A SYSTEMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN LABOR PRODUCTIVITY IS THE PRESSING TASK OF THE COMMITTEE'S LOCAL AGENCIES

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It is noted in the 21st CPSU Congress decisions that one of the most important tasks of the Seven-Year Plan is a substantial improvement in the productivity of labor. This decision fully applies to the State Inspection Laboratories of Measuring Equipment which are faced with problems of labor productivity, the full use of reserves, and overlooked possibilities in utilizing more efficiently the operative personnel's working time, all of them requiring immediate solutions, in view of the fact that the decisions of the 21st Party Congress and those of the June Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee must be carried out in the laboratories without an appreciable increase in the existing operative personnel.

It is at present advisable to introduce a change in the organizational structure of the inspection laboratories. Many laboratories have retained the old internal subdivisions in all the spheres of measurements. Such an organizational structure obliges the leader of each group to spend some of his working time on administrative and organizational problems, even if his group consists of 3-5 people only. It is necessary to decrease the number of subdivisions inside the laboratories and merge two or three groups into one, with a senior engineer in charge of it. Larger groups provide the personnel with greater flexibility in their work and the leader with an easier problem in distributing his forces; workers of such groups obtain the opportunity of mastering related specialities in instrument testing, thus advancing towards the required universality. Finally, the merging of small groups frees their former leaders of any administrative functions, thus making them entirely available for production work. Some of the inspection laboratories, having carried out such reorganization, have become convinced of its beneficial effects on the fulfillment of the planned targets, increased skill of the personnel, and improvement of labor productivity.

In a number of laboratories there still exist separate inspectorate groups. The segregation of these groups has bad effects on the general inspection work, since their personnel is divorced from routine testing and loses its skill through lack of practice. In inspectorate groups people are often employed who are unsuitable for testing work and unfamiliar with testing techniques. Moreover, the skilled personnel of these groups is often too small for general inspection of large plants with diverse and complex measuring equipment, thus leading to inspection at a low technical level.

Workers of the inspectorate groups often duplicate the work of state inspectors by establishing temporary branches in localities and inspecting the areas which had only recently temporary inspection branches established in them by state inspectors. It is necessary to end the segregation of the inspectorate groups in the laboratories, and distribute their personnel among other groups, so that for any general inspection, whether it is a trading establishment or a metallurgical combine, specialists with the required training can be allocated for inspection from among the groups' personnel, and highly skilled specialists sent for the general inspection of large industrial establishments. This measure will have a beneficial effect on the wastage of labor time and the productivity of labor of the laboratory operative personnel.

It is instructive to quote the experience of the Gor'kii State Inspection Laboratory, which tackled the problem of labor productivity and investigated the reason for inefficient utilization of the working time.

On the basis of the 1958 report, it was pointed out to the laboratory that the production per head of its operative personnel was low, and it was suggested that it was due to the bad organization of labor and excessive internal divisions, which prevented the leaders of the groups from directly participating in the routine work.
The laboratory personnel examined the possible ways of raising labor productivity and adopted the following measures. The number of internal groups was reduced by three and it is contemplated to abolish yet another group. The size of the newly established groups is of the order of 10-16 people. The workers of the inspectorate group were transferred to the testing groups. Energetic individuals with initiative and suitable qualifications for technical and organizational leadership were placed at the head of each group. In addition to supervising work, the heads of groups participate in the testing and inspection work.

The supervision of departmental inspection agencies, which was previously segregated, was also transferred to test groups, and it is now being carried out in conjunction with requests for instrument repairs at the same or neighboring plants. This measure provides considerable savings in the inspectors' time and travelling expenses in view of the existence in the Gor’kii region of 44 establishments with 204 measuring equipment inspection agencies. The laboratory has strengthened the control over a rational and full utilization of each operative worker's time. At the production conference the workers of the Gor’kii laboratory made other useful suggestions for an even more efficient use of the operative worker's time and greater labor productivity. All these measures provided in the first quarter of their application an increase of 21% in the production of each operative worker.

Great opportunities for raising labor productivity exist during the operation of temporary branches for checking measures and measuring instruments in the localities.

The laboratory workers of the Russian Federation operate annually over 2000 temporary branches, spending in them over 75,000 man-days. It is obvious that an efficient utilization of the state inspectors' time would have a beneficial effect on the general productivity of labor, and would in turn make it possible to use them in other laboratory work by reducing the time spent by them in the localities.

However, the organization and operation of temporary branches suffer to date from many defects, which lead to a low laboratory productivity, inefficient utilization of the inspectors' time and, in many instances, to an unsatisfactory state inspection owing to lack of supervision of the temporary branches by the laboratory administration.

In order to raise labor productivity and improve the quality of state inspection, the personnel and administration of inspection laboratories should take energetic measures for a better organization of the work of temporary branches. Tentative schedules for the operation of temporary branches should be discontinued; they should be fixed on the basis of previous experience in such a manner as to encourage the state inspectors to carry out productive and high-quality work. The supervision of the quality of inspection in these branches and proper utilization of the inspectors' time should be increased.

At the same time, inspectors who carry out high-quality work in the localities and reduce the time spent on it should be commended. The experience and methods of work of such inspectors should be studied in every laboratory and given wide publicity. The report of the work carried out in temporary branches should be examined at production conferences of the laboratories and evaluated according to their results.

Often state inspectors spend two or three days on their return from the districts on compiling an operation and financial report. Such a waste of time should be immediately stopped and the inspectors instructed to prepare their reports during the operation of the temporary branches, so that on their return they would only have to compile the final summaries in the minimum of time.

Mobile inspection laboratories play an important part in raising the labor productivity in local inspections. The use of auto transport in local inspection, with a few exceptions, is still far from being efficient. A rational use of auto transport combining testing and inspection work shortens considerably the operation of temporary branches and leads to high-quality state inspection.

The curtailment and elimination of some of the cumbersome and unwanted accountancy will lead to greater labor productivity in the inspection laboratories and permanent district branches. The writing of reports by test groups of the laboratories should be reduced to the minimum; the registration of technical statements, certificates, inspection documents, etc., should not be done by test groups. Any work of that nature should be carried out by clerical workers in the laboratories and by the receivers of the instruments.

Many heads of laboratories who have on their staff clerical workers, demand that leaders of permanent district branches compile financial and operational reports and keep accounts. As the result of these unreasonable