ROLE OF THE CRAFTSMAN IN PRODUCTION

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Our Party and Government have always ascribed an important role to craftsmen in ensuring the high efficiency of work in factories. This is perfectly understandable because the fate of the production plan and of socialist commitments is settled, above all, at the section and team level and at the actual places of work.

"It is there, in the primary laboring groups," as L. I. Brezhnev emphasized when referring to craftsmen in production sections, "just as in the cells of the living organism, that take place those creative processes which ultimately determine the dynamics of development of the economic life of our state."

Some of the most important decrees of the Central Committee of the CPSU have been aimed at increasing the role of the craftsman in production, developing his initiative and creative activity in all possible ways, improving training, especially with young people, and generating an atmosphere of high standards, of satisfaction only with the best, and of mutual assistance.

In the "Krasnogvardeets" Combine there are 154 craftsmen and senior craftsmen. Work with them has constantly been and is still at the center of attention both of the administration and of the Party and trade-union organizations. However, every decree of the Central Committee of the Party has reinvigorated this work. Decrees, of course, do not become realities automatically, but much organizing work is required.

The first steps at organizations were taken by extended meetings of the party committee of the combine. At these meetings resolutions were submitted and discussed to form the concrete program of action for the lower Party organizations, the trade committee, and the Young Communist League committee of the combine.

An important place in these resolutions was occupied by questions of further development of Socialist competition as a reliable instrument of efficient management and a school of experience and training. Among the engineers and technical workers, competition assumed forms such as obligations to reduce production times, personal measures to ensure economy in materials and labor costs, and discussions on creative collaboration with workers, with scientific organizations, and with medical institutions.

Much has been done to improve economic studies, studies to improve the occupational knowledge of the workers, engineers, technicians and other employees, and studies to raise the ideological and political standards of the workers.

The scale of these studies and the diversity of forms of training can be illustrated by concrete data. In the academic year 1974/75 34 schools for economic training of higher, middle, and initial grades (732 engineers, technical, technical workers, and other employees), courses in production engineering, courses in particular subjects, a school for the study of progressive methods of work, a school for instruction in two related jobs (265 workers), and courses for specialized training of craftsmen (90 persons) have functioned in the combine.

Outside the enterprise, 320 workers, engineers, technicians, and other employees have undergone further training and obtained higher qualifications, including 104 persons at higher educational establishments, 100 at technical schools, 6 in postgraduate studies, 80 at schools for young workers, and 30 persons at miscellaneous courses.

Specialization of the combine for the production of complex medical engineering goods calls for a certain level of medical knowledge on the part of the engineers, technicians, and other workers.

To solve this problem, close day-to-day collaboration has been established with the S. M. Korov Military Medical Academy. One successful feature of this collaboration has been the creation of a People's University of medical and engineering knowledge, based on the Academy, with a three-year course ending with the defending of projects for diplomas. During the current year the combine will already have about 600 specialists who have gained these diplomas, and by the end of the tenth five-year period there will be over 800 engineers, technicians, and innovators.

Schools of Communist labor have become important on their own account as an effective form of mass propaganda, combining ideological and political and moral education of people with improvement of their economic and occupational knowledge. At the present time there are 16 such schools in the combine, where 335 workers are studying.

New forms of socialist competition and study have stimulated the productive, social and political activity of the engineers and technicians, including craftsmen and section leaders, and have improved their collaboration with workers' groups, increased their role in production, and raised their authority over the workers.

Experience of our factory directly with craftsmen and experience of the work of the craftsmen themselves in the light of the decrees of the Central Committee of the CPSU may be of interest.

Since 1971 socialist competition between production sections for the rank of "Best production section" and between craftsmen for the rank of "Best craftsmen of the combine" has developed extensively in the combine.

The results of the competition are assessed monthly on the basis of established technical and economic indices. The winning section is awarded a temporary red pennant and a money prize, the size of which depends on the number of workers in the section. The title "Best craftsmen of the combine" is awarded to the craftsman whose section has kept the title of "Best production section" for three months in succession.

On the basis of the results of All-Union socialist competition the badge of "Winner of the socialist competition in 1973" has been awarded to 18 craftsmen, and the badge "Winner of the socialist competition for 1974" to 9 craftsmen. The senior craftsman of the power section, S. M. Fedorov, has been awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor.

Since 1972 a council of craftsmen has functioned on social principles. It has become an effective form of active participation of a large group of craftsmen in the administration of the factory. The council of craftsmen organizes the study and spread of progressive experience in production and training work, it participates in the drawing up of plans of economic and social development of the departments and the combine as a whole, it receives reports from craftsmen on the course of socialist competition and on the state of work in connection with the change to new conditions of payment for work, it gives recommendations on the promotion of workers to the rank of craftsmen and section leaders, and so on.

The council of craftsmen organizes its activity on the basis of three-monthly plans, which are agreed with the trade-union committee and the Party committee of the combine.

A council of tutors for the ideological and occupational training of juveniles and young workers has been created in the combine and is working effectively. It is headed by one of the senior craftsmen, so that close cooperation with the council of craftsmen is facilitated.

The council of tutors, which also works under the direction of the trade committee and Party committee of the combine, studies, generalizes, and disseminates the best experience of training work; it organizes studies with the tutors, analyzes the state of the studies and training of young workers, and up to the end of their studies it carries out the ceremonies of dedication to the working class and the ceremonial handing over of the first subscription; it takes part in the organization of the ceremonial departure of young workers for military service with the Soviet army and for the conduct of "coming of age" evenings and so on. The tutor-instructors are the right-hand men of the craftsmen.

With the publication of the decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU entitled "On the work of the Ministry of the Chemical and Petroleum Engineering Industry on increasing the role of the craftsmen in production" activities with production craftsmen became still more planned in character. In accordance