

is into it and other small rivulets that the plants are discharging industrial wastes, petroleum product residues and sewage.

Enormous harm to the ecology is being wrought by the integrated lespromkhoz. The loggers are "forgetting" to leave protective strips along the banks and are using the rivers for their own industrial needs. As before, there is a careless attitude towards the forests.

In the Ashi district, tan bark and bast fibre are harvested. In the view of lespromkhoz specialists, willow wood is valueless as timber. But what about its value from the water conservation standpoint? Meanwhile, there is no dependable forest protection monitoring of the activities of the tanning-bark harvesters: they make off with whatever they like from wherever they like. The same barbarous attitude is manifested towards the unfortunate linden. It would seem that the time has come for the Southern Uralian linden to be listed in the Red Book.

One is alarmed by the lack of openness (glasnost'), by which I mean the concealment from the public of the true state of affairs concerning the ecological disaster in the Ashi district and indeed, the Urals as a whole. I have witnessed at first hand the lifeless rivers and dozens of hectares of dead trees existing right alongside the Krasnoural'sk Copper Smelting Combine and also the suffocating pall of gases over Niznyi Tagil and Magnitogorsk, from which people are beginning to retch...

But in the official reports everything is as it should be. Public opinion is silenced and no action taken, for fear of antagonizing the economic planners and the local Soviets.