

"Mr. Belikov, how many days did the conflict last? When did you find out about it and when did you fly to Vorkuta?

"I found out immediately, on 2 March. At the time I was in Novokuznetsk. I arrived in Moscow and on 4 March, together with the Minister, I left for Vorkuta. We landed at night and went straight to the mine together with the leaders of the Party provincial committee. We went underground and spoke with the miners, suggested that they came up and discuss things calmly on the surface. But they were all wound up and didn't want to leave the mine before they had received definite answers.

"We couldn't do anything at five in the morning except go back to our hotels, catch an hour's sleep and then go back to the mine again. We got all the departments together, quickly solved the problems, told the miners what had happened and in the afternoon of 5 March they came up to the surface. So the conflict had lasted for approximately three days".

"How would you assess the whole situation?"

"There were many different aspects to it. The workers' demands were to a great extent justified. But, of course, I cannot approve of the methods they used. They had not exhausted all avenues before taking the final extreme step. Not to mention the fact that almost all the problems could have been resolved at enterprise level, and were within the authority of the employees to do so.

"As far as the administration of the mine, the association, the managers, economists and other engineering and technical staff, then I will say