

termed gross carelessness. To this must be added the improper handling of toxic substances, which frequently leads to leakages, sudden discharges and contamination of soil and water. Elementary observance of the prescribed regulations will reduce pollution levels by 25 per cent, said E.A. Sizov, Head of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry's Directorate of Nature Conservation and Water Use, in a speech delivered at the conference.

V. K. Gusev came up with an astonishing figure: no less than 90 per cent of all harmful emissions are the result of lax discipline on the production line. Last year, as a result of errors in calculations by the engineering services, the Astrakhan gas condensate complex discharged about a million tonnes of sulphur dioxide into the atmosphere. How could the Volga and its fish stocks not have been affected by this?

The unwarranted rush to build giant enterprises has led to an excessive concentration of industry in many regions and to an unacceptable stressing of the environment. The outlook for nature-intensive (and hence energy-intensive) production is clearly bleak. The lion's share of our petroleum, gas and coal is being used expressly for the generating of electricity. The extensive development of the economy, that is, putting all of the emphasis on volumes, kilowatts, cubic metres and tonnes must be relegated to the past. Speaking in Tyumen', M. S. Gorbachev said that we shall not and cannot support those directors who are orientating themselves by outmoded attitudes and outdated norms, and associate increases in growth rates of production with the acquisition of additional material resources.

For now, instead of counting on the final product directly meeting the needs of the population, the emphasis will be on the intermediate product, especially in the extractive industries, that is, on the tonnes of coal and oil, cubic metres of timber and gas, and so on. This will continue so long as the environment is in danger: for the economy will "feed" on itself, destroying without any benefit the sphere of our habitation. At the same time, behind every instance of Nature being