

been only too happy to free its warehouses from the chips, but there were no railway cars. So it was forced to take the chips to the dump. There you are: poverty at one end of the conveyer and plenty at the other. And yet each is crying, both the supplier and the customer.

If you think that the railroad employees are not crying, you are mistaken. And here is the proof. The telegram addressed by the Minister of Railways to the logging enterprises cannot be called anything but tearful. "Crossties, give us cross ties!". This is the essence of the cry emanating from the very souls of the railroad workers. And this is readily understandable for there are 50 million rotten ties lying on the tracks at the present time, which is four times more than the allowable norm for ensuring traffic safety. It explains the recent increase in the number of crashes, accidents and derailments of rolling stock. But here is the irony of fate: the logging enterprises no longer need to be persuaded. Just give them the empty railway cars. But in the last four months they have been undersupplied by about 135,000 units. So who will save whom? A complicated question!

Yes, it is a mess and then some. All those years of radical reform were accompanied by the slogan "Away with the anti-spending mechanism!". And was much accomplished to this effect? About two years ago I visited the Nikolsk Timber Industry Enterprise (Vologda Oblast). Their forest reserves consist entirely of over-mature aspen. There was no woodworking at all. Nor is the picture any different now: this lespromkhoz is sitting on subsidies and continuing to ship round timber cheaply. The Association is not providing financing to build woodworking capacities. Given that production expenses are much higher than the prices of the products, how can losses be avoided? Meanwhile there are sources from which to obtain the money. For what purpose, I wonder, was it necessary to