INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS
IN THE SOVIET REPUBLICS
OF THE
NON-RUSSIAN NATIONALITIES

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MORE than three-quarters of the entire industry of tsarist Russia was concentrated in its central provinces, in the Ukraine and in the Baku oil district.

The non-Russian borderlands of the empire were looked upon by Russian and foreign capitalists alike as nothing more than sources of raw material and markets for the sale of manufactured goods.

When it came into power, the Soviet Government abolished the regime of national oppression and established the equality of all nationalities. To give effect to this national policy, it had to put an end, in the shortest possible time, to the economic
and cultural backwardness of the nationalities formerly oppressed by tsarism.

Accordingly, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government designed and enacted a series of measures which enabled the districts inhabited by the backward nationalities to overtake the more developed central regions of Russia.

Many industrialization measures were included. During the first two Five-Year Plan periods (1928-37) the former "borderlands" of the country witnessed the construction of numerous industrial establishments and the growth of large forces of workers and professional people of native stock. Without all this, national equality would be but a sham, an empty, meaningless phrase.

The republics of the non-Russian nationalities comprised in the U.S.S.R. have fundamentally reorganized their national economy and have attained gigantic industrial expansion. From agrarian adjuncts serving as raw material bases for the industries of Russia proper, they have been

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Lead Works of the Ridder metallurgical plant in Kazakhstan
turned into mighty centers of Socialist industry. Vital centers of the iron and steel, coal, oil, machine-building and electric power industries have sprung up in the Soviet East.

There is no republic or region of a non-Russian nationality in the U.S.S.R. that has not founded its own industry during the last ten years. This is equally true of both the large and the small republics and regions.

Let us, for example, consider the Bashkirian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, whose dimensions are relatively small. The funds invested in the national economy of Bashkiria in 1932 alone equaled the total sum invested in this region by tsarist Russia in half a century. During the Second Five-Year Plan period (1933-37) capital investments in the national economy of this republic exceeded 1,000,000,000 rubles. Bashkiria, which before the Revolution had practically no industrial enterprises at all, has now built up scores of new factories, including the well-known
Ufa Motor Works and an oil cracking plant. The Beloretsk and Baimak Works have been totally reconstructed and transformed into modern enterprises. This republic has also been found to contain oil, and the Ishimbai and Tuimazy oil fields are already being successfully operated.

Let us now turn to another republic—Kazakhstan—one of the eleven constituent republics of the Soviet Union. This is a vast country, occupying a territory of 1,060,000 sq. miles, and is exceedingly rich in valuable minerals. It includes the huge Emba oil fields, second in size to the Baku fields. Its copper deposits constitute 60 per cent, and nickel deposits 50 per cent of the total known deposits in the U.S.S.R. Kazakhstan also has huge coal deposits. Recent prospecting revealed immense phosphorite deposits and new chromite beds. They are among the richest in the world. The metal content of the Altai gold, silver, zinc and copper ores is of the highest.

Yet, until the Revolution, all these
Mechanized loading of manganese at the Chiatura mines in Georgia
riches lay buried in the ground untouched. Kazakhstan was a backward region whose nomad population engaged almost exclusively in rather primitive cattle breeding. Meat and leather were the sole products they provided for Russia’s central regions. There were no industrial enterprises of any account, no railroads and no telegraph or telephone service.

Today the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic represents a land of new constructions. A large coal industry has been created here, with Karaganda as its center. Numerous oil fields are being exploited, the erection of the gigantic Balkhash copper smelting works has been completed, the Ridder Lead Works has been entirely reconstructed, and a huge lead factory, the giant of the Soviet Union’s lead industry, has been erected at Chimkent, while several new chemical and other works have been added to the republic’s industrial plant.

The tempestuous rate of development of the republic’s industries may be judged by the fact that during the years of the
Second Five-Year Plan lead smelting in Kazakhstan increased twelve-fold and in 1937 constituted 75.3 per cent of the total lead smelted in the Soviet Union, as against 30.2 per cent in 1932.

A roadless country in the past, Kazakhstan under Soviet rule has been covered with a whole network of overland communication lines, including numerous railroads whose trackage totals 4,160 miles, while 3,700 miles of waterways have been made available for navigation.

Bordering on Kazakhstan is Uzbekistan, one of the Soviet Socialist Republics situated in Central Asia. In the past, this republic, like all the other borderlands inhabited by non-Russian peoples, was a tsarist colony. It supplied the central regions of the empire with cotton, which the tsarist authorities did not allow to be woven or even spun in the regions which produced it. Today, Uzbekistan has a number of big textile mills. Special mention must be made of the huge plant in Tashkent, the republic’s capital, which is equipped
with 112,000 spindles and 3,246 looms. A second section of this plant is now under construction, upon completion of which the plant will have in operation 211,000 spindles and 6,952 looms. Many electric power stations, plants manufacturing agricultural machinery and implements, silk reeling mills, clothing factories and other industrial establishments have also been built in Uzbekistan. Not far from Tashkent, on the banks of the Chirchik River, a combined plant producing electricity and chemical products is now under construction. It consists of a hydro-electric power station with a capacity of 270,000 kilowatts, which will supply cheap energy to the industrial establishments of Tashkent, and of a fertilizer factory whose products will go to enrich the republic’s cotton fields.

The industrial development of Uzbekistan has led to a considerable increase in the number of the republic’s native workers and professionals. Over 100,000 people are now employed in its large-scale industries and on construction. More than half of these
are skilled and semi-skilled Uzbek workers. An Uzbek technical intelligentsia—technicians and engineers—has also come into existence.

Similar records of achievements may be exhibited by the other non-Russian nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Industry is rapidly expanding not only in those republics which formerly were agrarian colonies pure and simple, but also in Azerbaijan and the Ukraine, which even before the Revolution had quite a few industrial establishments.

In Azerbaijan, the old Baku oil industry, dating back to pre-revolutionary days, has been entirely reorganized. As a result, the annual oil yield has increased 3 times in comparison with 1913, the gas yield 69 times and the production of gasoline 48 times. In recent years a number of new oil fields have been prospected and are now extensively exploited. In 1938 the new fields and the new wells on the old fields accounted for 83 per cent of the total oil output.

The Donetz coal basin, the chief pur-
veyor of coal for the whole country before the Revolution, is located in the Ukraine. Now, with the development of the Kuznetsk coal fields in Siberia, the Karaganda coal fields in Kazakhstan and local coal fields in Central Asia, Georgia, the Far East and in other districts, the Donetz basin’s proportionate share in the Soviet Union’s output of coal has, naturally, diminished. However, as far as absolute figures go, the mining of coal in the Donetz basin is increasing from year to year and has more than tripled in comparison with pre-war times. Today, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic produces twice as much coal as all of Poland.

The Ukraine also had an iron and steel industry before the Revolution. This, too, has been thoroughly reconstructed during the years of the Soviet rule. In place of the old blast and open-hearth furnaces and of the old rolling mills, new, thoroughly modernized equipment has been installed. Many first-class new works, such as the Zaporozhye Steel Mill, the Azov Steel
The new mountain highway leading to the Aldan gold fields in Yakutia
economic revival has been followed by the Socialist industrialization of its national economy.

A number of hydro-electric power stations, with an aggregate annual output of 350,000,000 kilowatt-hours, have been built. All these power houses are linked up into a single chain, which makes it possible to regulate the flow of electric power.

Extensive work is now under way to utilize the abundant waters of the huge Sevan Lake, situated high in the mountains, for which purpose a number of hydro-electric power stations are being erected on the cascade system along the Zanga River.

When construction of the cascade is completed, leaving the lake and its innumerable fisheries intact, Armenia will annually be supplied with more than 3,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours of cheap electric power.

At the same time the water discharged by the turbines will go to irrigate more than 321,000 acres of fertile soil.

Construction of power plants has made possible the extensive development of in-
dustry. New branches of industry have been launched, and the old branches have been fundamentally reconstructed. Armenia’s copper industry has made big strides. At present the annual output of the Alaverd and Kafan copper smelting works amounts to 10,000 tons.

The republic also has large chemical works. In Erevan, the capital of Armenia, a huge synthetic rubber works has been erected. Some time ago a new cement factory, producing 114,000 tons of high-quality material annually, sprang up on the Davalin sands, at the foot of a long range of mountains rich in limestone.

A machine-building plant manufacturing engines and compressors is another addition to the Republic’s industries.

A new tobacco factory manufactures 1,700,000,000 cigarettes a year. Armenia’s canneries yearly put out 20,000,000 cans of preserved fruits and vegetables. The output of wine presses and distilleries, meat packing plants and other establishments of
Cracking plant at Neftedag, a new oil center in Turkmenistan
the food industry has also increased to a marked extent.

Two cotton ginneries have been built to take care of the rich cotton crops. Their capacity is 22,000 tons of cotton annually.

A huge textile plant, with large new spinning and weaving mills, forms the nucleus of a regular little town of its own within the city of Leninakan. This plant has 117,000 spindles and produces 33,000,000 yards of textiles a year.

The leather and shoe industry has also undergone considerable development.

Erevan, which only recently used to amaze the foreign tourist by its winding, typically Asiatic streets and clay hovels, has been transformed into a beautiful, well-planned city really deserving of being a capital.

Under capitalist conditions nations required whole centuries to attain to modern modes of production.

With the impetus given them by the October Socialist Revolution, our formerly backward nations needed little more than
a decade to develop into flourishing Socialist republics, where exploitation of man by man and national oppression have been wiped out once and for all, where advanced Socialist industry and large-scale Socialist agriculture hold undivided sway.