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LABOR PRODUCTIVITY IN SOUTHERN METALLURGICAL PLANTS
HOUSING AND SANITATION AT AZOVSTAL'

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A number of metallurgical plants are already working on the 1950 schedule. These include the Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk Combines, the Moscow "Serp i Molot" Plant, the Zlatourt Plant and others. The Serov Plant produced its 5-year quota in 2½ years.

The 1948 metallurgy plan has been fulfilled. In comparison with 1947, the production of iron increased 22 percent, steel and rolled goods 28 percent, rail road rails 34 percent and iron pipe 39 percent. The achievements were made possible by providing new or restored equipment and by increasing productivity of labor.

In comparison with 1940, the 1948 utilization of blast furnace capacity increased 13 percent; during the same period the output of steel per square meter of open-hearth furnace sole increased 12 percent. Blast furnaces of the Soviet Union now produce an average of more than one ton of iron per cubic meter per day. Advanced blast-furnace operators of Plant imeni Dzerzhinskii, the Serov and other plants have reached 0.70 - 0.75, coefficients of capacity utilization. In steel smelting, the average output is 5 tons per square meter of furnace sole per day, while the output of such advanced enterprises as the Kuznetsk, imeni Dzerzhinskii, "Serp i Molot," Magnitogorsk and others is 10 - 12 tons. The most advanced US enterprises are surpassed in efficiency of open-hearth furnace operations. Recently, US plants boasted they smelt 20 tons of quality steel per hour. Our Stakhanovites at Kuznetsk and Magnitogorsk produce 30 - 32 tons of high quality steel per hour.

In 1948, metallurgical workers provided over a billion rubles of above-plan accumulations; production cost was below plan; the production per worker was 36 percent higher than that of the previous year, and 6.2 percent higher than that of the prewar period. The most important achievement was the elimination of summer and winter seasonal decreases in production.

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Socialist competition played a large part in these achievements; 91.6 of all the industrial workers, engineers, technicians and employees are participating.

Sideben the achievements, however, are still inadequately popularized. Trade unions should undertake publication of a great number of papers by which to propagate information on the initiative of innovators and on the accomplishments of advanced workers.

Despite results, the progressive norms established last year were not applied in all plants. About 8 percent of the workers do not fulfill the norms. Although the average productivity of labor in metallurgy surpasses that of the prewar period by 6.2 percent, it represents only 86.1 percent of prewar productivity in the southern plants, which are now being restored. Rationalizers' suggestions are still adopted very slowly. During the last year only 40 percent of all suggestions were put into practice. Trade unions must actively participate to eliminate these defects.

Collective agreements must be fulfilled. Some managers and some ministries completely disregard this question.

Interplant competition must be widely developed, and special brigades for higher quality production must be organized to improve production, which very often is of very poor quality. Mining, by-product coke and refractory material industries must supply high-quality products to metallurgical enterprises.

Mechanization in mining industry is still insufficient. The coefficient of utilization of excavators in iron mines is only 0.55 - 0.60. Quality of raw material is very important; for instance, it has been reported that the Krivoy Rog ore contained 2 percent less iron than the percentage indicated in bills of lading.

Over a hundred open-hearth furnaces are now mechanized, and other furnaces will be mechanized in 1949. At Magnitogorsk, rolling is completely mechanized and all operations are automatic. In Soviet metallurgical plants, temperature in furnaces is automatically regulated and smelters do not have to check constantly on whether or not the furnace is overheated.

The maximum must be done to improve living conditions and cultural and social organizations. Trade unions must ensure that all necessary services are provided for workers in such new metallurgical cities as Magnitogorsk, Stalinsk, Nizhny Tagil, Chelyabinsk, in the Far East, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Georgia and Azerbaydzhan.

Restoration of living quarters in the previously occupied areas is slow. A typical example is the Azovstal' Plant where a new blooming mill and a rail structural mill, which did not exist before the war, are operating, but where the attention paid to sanitary and hygienic conditions and to cultural and social organizations is insufficient. In 3 years, over a billion rubles were spent on housing, but results still cannot be considered as satisfactory. In 1949, over 700,000 square meters were planned; this program must be surpassed. It is difficult to understand why the Ministry has planned less housing space for this year than it did for last year.

In 1948, about 400 million rubles were paid for metallurgical workers' retirement pensions. The real increase in their wages was 250 percent.

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