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ALUMINUM FACTORY UNDER CONSTRUCTION; MACHINE-TOOL PLANT EXPANDS PRODUCTION

MECHANIZED PRODUCTION STRESSED -- Borba, No 172, 21 Jul 49

The largest aluminum plant in Yugoslavia, and one of the largest in Europe, is being constructed at Strnisce in Slovenia. At present, installation work is taking place. Some of the equipment was built in Yugoslavia. The first aluminum factory to be built under the Five-Year Plan, it is to form the basis of the Yugoslav aluminum industry. It has a number of boilers, each weighing 25 tons and measuring 10 meters in height, at the separation building, which has firm concrete foundations.

The factory will produce aluminum at very low cost because of the proximity of raw materials and because its production is entirely mechanized. All equipment will be run by electricity. The most powerful high-tension transmission line in Yugoslavia has already been installed to supply the factory with electricity. Equipment installed in two rooms, each 100 meters long, will automatically transform and measure the current, most of which will be used by the numerous electric furnaces. Several large rooms, each over 450 meters long, have been erected to house the furnaces.

Mills for crushing bauxite are found in the bauxite warehouse, which has several floors. The mills stand on massive foundations of concrete to prevent the whole warehouse from shaking when the mills are at work. The crushed bauxite will be collected in a large warehouse next to the mills. A large shovel in the center of this room will collect the bauxite and deposit it in a car. The bauxite will be move mechanically from all sides of the room toward the center.

The rotary furnaces, installed on great concrete foundations among long rows of concrete pillars, are huge pipes, 100 meters long and several meters in diameter, which will rotate completely automatically. The furnaces will not be opened for receiving the crushed bauxite or for removing it. The roasted bauxite will move to the separation department through a corridor which resembles a bridge erected between two structures. At the separation department the installation of equipment is in progress. The boilers are installed on concrete pillars forming a circle as on a huge tripod. A series of filters, small boilers, and other installations can be seen behind the boilers.

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All work at the factory will be mechanized to the utmost. About 32 kilometers of standard-gauge railroad tracks will be laid near the buildings and in the yards to carry hundreds of cars of raw materials.

The workers, of whom there will be relatively few, will merely watch the instrument dials and various valves.

There will be 36 boilers, each 18 meters high, in the decomposition department. The product will never be touched by hand. A special machine will lift the car and deposit the bauxite in the warehouse. From there, the bauxite will be moved through grinding machines, rotary furnaces, and [illegible]ing equipment. On its way to become aluminum, the bauxite will be ground and burned, and will pass in the form of fluid through innumerable apparatus until it becomes alumina. The alumina then will pass through water-filtering equipment and small rotary furnaces where it will be completely dried. It will finally come to the high-temperature electric furnaces, above which the finished aluminum in huge containers will be picked up by cranes.

/See CIA Photo Accession No 43447

REPAIR INSTALLATION TURNS TO MANUFACTURING -- Borba, No 172, 21 Jul 49

Zagreb -- The tool-making plant of the "Meba" metal factory, which in the past merely repaired factory installations, at the beginning of 1947 began manufacture of automobile parts.

After initial difficulties and experiments, the "Meba" factory began manufacturing thousands of distributor caps, and then several other automobile parts which had formerly been imported from abroad. From a factory producing buttons and other similar small articles, the "Meba" factory began converting into a large machine plant, manufacturing many important products.

When a certain electrode factory faced difficulties and loss of time because of a shortage of imported machines for grinding chemical materials and machines for cutting wire for electrodes, after considerable consultations and experimenting the "Meba" factory was able to build machines of better quality and with a 15 percent higher grinding speed than machines imported from abroad.

The Jesenice ironworks had insufficient bakelite bearings for rolling iron. They could not be obtained abroad. Bronze bearings were used, but had to be smeared with lard when under great heat. To save great quantities of fat, bearings of hard wood were later made and the fat was replaced by water. However, these bearings had to be changed every 3 days and production interrupted. Research toward producing bakelite bearings was done at the "Meba" plant, and production of tools was begun. On 17 October 1948, the rolling mills at Jesenice delivered the first bearings, which lasted more than 4 months without changing; they are lubricated with water.

When the collective of the "Ventilator" enterprise desired to use metal scrap to speed production of segments for radiators, the "Meba" plant produced tools for making radiator segments. Thereafter, the "Ventilator" factory no longer used sheet metal, but hard scrap, for the manufacture of radiator segments, and production doubled.

By manufacturing tools, the "Meba" factory made possible the standardization of cook production at the "Metal" factory in Otocac, where production has been increased by over 300 percent.

This year, all tools needed by the first Yugoslav camera factory are produced at the "Meba" plant.

Last year, the construction of the first Yugoslav factory for manual and automatic saws for cutting iron was begun. The task of building equipment and tools for the new factory was assigned to the "Meba" plant. The chief problem in the production of tools and machines was the manufacture of gear-cutting machines. The greatest precision had to be attained in the manufacture of the first machine. This precision was not fully attained, but experience for making other machines was acquired. At present, the factory making saws for cutting iron produces thousands of saws daily.

Production of lenses for field glasses, cameras, microscopes, and various other instruments, as well as optical glass, will soon begin in Yugoslavia. Machines for this production do not have to be imported from abroad because the "Meba" factory has begun producing them already. The first machine for the precision grinding of convex and concave lenses has shown extraordinary results. As a result, the "Meba" factory produces all machines and tools for the first Yugoslav optical glass factory.

The "Meba" factory continues to produce buttons and other small articles.

REPAIR PLANT TO BE OPENED -- Rad, No 192, 13 Aug 49

The new "Trudbenik" plant for the general overhaul of tractors and motor vehicles will be opened within a few days in Usora near Doboj. It will be the largest enterprise of its kind in Bosnia. It will have a modern foundry capable of casting spare parts for trucks and tractors. The lathe shop will also produce spare parts for farm machinery.

The plant will be operating at full capacity next year.

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