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CONSTRUCTION OF STATE INDUSTRIES
IN NORTH VIETNAM

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CONSTRUCTION OF STATE INDUSTRIES IN NORTH VIETNAM

[Following is a translation of an article written by Tran Dai Nghia in Lao Dong (Labor), Hanoi, No. 793, 1 September 1960, page 3.]

September 2, 1960 marks the 15th Anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and this is a festive day for the people of Vietnam. During the last 15 years, under the wise leadership of the Party and following our leader Chairman Ho, the working class and all the people of Vietnam have fought hard to overcome many difficulties and have obtained glorious results.

Fifteen years ago, under the oppression and exploitation of colonialism and feudalism, the economy of Vietnam was very poor and backward. Through 80 years of rule, the French colonialists had transformed Vietnam into a market for French products. As far as industry was concerned, there were just a few mining enterprises and a few light industrial factories and machine repair plants. Heavy industries, such as machine, refining and synthetic factories, etc., were almost non-existent. The smaller handicraft branches were oppressed and for the most part, merchandise used by the people were imported from foreign countries. The life of the people and the workers was miserable; unemployment, famine and sicknesses were constant menaces to the people.

After the August Revolution and during the Resistance Period, almost all industrial facilities were in areas occupied by the French army; most of them were either destroyed or non-productive. Activities were weak.

On the other hand, in the resistance areas, though industry and handicraft industries were encouraged and helped by the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, fighting was still going on, therefore all construction was either on a smaller scale or dispersed. The speed of development was very limited.

Then came the day of "peace." However, in withdrawing troops, the French colonialists destroyed or expropriated great

quantities of raw materials, machines and important documents. They forced thousands of specialists and technical cadres to move to the south; at the same time, they hired people to stay behind to sabotage production. All this created more difficulties and problems for us.

However, during the past six years, under the positive and brilliant leadership of the Party, the government and Chairman Ho, and together with the enthusiastic help of the Soviet Union, China and the fraternal socialist countries, the Vietnamese working class, for the love of their country and for the love of socialism, have given their utmost devotion to the development of labor. In a unified spirit they continuously compete for the restoration and advancement of our young industries, thus bringing them to a more important stage today.

At present, after three years of restoration and thanks to the Three-Year Plan for reforming and developing our economy, we have expanded facilities in nine factories remaining from the Resistance Period. These include the Tran Hung Dao Machine Factory, Hoang Van Thu Paper Mill, Nam-Phat phosphate [industry], etc. Thus, we have not only promoted production but improved product quality as well, which in turn leads to development in agricultural production, handicraft industries, and in the people's livelihood.

Furthermore, we have gained two electric plants in Hanoi and Haiphong, one machine repair factory and one coal mine in Hongay and Campha.

We have maintained constant and regular production schedules; at the same time in order to abandon the old systems of oppression and exploitation, we have replaced them with systems and policies that aim at protecting labor, at improving the spiritual and material lives of the people. Recently these enterprises have been provided with more equipment and better means of transportation, enabling the further development of production capacity. As estimated for the end of 1960, the production of the two electric plants in Hanoi and Haiphong will have increased three times compared to that of 1939 and coal production in Hongay-Campha will have increased 133% compared to 1939.

The healing of wounds and of destruction from 15 years of fighting is being realized but the utilization of old machinery and facilities still remains.

During the last six years, the Department (Bo) of Industry has restored 13 old facilities, among them are such large enterprises as the Nam-dinh Textile Mill and the Haiphong Cement Plant. Most of these enterprises are being supplied with more equipment. The Nam Dinh Textile Mill,

for example, is being supplied with 1,100 automatic weaving machines and other equipment, thus making it possible for the mill to increase its production to double that of 1939. The quantity and quality of silk, cotton and woolen materials have also been improved. As to the Haiphong Cement Plant thanks to the good supply of machinery and improvement in technology, the factory has been able to increase its production to about 90,000 tons over that of 1939. In a short time, when the enlargement of this construction is complete, the production level will increase many fold.

Concerning the construction of new factories, thanks to the devoted help of the Soviet Union, China and the fraternal countries in providing specialists, equipment and raw materials, we have constructed 120 new factories, of which 73 have started production.

Speaking especially of the Hanoi Machine Plant, which is completely equipped with modern machines, including a large steel mill, it is producing all kinds of equipment for use in other factories.

During recent years, new factories have been built everywhere. In the industrial zone of Vietri, for example, there are now electrical factories, paper mills, sugar refineries and synthetics factories. In the industrial area of Thuong-dinh, there are soap, tobacco and rubber factories. In Thai-nguyen, especially, iron and steel plants are being constructed, marking a major step in industrial growth and in the history of industrial construction in Vietnam.

Concerning commodity supply to markets, we have produced many varieties of goods, including lumber, canned fish, tea, sugar, office products, rubber synthetic products, etc. Many of these commodities have received international prizes and some of the merchandise is used for export.

For the last five years and during the first half of 1960, the industrial branch has fulfilled and exceeded the planning goals of the State. Compared to the 1955 value, the estimated value of the total output of State-owned industries in 1960 has increased to 1,920%; the value of silk products produced has increased 10 times and consumer goods have increased about 90 times.

Thanks to this speedy development, the [value of] agricultural and industrial production of State industries increased from 1.5% in 1954 to 17% in 1959. This has brought a big change to the backward, lagging industry and agriculture of 15 years ago. Parallel to the construction and development of the central industries, local industries have also been constructed and developed. By the end of 1958, we had over 500 local State owned enterprises with a total

output of 16.3% of the central State-owned industries. In local areas, smaller factories--such as the cement factory, etc.,--have been constructed, and these also share in the production of iron and steel and construction materials. In a number of provinces, local industrial enterprises have developed in districts and villages. These and the minor handicraft industries, cooperatives and private business enterprises make a network of local industry, which complies with the demands of agricultural production, improving living standards, and providing sufficient raw materials to the central industries.

To prepare for agricultural development, geological investigations have been paid great attention. On the old foundation left by the French, on which there remained practically nothing, we have built a geology headquarters [department] which is composed of leagues and troops who investigate and examine natural resources in all forrest and mountainous regions in the North. With results obtained, State industry thus has made important contributions to the restoration and development of the economy, cultural development and improvement of the people's lives. At the same time, State industry has become the nation-wide leader in the people's economy.

Besides supplying machinery, equipment and raw materials to promote production and transportation, State industry also supplies manure, electric power, and consumes agricultural products, thus creating conditions for the development of agriculture. At the same time State industry increases export merchandise, thus promoting foreign trade and economic cooperation with socialist countries.

The progress in quantity and quality of industrial development during the past years has been the great achievement of the working class of Vietnam. The Party and the government have never ceased to give great attention to the people's education, to raise political standards and ideas for the people, to encourage the people's leading role in the management of enterprises. Moreover, the people's spiritual and material lives have been given great attention; for example, wages in 1958 were 153.3% of that in 1955; this went up 112.4% more in 1960.

In the last five years, the State has built 691,342 square meters of living quarters for workers and officials; this does not include beneficial construction for the people, such as hospitals, convalescent homes, nurseries, public messes, sports fields, etc.

Being deeply grateful for the support given by the Party, the government and Chairman Ho, and to the selfless help of the fraternal countries, the working class of Vietnam

has never stopped to develop its capacities and creativity. As a result, the workers have contributed millions of valuable ideas to the competition movement and thus have created 14 labor heroes, over 10,000 competitive soldiers and over 18,000 advanced workers.

However, the above victories are but first-step victories which do not as yet permit us to be satisfied with results. The First Five-Year Plan demands from the people a speedier development, with higher quality.

In assigning this responsibility to workers, our cadres will continue to improve technological standards and management standards in production and, especially, to improve socialist labor enthusiasm, to overcome all difficulties, and to surpass completely the planned goals of 1960 and the Three-Year Plan and to be better prepared for the First Five-Year Plan.

Being proud of the successful results obtained, the working class of Vietnam is determined to give all efforts for socialist industrialization in the North and to fight for the unification of Vietnam, to construct a peaceful and unified Vietnam, which is independent, democratic, strong and wealthy.