Q.   "The Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Forestry (Goskomles), Academician A. Isaev, stated at a recent plenary session of the Central Committee of our sector's Trade Union that "the question of overfellings of allowable cuts is being removed from the agenda since it is an ecologically immoral phenomenon". Everyone knows that in the past, however, the planning bodies of the republic repeatedly took decisions and interceded with the government to secure the retention of such overfellings. What action is being proposed with a view to the firm application of scientific principles of forest use under the new conditions of management?"

A.   "A heavy overfelling of the allowable cut occurred in the Republic in the fifties and sixties. At that time, there was a 1.5 to twofold overfelling of the allowable cut, which could not fail to have had an effect on the age structure of the forests. Although the 'percentage of forest cover' ecological index, by virtue of intensive reforestration and elimination of overfellings, has now been increased to 34 per cent for the Republic as a whole (as against 26 per cent in 1950), we have not yet succeeded in restoring the resources of mature timber. These currently make up only 2.4 per cent of the total forested area. Of course, in these circumstances even what would formerly have been perceived as a slight overfelling is unacceptable. We maintain that in the very near future the procedure for reviewing and sanctioning scientifically validated allowable cuts must be set in order and that we must get rid of the multi-staging that occurs in their coordination with various institutions. These latter frequently assume no responsibility for the fate of the forests, and to make matters worse, exert pressure on those who have a say in the possible "making of an exception" so as to unjustifiably increase the allowable cut and even "scientifically" validate the increase.

     "Certainly, the economy's requirement for timber is constantly growing. Where will the additional raw material be gotten? Which tactic should the sector adhere