tices of cultivation and thereby raising their own economic levels in the rural areas.

Ceiling

Legislation for ceilings on land holdings had also been enacted in almost all the States in the country. The provisions relating to the levels of ceilings, transfers and exemptions from ceilings differed considerably from State to State. The purpose of this legislation had been to fix the maximum level of holdings under cultivation and to acquire all surplus land in excess of the ceiling for redistribution to landless tenants and agricultural labourers. In some States the ceilings legislation was applicable to the lands held by each land holder rather than to the aggregate area held by the members of a family. In others, adequate provisions had not been made for disregarding the transfers and partitions subsequent to the date of announcement of intention to impose ceilings on holdings. Again, the old legislation provided a number of exemptions permitting evasions of the ceilings legislation such as exemption of cooperative farms, orchards, well managed farms etc. As a result, the evasion of the ceiling law as enacted during the fifties and sixties was quite common. Over the years only about 9.6 lakh hectares of land was declared surplus in the country over and above the ceilings legislation. Of this area also, about 6.4 lakh hectares had been taken possession of by the State Governments and 4.6 lakh hectares had been distributed to landless tenants and agricultural labourers. With the enactment of a uniform law in all the States following the recent decisions taken by the Congress and the Government, it is hoped that a larger area of surplus land would be available for distribution to small landless tenants and agricultural labourers.

Consolidation Of Holdings

The legislation which would be of immense help to overcome the obstacles of development in agriculture, due

to fragmentation of small holdings, is that of consolidation of holdings. Legislation for consolidation of holdings has been enacted in nearly all the States in the country. It is claimed until April 1970, the State Governments have consolidated nearly 31 millions hectares of land in different parts of the country and were proposing to consolidate a further 14 million hectares by 1973-74. But it is doubtful how far consolidation has been effective. For this also, conscious and organised public opinion amongst the farmers is necessary. There have been other problems in the consolidation of land holdings in recent years. A major obstacle has been the wide differences in land values within the village itself. These differences have been more varying in those areas where irrigation is available only for some proportion of the land. Once different methods of irrigation were possible in all areas, it is likely that the differences in land values would not remain so wide. However, even once the land has been consolidated there is always a problem of its being fragmented with the distribution of the land at the death of the original owner. On the other hand, the reorganisation of small and uneconomic holdings is extremely necessary to facilitate the introduction of improved practices of cultivation by the farmers and thereby augment their income.

Land For Landless

The Government has also attempted to distribute land to landless agricultural workers from time to time. Cultivable waste lands which have been reclaimed are generally distributed to landless labourers. In all about 10 million acres of cultivable waste land has been distributed so far. Further, as a result of the bhodan and gramdan movements, about 1.9 million acres of land was distributed to landless workers. But no planned effort seem to have been made to see the poor farmers can derive full benefit out of it.

The land reforms legislation enacted by the Government from time to time had been aimed mainly at helping the small farmers and the landless agricultural labourers. There may be loopholes in the legislation and these loopholes

will have to be plugged. For example, the legislation for tenancy reforms has been amended in such a manner in Kerala that no land owner is permitted to evict his tenant from the land nor can he charge rents higher than those specified under the tenancy legislation. Again, the ceilings on land holding in that State have been fixed for a family, the minimum level of ceiling being about 2 hectares only. Probably, all the State Governments would have to enact legislations in such a way that surplus land could be allotted to small farmers and landless labourers.

Paucity Of Resources For Small Farmers

We are aware of the new technology in agriculture which has become so well known in the country in the last few years. It can be taken up not only by the big farmers but by the small farmers could take to intensive cultivation on their holdings by using the new seeds, fertilisers, irrigation, etc.

It is not as though the small farmers cannot improve their forms of cultivation and resort to more intensive agriculture. In those areas where the new agricultural strategy has been able to taper down to this class of cultivators, it has been revealed that there is a much larger utilisation of rural labour per hectare among the small farms than on large sized farms. The Farm Management Studies, conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture in selected regions in the country, have revealed that the intensity of cultivation has been largest among the small farms in a number of districts especially in Muzaffarnagar and Deoria districts in Uttar Pradesh, Ferozpur district in Punjab, Surat and Bulsar districts in Gujarat and Thanjavur district in Tamil Nadu. So, these instances prove that small farmers can undertake more intensive cultivation.

But the major problem faced by the small farmers is that of obtaining the necessary resources of inputs for making their farms economically viable. Small farmers have found

it difficult to obtain credit at reasonable rates from institutions so as to enable them to purchase the requisite quantities of seeds, fertilisers, agricultural implements etc., as also for the construction of wells, installation of pumpsets and in some cases tubewells. In the bulk of the States, the cooperative credit institutions have not, by and large, found themselves in a position to cope with the demands of the small farmers. According to the studies undertaken in different regions, it was found that credit was supplied mainly to the large farmers from the cooperative credit institutions rather than to the small farmers.

In Madurai in Tamil Nadu, according to a study of 90 randomly selected farms, the cooperatives were able to help 82 percent of the large farmers in obtaining necessary credit, which accounted for nearly 62 percent of the total credit supplied. The small farmers on the other hand, whose need for credit were large in relation to the farm expenses, were unable to obtain this benefit from the cooperatives. In another study in Burdwan district, West Bengal, it was found that 76 percent of the farmers could not obtain any credit facility from the cooperative agencies. In the Kalyanpur block, Kanpur district in U.P., the bulk of the cooperative credit loans were limited to farmers holding land above 12 acres in size. The small farmers, therefore, remained virtually untouched by the supply of cooperative credit though it is priority meant for them.

Even the banking institutions which have expanded into the rural areas after nationalisation have been unable to assist the small farmers. The main reason for this inhibition of the nationalised banks to help the small farmers is said to be the insecurity of tenure of the small peasants, who have no recorded rights in land. In addition to the difficulties in obtaining credit, the other institutional factors inhibiting the expansion of the new agricultural technology to the small farmers is what has been discussed earlier, that of the tenurial system in the different States. Again, there are problems affecting the small farmers relating to marketing and storage of their produce.

It is gratifying that since 1970, the Government has become cognizant of the problems faced by the small farmers, the marginal farmers and the agricultural labourers. They have, therefore, introduced a number of schemes in the rural areas to come to their aid. One of the schemes that has been taken up is the Small Farmers Development Agency, which aims to assist potentially viable farmers to become surplus producers and to adopt improved techniques of cultivation with assistance in the form of credit, inputs, etc. 46 pilot projects have been introduced in different parts of the country for this purpose. Under the programme small farmers are identified, appropriate programmes are prepared for them and assistance is given to them to ensure availability of inputs, services and credit. It was expected that in each of the projects approximately 50,000 families of potentially viable farmers would participate in the programme. The agency in each pilot project area would function as a catalyst and stimulate the flow of credit from various institutional sources. It will also assist the farmers and the institutions in the work of distribution of inputs, marketing, processing and storage so that an adequate infrastructure could be built up for improving the marketing and storage facilities in the project areas. Arrangements would be made for customer service units to be set up, which would charge the small farmers for the services provided at subsidised rates. Model farm plans and schemes would be drawn up for dairy, poultry farming, etc., and supplied to the participant farmers. A basic premise of these pilot projects is that small farmers are as progressive in their outlook and responsiveness to use of fertilisers and modern agricultural techniques as big farmers and it is only the lack of credit facilities and other institutional factors which have hindered their programmes in the past.

Supplemental Income

Another programme introduced by the Government as a pilot project is the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Scheme. Under this scheme, which has been introduced in 41 districts in the country, the emphasis will

be to provide subsidiary occupations to the small peasants and the agricultural labourers in the form of animal husbandry, poultry and piggery and to encourage them in the cultivation of vegetables and fruits which could have a ready demand in nearby towns and markets. The objective of the scheme would be to assist the small man in making the optimum productive use of his holdings by undertaking horticulture, animal husbandry and poultry. The effort would be directed towards generating larger incomes by channelling credit, improved inputs and improved practices in these activities. Two more programmes taken to assist the small farmers and agricultural labourers which would provide employment during the slack season are the Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE) and the Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP). Both these programmes are for the construction of rural works; however, while the CSRE will cover all the districts in the country and will provide employment on rural works for atleast 1,000 labourers in each district for 10 months in the year, the DPAP aims largely at covering 54 chronically drought prone districts in the country and of undertaking suitable works programmes which would not only be labour-intensive, but would also help in developing the natural resources of land and water in these regions and thereby extend the potential for agricultural operations and additional employment.

Expansion Of Schemes

Most of these schemes which the Government have initiated to help the small farmers in agriculture are still in the teething stages and are likely to be changed or improved upon once more experience is gained. It will certainly be necessary to expand these schemes for all parts of the country. They cannot remain restricted to only a few districts and a few blocks. As it is, the programmes as they are at present, would cover only 10 to 15 percent of the small farmers in the rural areas and make them economically viable. It would be necessary to expand these programmes in a very big way in the coming years, if small farmers and agricultural labourers are to be promised an income and employment commensurate with their dignity and human welfare.

The Government in the Centre and the States have taken up or thought of developmental programmes, particularly for the rural areas and the weaker sections of the people. Land Reform laws are being passed. Ceiling has been fixed on land holdings, so that the surplus land can be made available to landless labourers and small farmers. Certain rural development programmes have also been taken up.

Popular Participation In Rural Development

But it is obvious to all who have experience of conditions in the villages that generally speaking it has not been possible for the people in the lowest strata to take advantage of the schemes which are formulated for their benefit. They do not percolate to the bottom. The landless labourers, small farmers, share croppers, landless peasants are so resourceless, that left to themselves, they cannot get the benefits which are meant for them. It is a tragedy that inspite of the best of intentions, expression of sympathy and all the efforts made, the poor has remained poor. Now, the question is what is the remedy? There may be basic defects in the socio-economic system which creates class differences and make it difficult for the poor to rise. Our Government and the Congress Party under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi has moved in the direction of removing these defects. But legislation and government action itself may not be enough. For implementation, popular enthusiasm and organised efforts are essential preconditions. During the national movement for freedom, many constructive programmes, such as removal of untouchability, communal unity, literacy campaign, drive against opium smoking or drink evils were taken up by the Congress with great success, though there was no fund and the foreign Government at that time was against such programmes. The above success was possible, because popular enthusiasm was created by Congress for making the programmes successful. Now, the Governments are giving all support for development programmes. So, it

should be easy to implement the programmes, if proper organisation is set up and popular enthusiasm is created. In this connection, we may remember what Gandhiji wrote in an Editorial of his paper in 1946 under the caption "IF I WERE THE MINISTER" :

"My first business as Minister in charge of revival of the villages as the centre of all governmental activity would be to find out from among the permanent service honest and incorruptible men, capable for work. I would put the best among them in touch with the AISA and the AIVIA, creation of the Congress and bring in a scheme for giving the village crafts the greatest encouragement. I would stipulate that there should be no compulsion on the villagers, that they must not slave for others and they should be taught to help themselves and to rely upon their own labour and skill for production of articles of food, cloth and other necessaries. The scheme would have to be comprehensive".

Here, the cardinal point is the organisation, like the AISA. Gandhiji said :

"The only question for me as Minister is whether the AISA has the conviction and capacity to shoulder the burden of creating and guiding a khadi scheme to success."

It is necessary to understand the implications of these observations and set up suitable organisation, which can serve the purpose in the present conditions. The common man can be strong only by organising themselves. If land reform laws are to be properly implemented, then the beneficiaries of the laws have to be organised. If the development plan for the rural poor is to succeed, then also they have to be properly organised. Because, individually the poor people cannot take advantage of the schemes and make much headway. Some devoted social workers, who are ideologically committed to the cause of the poor and are well trained to give their

dedicated service, will be necessary to help them to organise. But an outside agency, however well intentioned, cannot do much to take them out of their present conditions. The poor and the weak will have to help themselves through their own organisation. It should be entirely free from the tangles of party politics. Its approach and line of action will have to be constructive and positive. The main objective of this organisation will have to be removal of socio-economic injustice and economic betterment of the bulk of the rural population, who now suffer from abject poverty and ignorance. It should be the endeavour of the organisation to make the development programmes successful. Further, from their experience in actual working, they will have to suggest what steps should be taken to remove the defects in the existing laws or plan programmes and what other measures are to be adopted to ameliorate the conditions of the poor.

Organise Rural Labour

The Government has recently launched a massive campaign against poverty. With that end in view, it is repeatedly laying stress on the necessity for the participation of the people in the development work. It feels that the people have to be involved in the great task of development. We feel that now it is for those who are in the trade union movement to see how the above policy can be implemented in the field. It is obvious that mere emotion cannot achieve much. It is necessary to have an organisation and a movement on the proper lines. So, the INTUC has thought it necessary to organise the rural poor under its banner.

It has been rightly felt that the Congress should have a cadre, who have faith in socialist ideal and programmes of the Congress. The question now is how to build up such a cadre. Some theoretical training or academic discussion may be necessary. But that itself cannot infuse a new spirit among the new cadre that is to be built as they would not have the necessary practical experience. A cadre as envisaged above can be built up only by working in the labour or the Kisan front on the trade union lines. The Kisan organi-

sation, as suggested will give wide scope for creating a cadre, which would help both the Congress Party as well as the INTUC in consolidating their work among the rural areas.

Activities Of The Organisation

The Rural Workers Organisation has much to do. Firstly, the organisation will have to be built on a sound foundation at the bottom.

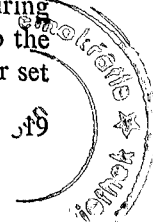
The Organisation will have to be involved with the planning and implementation of rural development programmes. Apart from planning and development, the organisation will have to take such questions as health, housing, vocational training, cultural activities, and supply of consumer goods etc. Implementation of Land Reform Acts, effective application of Labour Legislations, suggestion for appropriate legislation to safeguard the interest of the weaker section in the agricultural field, i.e., agrarian reform, increase of wages and improvement in conditions of work, may constitute important activities of the organisation. Education and training may be also their important activities. In view of the high rate of illiteracy in developing countries, workers' education is of primary importance for the growth of a really representative rural workers organisation.

Production Agency

For implementation of development programmes, a production agency will have to be created. So far one of the major defects is in the field of implementation. Apart from human failure, there is the question of setting up of adequate administrative and other agency for development. Active participation of the people is essential for boosting economic activities. How that can be achieved? Firstly, the Plan must have not only financial or physical, but also a policy approach and that should be "the right to work". It is necessary to create a climate of confidence and optimism amongst the common men by concrete steps to curb disparity. What is also equally important is to set up a proper production agency of

the small farmers and of the entrepreneurs (for small scale industry, self-employment scheme) so that though individually the unit of production may be small, but all put together under the umbrella of a great organisation, they become powerful to stand any competition. The organisation should be of the actual entrepreneurs, assisted by the Government. The organisation will have to look after financial arrangement, raw materials and marketing, making the individual entrepreneur free to devote his time and energy for production. Those farmers who have very small holdings may be persuaded to join an organisation of their own for providing facilities, which are necessary for improved cultivation, but individual holdings will be maintained and its owner will have full right over it. Customer service centres, set up by the Government may then properly help the small farmers though their organisation will have to take up the work of providing subsidiary source of income to the small farmers, or landless labourers. An organisation of the rural poor is of great importance, if schemes for their benefit are to be implemented. It may be on cooperative basis. Individually a farmer may find it difficult to manage finances, marketing etc., which are necessary to run a small industry or to take up some other work in addition to his farming; but if he is organised along with others, he can do the job with a sense of security and without much botheration. In his spare time, the farmer or his family members can produce many things, if there is an organisation to look after the planning, designing, management, financial and marketing side. With necessary modification to suit the changed conditions, A.I.S.A. and A.I.V.I.A. may be models for such organisation. Amul Dairy at Anand may be also a good model so far dairy is concerned to involve the villagers in bringing about a white revolution. These organisations may be formed and run by the actual workers, but Government should provide them with all necessary technical assistance and leadership.

There should be one set of organisation by the actual producers or entrepreneurs in different fields for ensuring growth in production. It should begin from the plant to the National level, occupation-wise. There should be another set



of organisation by experts and trained public workers to guide and help the organisations of the producers or the entrepreneurs, at different levels.

The character of the organisation will have to be somewhat different from that of the trade unions in the industrial sector. But at the same time, if it is to be effective, it will have to be within the sphere of trade union movement. In this task, the INTUC wants help and guidance from the Indian National Congress, the Congress Party in Parliament, Members of Legislatures at the Centres and in the States and Congressmen.

To begin with, it will be necessary to train devoted workers to take up the work in right earnest. Under the auspices of INTUC, the Indian National Rural Workers' Federation has now been set up with Shri Chandrika Prasad, M.P., as the President and Shri G. M. Khode as the General Secretary. It will have to be strengthened by having branches in the States. We want active association/participation of Congress Members of Parliament and other Congressmen and INTUC workers in setting up the organisation and fulfilling its objectives.