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ALL-OUT EFFORT NEEDED TO MECHANIZE HEAVY OPERATIONS

A. Filippov

The great development of the postwar national economy has been brought about mainly through a large-scale mechanization of heavy laborious processes.

In April 1949 the city of Moscow had achieved, for the majority of its important industries, the average monthly production level which had been planned only for 1950. Among the many plants which fulfilled the Five-Year Plan ahead of schedule, were the "Tormoz" Brake Plant and the "Dynamo" Plant.

For a long time the Brake Plant had failed to carry out its program because its foundry, where all heavy processes were carried on by hand, delayed the work of the mechanized shops. Output increased after the production of castings had been mechanized.

The "Dynamo" Plant is mastering the technique of die casting; moulding by machine is replacing the hand process. The plant has undergone mechanization within the shops and transport between the shops has been mechanized.

In mines, coal is now cut by machines and transported by electric locomotives. In 1948, alone, coal combines increased 2.2 times in number and sorting and loading machines 3.3 times. During 1949, many mines of the Kuznetsk, Donets, and Moscow basins will be mechanized.

No less noteworthy are the changes that have taken place in construction. Industry has provided the Five-Year Plan projects with such machinery as excavators, bulldozers, rock-crushers, cement-mixers, etc. Bulldozers for the Ministry of Construction of Heavy Industry Enterprises, increased eight-fold during 1948, and the number of scrapers, four-fold.

In 1948, earth-moving operations, which are the heaviest and most laborious in construction work, were 60 percent mechanized. A real technical change took place when road-machinery stations were set up. Now, 80 workers of such a station, constructing a rayon highway, accomplish the amount of work formerly requiring 3,000 men.

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Labor conditions have also changed radically in the timber industry. This industry now employs electric saws, hauling tractors, cranes, and other machines on a large scale. In 1948, several laborious operations, such as log rafting, were mechanized 75 percent; C-80 tractors, equipped with grabs, winches, and derricks, were dispatched to river basins where the timber is floated. The personnel has changed from seasonal workers into permanent cadres of workers who have mastered the advanced techniques. These have been growing rapidly, and in the last 2 years have almost doubled. In 1949, industries involving heavy labor are receiving powerful new machines. As a result, the amount of coal loaded by mechanical means is increasing five-fold and timber, four-fold.

However, not all processes in the coal, timber, and other industries, have been mechanized. Not all of the high-production machines are being fully utilized. In many cases, the machines are not being run at full capacity. An open letter addressed by a worker to Kozhevin, the chief of "Kemerovugol," points out that because of poor organization, an excellent C-153 loading machine was active only 30 - 40 minutes per shift. In the same mine, the electric drills and boring machines were poorly utilized. At the Tenth Congress, many such instances of poor utilization of machines and lack of interest in mastering new techniques were pointed out. For example, in the first half of 1948, trucks were inadequately utilized for road construction. In the gathering of peat thousands of additional man-days had to be expended because trucks stood idle.

While Soviet metallurgists achieved the highest production coefficient in the world in the use of blast furnaces, production schedules for cutting machines in the mining industry were not carried out.

In certain branches of the economy, antimechanization tendencies are still to be found. The Glavvostles enterprises have been cutting timber by hand, and failing to utilize a large number of mobile electric stations and electric saws.

The trade unions can do much to rectify things by conforming strictly to machine-repair schedules, systematically checking preparations for a given task, and providing necessary materials on time.

The proper training of workers in production processes is equally necessary. Yet, in 1948, in the eastern coal basins, the number of machinists trained to operate drills was seven times less than the number indicated in the plan, and the number to operate combines, two times less. At the same time there were three times the number of trained hoist mechanics required: thus, one task was exceeded but the shortage of skilled workers remains.

There are serious grounds for concern in regard to the mechanized cadres in the timber industry. A considerable number of training centers have no curricula, school buildings, workshops, or dormitories; consequently, first-class machines are poorly utilized in Leningrad Oblast timber operations because not all the workers know how to handle them.

The personnel section of the Ministry of Timber and Paper Industry USSR assigned to the Karelo-Finnish SSR such a small a quota of men to be trained as trailer-tractor drivers that each driver would have 5 machines to drive while, in reality, two drivers are needed for each machine.

The obligations of the leaders of training enterprises are set forth with exactness in the collective contracts; it is the duty of the trade unions to keep tab daily on their implementation with regard to individual trades, as well as on the quality of instruction.

The trade unions must not consider the mechanization of small operations involving tens of thousands of devices, of secondary importance. In ferrous metallurgy, for example, compulsory "mechanization minima" are worked out for the enterprises. The enterprises are supplied with draft plans and schemes for mechisms which they must produce. In many plants, special shops have been set up for

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the production of small mechanized equipment. Thus, the Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant has a mechanization shop which has turned out for this plant hundreds of new crane-arms, roller conveyers, shuttles, and thousands of meters of monorails and overhead conveyers. The experience of this plant must be widely emulated.

During the past year the Ministry of Construction of Heavy Industry Enterprises saved 100 million rubles as a result of inventions and suggestions by the workers. Very often, however, proposals by workers do not meet with the necessary support. Thus, at the Tenth Congress it was brought out that during the last year 15,000 such proposals by workers were not followed up. Trade unions must eliminate all obstacles in the way of attempts at invention and rationalization of labor by the workers.

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