

Q. And meanwhile the timber industry of Lithuania is deeply integrated into the national economic complex of the USSR...

A. 80 percent of all the paper and 92 percent of all the paperboard produced in Lithuania is presently being shipped outside the republic. The customers taking delivery of these products are scattered all over the 14 other republics. The RSFSR alone receives pulp and paper products worth 80 million rubles annually. Take wood-fibre panelling, for example. Seven million square metres of it are exported from Lithuania through the Exportles (Timber Export) Association. And now, due to the lack of raw material, we have underproduced by almost 2 million rubles worth of production, including some unique items which are not manufactured anywhere else in the USSR. Many of our customers are finding themselves in difficult circumstances and are beginning to incur losses.

Q. I think that the USSR Minlesprom (Ministry of the Timber Industry) will take such facts into consideration and will assist in reinstating contractual discipline. And yet regardless of how the political situation in Lithuania may develop, it seems that the economy of the republic should be given a stronger orientation towards its own resources in terms of supplies of raw material. What is being done in this regard?

A. The situation which is developing with regard to the supply of raw materials is forcing us to think along these lines. Consequently, we are looking jointly with the republican Ministry of Timber for ways to increase our own timber resources. We are not ruling out the possibility that we will have to curtail the output of some types of products and replace them with others that consume less material. However, we certainly do not intend