

**Collective Bargaining : Perspectives and Practices by Dr. B R Patil, University Press, 1993**

Collective Bargaining is recognised as a major institutional mechanism of resolving conflict of interests between labour and management in free society. Both parties have an objective of reaching a mutually agreeable solution following the bargains.

The book under review deals with this particular concept called collective bargaining at length. Starting with a broad general and then international perspectives, it moves on to national scenario and then industry specific references on practice of collective bargaining. The book has four parts. The first part deals with the general dimension of collective bargaining i.e., theoretical background, process, techniques, strategy and patterns of bargaining as it has developed in countries like Britain, USA, Canada, Sweden, Japan and Australia. The author has given various viewpoints on the theories of collective bargaining. Along with that of Jhon T. Dunlop's, it may be emphasized that Dunlop regarded collective bargaining as 'determination of priorities' within each side in the bargaining process. According to him, a great deal of complexity of collective bargaining involves compromise and assessment of priorities within each side<sup>1</sup> The definition which has been provided at the end is quite exhaustive but it would be unjust from our part if we don't mention that Harold Davey has already stated that collective bargaining may be regarded as an institutional proces for 1) fixing up the price of labour services 2) establishing the system of industrial jurisprudence and 3) providing machinery for representation of individual and group of employees<sup>2</sup> In the second part, the author has elaborated national perspective which indicates industrial relation scenario in India after

Independence, growth of trade union movement and role of state and its policies on industrial relation. He has also analysed some collective agreements of 1950's. It is true that during that period very few companies used to depend on entirely bipartite agreements. Rather, the usual practice was to sign tripartite agreements. While mentioning about public sector, the author has shown patterns of settlement in some industries like Iron and Steel, Port and Docks, Railways, Banking, LIC, etc. In this connection it may be supplemented that the formation of joint bipartite forums in the Corporate level of some industries like Steel, Coal, Chemicals, Fertilisers, Cement etc. have facilitated the position of collective negotiation in public sector.

In part III the author describes at length the development of so-called industrial relations situation and bargaining process in South India Textile and other industries located in Coimbatore. From 1956 onwards there have been a total transformation in the content of bargaining which has given rise to new patterns called "sectionalised bargaining" and "coalition bargaining" in textile industry. He has also elaborated the constructive role played by South India Mills Association (SIMA) in bringing together the trade union operating in that area and also in resolving the problems of recognition of unions. So it is this organisation who has played a major role in instituonlising collective bargaining in Coimbatore region. In addition to the review of books, dissertations and other literature on Collective Bargaining by the author in the begining of Chapter 16, it may be added that another Ph. D dissertation was undertaken in 1984 and completed in 1991 from Calcutta University entitled "Collective Bargaining" in Public Sector Manufacturing Industries in India". This was done through a survey work on existing status, problems and prospects of collective bargaining in the Central Public Sector Manufacturing Undertaking

which was supplemented by content analysis of collective agreements of similar industries.

The concluding chapter is mainly a brief overview of what has been related so far. While concluding the author has also emphasised on the evolving nature of collective bargaining which has undergone lot of changes. As an institution (CB) has certain adoptive characteristics where it is open to socio-political and other environmental conditions and finally, this bipartite method is gradually becoming more and more useful and fruitful method of resolving disputes.

The author has detailed out almost all possible dimensions of collective bargaining. Since in

India we have a definite dearth of books and research works on collective bargaining, this book would, no doubt narrow down this gap and thus would benefit students, researchers and teachers of industrial relations. However, a suitable model based on the basic static as well as the dynamic factors of collective bargaining could have given further insight and enriched the whole presentation.

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1. J. T. Dunlop, The Social Utility of Collective Bargaining inc L. Ulman (Ed.) *Challenge to Collective Bargaining*. Prentice Hall, N.J. 1967. P. 173
2. Harold Davey ; *Contemporary Collective Bargaining* N. Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc. 1959. P 33.