

explosives. They used to be priced at 600 roubles a tonne. Today this has risen to 5,000. Our institute has developed a set of manual implements consisting of six items. It is priced at 120 roubles. A shovel costs 25 roubles. So before we talk about artificial rain and infrared technology the problems of prevention, detection and day to day procedures for extinguishing fires need to be resolved. Consequently, the staffing of the parachutist-smoke jumper crews needs to be increased and a united effort made by the various departments, so that they can jointly participate in solving this problem."

P. Barsukov (Deputy Minister of Forestry for the RSFSR). "We refer to the forest as national property. This being the case, it is for the State to allocate sufficient funds for the work of the fire protection service. We are accused on every level of sitting on funds and not giving them to the fire protection workers. But check for yourselves and you will find that there is simply nothing for us to give. We maintain that the State ought to finance all nature conservation operations, including - possibly on a first-priority basis - aerial protection of the forests. The cost of the Il-76P project alone is one and a half million. I wonder where we are going to find this money, given that all we have is one and a half million to cover the sum total of the scientific and ministry requirements.

"Another matter I want to bring up is the tactics employed in fighting forest fires. I deeply respect science but I completely disagree that it has done all that is necessary for the successful combatting of fires. In our forestry projects science is often working for the benefit of science. We have no genuine system for the extinguishing of fires, either in flat or mountainous forests. You are showing us equipment which has been tested in a kitchen garden or a good sector of forest. It is as though you said, "Look, we have the airborne tankers with which to strike the first blow, and if the fire begins