

Shortly before the district conference of the Party took place I visited the plot where the team led by Leonid Lobanov is working. It is one of the best in the Karabul'skii forest industry enterprise (lespromkhoz). It happened to be the day when they had harvested the millionth cubic metre of timber since the start of the Five-Year Plan. But Lobanov did not even refer to the event, which would previously have resulted in a meeting or some other celebration.

"You know what's worrying me?" said the team leader, as we strode up and down the plot. "It's what our grandchildren will say about us. For we have been turning the pine forests into tundra".

Lobanov was not given an opportunity to speak at the Party conference. But the preoccupations of the man and his sense of responsibility for what he himself is doing and what is being done at his behest were echoed in speeches delivered by a foreman of the Inbakha lespromkhoz, an electrical cable installer from the Severnyi lespromkhoz, the General Director of the "Karabulales" Association and others.

There is indeed good reason for the Boguchanskii Communists to feel anxious. The most modest estimates indicate that some 30 per cent of the timber felled in the district is either left behind at the plots, rots in the stacks, is set on fire in the dumps and at the lower landings, or sinks to the bottom in the course of the timber float. Although the enterprises of the "Boguchanles" Association annually harvest about 3,000,000 cubic metres of timber, not a single cubic metre is dispatched in the converted form. It has been this way for tens of years. More than 400,000 cubic metres of wood are written off as "wastes" here every year. Wastes, you say? More than 100,000 of these cubic metres consist of wood already delivered to the lower landing: shortwood, wood culls, tops. The remaining 300,000 cubic metres of "foliage" and broken ends are left at the felling sites. Collect all this raw material, put it to work - and you can protect the forest over an area of 1,600 hectares.

What if you collect the timber strewn along the banks of the Angara? If you raise the sunken logs in the water-transport depots? Not less than two million of them would be garnered throughout the region, in which case four thousand hectares of forest stands would not need to be axed.