

Having filtered down through the various organisations as usual, the letter was returned to the trust from Moscow. And again a commission was set up, which galloped around the departments, discovered that some significant things were wrong and avoided the main points altogether, which were the unsatisfactory working conditions in the maintenance workshops and the system of housing allocation. They apparently saw nothing wrong in the fact that, allegedly for particular achievements at work, a certain manager had "wrung out" of the Ministry and the association a new Volga car for his own use, to replace his old one, and the trade union committee had meekly gone along with him, despite the fact many of the trust's workers, who had been with them for years and years, were still waiting in vain for the opportunity to buy a car. As for the "unprecedented successes" supposedly achieved by the workforce under Mr. Petrenko, economists who have looked at the figures confirm that it is all a myth. If there had been a "great leap forward" in anything, then it was first and foremost in the number of administrative and managerial personnel: since the new boss had arrived, the administrative offices had become two and a half time more crowded.

The employees all thought that there should be cutbacks in the trust's office staff and that the production teams should change over to leasing contracts, which could only improve matters. The management, naturally enough, gave the idea a hostile reception. It is true that production was reorganised nonetheless, but it was done without consulting the workers, in fact, quite the opposite, in opposition to them. The nascent idea in the administrative offices of renting out equipment was at first presented as the panacea to all ills, quite forgetting that there could only be any effect from