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SOURCE Sunkan T'ongsin

DEVELOPMENT AND PLANS FOR NORTH KOREAN TRANSPORTATION

The railway system of North Korea, constructed by the Japanese, with materials and technicians supplied almost entirely by them, faced serious difficulties after Korea's liberation. The withdrawal of the Japanese immediately brought about an acute shortage of technicians. The creation of the 38th Parallel also deprived North Korea of locomotives, cars, and other equipment, as these items were concentrated mainly in South Korea at the time of the country's division. The destruction of important tunnels, bridges, rolling stock, rails, and other railway installations by the Japanese before their withdrawal further aggravated the situation. Consequently, a complete restoration of the railway system was the major task in the economic rehabilitation of North Korea following the liberation.

Railway freight shipments for 1948, when the Two-Year People's Economic Program for 1947-48 was completed, amounted to 16,108,400 tons, an increase of 41.5 percent over 1947 shipments. During this period, the Yangdok-Ch'onsong section on the P'yong-Won / P'yongyang-Kowon Line, and the Kaego-Koin section on the Manp'o Line, which originates in Man'ojin, P'yongan Pukto, were converted into electric railways. Before conversion, eight trips a day were the maximum on the Yangdok-Ch'onsong Line because of steep inclines in this sector. After conversion, as many as 17 trips could be made on this line. The amount of freight carried on the Kaego-Koin Line has tripled since the conversion.

The total railway freight for 1950 is expected to be 18 million tons, which surpasses the all-time record for Korea reached in 1940 when the Japanese transported enormous amounts of raw materials and military supplies through and within Korea.

The above goal is expected to be attained through capacity utilization of existing railway facilities. Some of the practical plans are to increase the average daily carloads to 1,588 carloads in 1949 and 1,906 in 1950; the number of freight cars in use to 11,307 in 1949 and 11,599 in 1950; and the aggregate hauling distances to 3,407 million kilometers in 1949 and 4,158 million kilometers in 1950. In addition, the technical phase of railway operation will be improved, the unit load increased, back-tracking avoided, idling time minimized,

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scheduling and dispatching improved, and additional locomotives obtained. It is estimated that the railway maintenance shops will repair 901 locomotives, and the railway districts /repair shops, 10,555 locomotives, during 1949; and 1,048 and 12,669 locomotives respectively during 1950. The railway maintenance shops are also expected to overhaul or recondition 65 obsolete locomotives during 1949-50.

A considerable number of basic construction projects will also be undertaken during 1949-50 for the railway facilities. There will be at least 22 outstanding projects, including the construction of the West P'yongyang Railway Plant, the Wonsan Railway Plant, Kaech'on (coal mine in P'yongan Namdo) Wide-Gauge Line, Kowon (coal mine in Hamgyong Namdo) Line, and Kanggye (P'yongan Pukto) Cable Railway. Of these, the first two projects were started in 1948, and are expected to be completed in 1951. The other three projects are scheduled to be completed in 1949.

The West P'yongyang Railway Plant will be equipped with a foundry, locomotive, passenger-car, and freight-car manufacturing plant, and a smithery. The foundry has been in operation since April 1949. The construction of the passenger- and freight-car manufacturing plant is scheduled for completion in July 1949.

The operation of the locomotive workshop at the Wonsan Railway Plant has been started, while the expansion of the passenger-car and freight-car plants, parts manufacturing plant, and the foundry is under progress. When the installations of the main facilities are completed in 1950, the Wonsan Railway Plant will start manufacturing locomotives, passenger and freight cars, and all other railway equipment and parts in large quantities.

The Kaech'on Wide-Gauge Line expects to open its Anju-Yonghung section on 1 July 1949, and the line's entire distance of 29.3 kilometers by 1 August 1949. When completed, this line will link the P'yongyang-Sinuiju Line and P'yongyang-Manp'ojin Line, cutting the distance between Kaech'on and Anju in half and eliminating the detour via P'yongyang. The opening of the Kaech'on-Anju Line will also help to facilitate the Anju irrigation project.

The improvement of the Kanggye Cable Railway Line is expected to be completed in 1949. The many instances of long, 37-degree gradients, the many sharp curves, and the weak foundation of the roadbed have greatly restricted the transport capacity of this line. Consequently, the cable-winch capacity has been increased to 140 percent, the roadbed reinforced, and the gradations minimized. This line is an indispensable link between Chagang Do and the east coasts.

The government ordered construction of the Kowon Line to facilitate transport of anthracite coal from the Kowon mine. The work was begun in March 1949 and is expected to be completed by January 1950. Plans are being pushed for the construction of bridges over Chaeryong Gang and the Hongi Gang in Hwanghae Do, and for the installation of additional yard tracks at Myongch'on, Odaejin, and Komusan in Hamgyong Pukto on the east coastal line. The government has appropriated 908 million won for 1949, and 512,727,000 won for 1950, for the basic improvement of the railway system under the Two-Year Program.

In conjunction with railway transportation, highway and water transportation is also improving. The total motor-truck freight for 1949 is /estimated at 1,216,000 tons. This amount is expected to increase to 1,997,000 tons in 1950. A sum of 288,502,000 won has been earmarked for basic improvement of highway transportation.

The total marine transport for 1949 will amount to 714,400 tons /estimated, which is expected to increase to 1,244,700 tons in 1950. Under the Two-Year Program, the government will purchase and construct new vessels and expand the ports of Hungnam, Wonsan, Ch'ongjin, Najin, Tanch'on on the east coast and

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Chinnamp'o on the west coast, in order to facilitate transport of goods to and from democratic countries in Asia, southeastern Europe, and the USSR, with which North Korea has concluded economic and cultural exchange pacts. Accordingly, all the shipyards under the supervision of the Bureau of Marine Transport Control are building iron-hull vessels and sailing boats, while the provincial authorities are hastening expansion, improvement, and construction of harbor facilities. A total of 88,304,000 won for 1949 and 282,470,000 won for 1950 were allocated for the general development of marine transportation.

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