

sphere of utilization for the coming years is not expected, and we are incapable of raising labour productivity sharply without government intervention. Moreover, the Supreme Soviet has adopted measures to curb the growth of wages to avoid increased inflation."

"Won't this lead to a situation where - to be realistic - the fleet will follow the miners' example and balk? Won't they say that it was you, the current administration, that refused to lift a finger... What then? Maybe these questions today need to be posed somewhat differently?"

"How else can they be posed? During my time I've prepared a number of proposals to the government. We have appealed to the VTsSPS (All-Union Central Trade Union Council as well... Their answer: 'It's bad everywhere. You're not alone!' For two years we labored over a draft of a government decree. We got it approved by Goskomtrud (State Committee on Labour and Wages) and the Ministry of Finance and support had almost been secured... But there was a change of personnel at the top and our draft was shoved into a far corner, together with proposals for night and Sunday duty pay, length-of-service pay, and so forth. They told us: "Look for reserves."

"And we are looking. At least, since the Soviet rouble has dropped in value we proposed to the Main Economic Administration of Minmorflot (Ministry of the Maritime Fleet) that nuclear ships' crews be paid partially in cheques drawn on Vneshekonombank. We understand that in raising the issue this way there are serious contradictions, but what alternative is there. We have to do something to reduce the tension among sailors, if only within the steamship line itself. The Murmansk Fleet does not operate on lines. Its principal orientation is tramp service and work in the Arctic. Some, as we say, are leaving "to the left" (abroad) and others "to the right" (to the Arctic). And this, given the economic difficulties in the country, will always create an explosive situation.