

Part 1

The line of Russian workers is governed, first and foremost, by the "collective", the smallest unit of authority in any given factory, plant, or enterprise. The sectional and shop cells form a highly organized and well supported political organization. These shop committees are in turn governed by the shop and section party chiefs who are elected by the factory or plant party secretary. This post carries officially the same amount of authority as the production director, or president of the plant, but in reality it is the controlling organ of all activities at any industrial enterprise whether political, industrial or otherwise personal relations. The party secretary is responsible for political indoctrination of the workers, the discipline of members of the communist party working at the plant and the general conduct and appearance of all members.

The Minsk Radio and Television plant is known throughout the union as the major producer of electronic parts, and sets. In this vast enterprise created in the early 50's the party secretary is a 6'8" man in his early 40's who has a long history of service to the party. He controls the activities of the ~~plant~~ communist party members and other workers employed at this major enterprise in Minsk the capital of the 3rd working Republic, Belorussia.

This factory manufactures 87,000 large and powerful radio and 60,000 television sets in various sizes and ranges including pocket radios which are not made mass produced anywhere in the U.S.S.R. It is this plant which manufactures ~~the~~ ^{small} console model combination radio-phonograph television sets which were shown as mass produced items of commerce before several hundreds of thousands of Americans at the Soviet Exhibition in New York in 1959. After the exhibition the sets were duly shipped back to Minsk and are now stored in a special storage room on the first floor of the administrative building at this factory, ready for the next international exhibit.

I worked for 23 months at this plant, a fine example of orange and even slightly better than average working conditions. The plant covers an area of 25 acres in a district one block north of the market throughfare and only 10 minutes from the center of the city with all facilities and systems for the mass production of radios and televisions. It employs 5,000 full time and 300 part time workers 88% percent women and girls.

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