

A. "Exportles is a major exporter of timber and paper products on the world market. Imports also occupy an important place in its commercial operations. We sell millions of cubic metres of timber products and over two million tonnes of pulp-and-paper products annually. Exportles has important dealings with foreign freight companies, especially in regard to the chartering of vessels and other services. It is not easy to buy and sell such a large quantity of timber products, given the fierce competition on the world timber and currency markets. It is necessary to have a thorough knowledge of prevailing market-conditions and the laws of each country with which we are trading, and also to correctly determine the conditions of payment, transportation, grading, legal arbitration, and so on. Special attention is devoted to the setting of prices for products.

Deals are concluded after a series of complex negotiations. They often begin in Moscow and end with the signing of a contract abroad, or vice versa. Executives of our specialized firms and product specialists participate in the negotiations. Legal and financial experts, shipping agents, and industrial representatives are also invited to take part. Every year nearly 4,000 negotiations with foreign firms take place in Moscow. An equal number are conducted abroad, including those held by our joint companies. Contracts are concluded for various periods - some are one-time orders for immediate delivery, others are one-year contracts, and still others are for a period of several years."

Q. "What can you tell us about the results of your organization's work in 1987 and what are the prospects for Exportles in 1988?"