

Former Deputy Minister of the Timber, Pulp and Paper and Woodworking Industry, G.F. Pronin, answered: "At present, only first- and second-grade pulp is being manufactured. This situation arose because Ministry of the Chemical Industry enterprises refused to certify superior grade pulp, despite the fact that GOST approved the superior quality category by mutual consent of both parties. The refusal to certify has deprived the Ministry at the Timber, Pulp and Paper and Woodworking Industry of the USSR enterprises of their incentive for producing superior quality output ..."

The chemists on the other hand believe that the Grade I pulp manufactured by the Svetlogorsk Pulp and Paper Combine must become the analogue of Soviet-made pulp. Its quality is high, and it is in no way inferior to non-USSR analogues".

Nor is the USSR State Standards Committee standing apart from the fray: "... We consider a further increase in the alpha cellulose content to 93 percent to be economically unfeasible, since it considerably reduces finished output yield in the case of both the supplier and the consumer without significantly affecting viscose fibre quality..." (I would note that western companies consider it profitable to raise the alpha cellulose content even as far as 94 percent).

The Ministry of the Chemical Industry does not agree with the State Standards Committee's conclusion. And so forth and so on ...

I do not presume to judge who is innocent and who is guilty in this real-life story. Here the experts should have the last word. As I see it, however, the correspondence has highlighted a number of interesting questions.