

and initiative. But instead, we are advised to sit, do nothing, and wait for instructions: on a specific date and at a certain time you are to start doing this or that, but what exactly we don't know yet! The crux of the matter lies, of course, in the basic unwillingness to share power. This is the reason behind all the allegations about pulling the forest complex apart "piece by piece." It is as if the market is some kind of monolith which can be controlled from a an immense office right at the top. If this were the case, then what is the purpose of the anti-monopoly legislation on which the government is presently working?

Let me explain my position in full. If our enterprises begin to detach themselves from the Association in exactly the same way, it will be impossible to do anything with them. This is an objective process that can only be accepted unequivocally. There can be no intertwining of interests.

I am convinced that now is not the most appropriate time for embarking on a "witch hunt", for putting labels on everything and determining the degree of individual blame for the crisis in the timber industry. It would be much more beneficial to get down to finding constructive solutions for correcting the situation which has arisen. Nevertheless, since the bill has been presented to me, I am forced to respond to it. The reader, I think, will be more than interested to get an idea about the real situation in the area in question.

Is it really true that "one of the most powerful associations of the past is falling apart right in front of our eyes because of the near-sighted and at times adventurist policies of its leaders"? All the average annual indices from the current and past Five-Year Plans attest to the contrary - volumes have increased substantially. Moreover, the rate of increase in wages has not exceeded the rate of increase in labour productivity.