

At the same time one must keep in mind that, as regards the question of financing, the Finns intend to involve their northern colleagues - and not without reason as the declaration by the head of the Norwegian government indicates. In the final analysis, we are talking about billions in "eco-investments".

People in the region understand that giving assistance not only to the USSR but also to other countries of the former Socialist bloc, which possess a huge arsenal of "killer enterprises", will demand more than merely the surpluses of comfortable life. As the Prime Minister of Finland, Harri Holkeri, once said, the West will even have to lower the living standards of its people. President Mauno Koivisto has also remarked that the development of Eastern Europe "demands sacrifices from the West". Of course, people had in mind primarily economic assistance, but environmental protection ranks among its highest priorities.

"Glasnost" was so effective in exposing such ecological neglect in the GDR, Poland and the USSR that the Chairman of the International Commission on the Environment and Development, Gru Harlem Brundtland, the former Prime Minister of Norway, was compelled to declare:

"Very serious international cooperation is needed to dismantle and rebuild industry in these countries, which is still operating at the cost of catastrophic damage to the environment and to people's health..."

In speaking these words the leader of the Norwegian Workers' Party does not intend to gloat over former "ideological enemies". His word, I think, expresses that same pain and shock which we are now experiencing from decades of mismanagement and abuse of nature.

It is here, in the realm of ecology, that the West seems to be ready to help us immediately. And this is because, as we are seeing, it is the salvation of the West itself that's at stake.