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EXTRACTS FROM THE SOVIET PRESS ON USSR FORESTRY
AND FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES
SEPTEMBER 1989

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 based on integration of forest use, and
 strategy for the mechanization and social

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Undermechanization is preventing our sectors
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 therefore hinge on three main requirements:
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 50-60 per cent; effecting major improvements in the
 social sphere; assuring ecologically clean production
 processes. None of this will be possible in the
 absence of a machine-building capacity within the
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 will not be achieved overnight. Accordingly, the
 role of external economic relations will be vastly
 increased. Without the active involvement of foreign
 firms and without increased exports of timber and
 paper products it will be very difficult for us to
 supply the country with all the consumer goods it
 needs.

Simultaneously with the growth in exports
 the development of new forms of cooperation is
 foreseen. To date, in the timber industry nine joint
 enterprises have been formed with Finnish, West
 German and Japanese manufacturers of lumber, veneer
 and furniture. A further 40 such projects are under
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TIMBER & WOODWORKING

Excerpts from an Article on Perestroika by Minister of the Timber Industry V. Mel'nikov

We are still a long way from solving such vitally important problems as improvements to management based on integration of forest use, and devising a strategy for the mechanization and social reorientation of the forest-based industrial complex. It is because of this that we are unable to meet all of the requirements of the economy and the general public for paper and other forest-based products. The annual shortfall of timber is between 20 and 25 million cubic metres.

Undermechanization is preventing our sectors from moving ahead. Restructuring (perestroika) must therefore hinge on three main requirements: increasing the productivity of labour by at least 50-60 per cent; effecting major improvements in the social sphere; ensuring ecologically clean production processes. None of this will be possible in the absence of a machine-building capacity within the sector. Establishing it will be a difficult task and will not be achieved overnight. Accordingly, the role of external economic relations will be vastly increased. Without the active involvement of foreign firms and without increased exports of timber and paper products it will be very difficult for us to supply the country with all the consumer goods it needs.

Simultaneously with the growth in exports the development of new forms of cooperation is foreseen. To date, in the timber industry nine joint enterprises have been formed with Finnish, West German and Japanese manufacturers of lumber, veneer and furniture. A further 40 such projects are under consideration. Among them are enterprises with annual production capacities of 200 to 400 thousand tonnes of newsprint, 250 to 300 thousand tonnes of

sulphate bleached pulp, 5 million paper-based sterilisation kits for surgical instruments, and 200 to 250 wheel-based forest tractors.

One of the most important tasks is improving the administrative and managerial machinery. The first stage of the economic reform has shown that in reserves alone, we have barely scratched the surface. In forestry, financing that is tied to expenditures no longer makes it possible to interest people in the efficient execution of the work. This means that it is necessary to restructure the entire system of reforestation on a khozraschet (self-financing and profit-and-loss accounting) basis which makes the foresters personally accountable for the quality of the plantations being established.

A serious planning problem is presented by the state of imbalance between specific resources and production targets. It shows up in the overestimated output of round wood in comparison with what is present in the allowable cut. In the Vologda, Perm and Kirov Oblasts and the Krasnoyarsk Krai this discrepancy is as high as 10 to 14 per cent, which is leading to chronic non-fulfillment of planned deliveries.

The lack of balance also shows up in the fact that every year, the quotas established for us with respect to the timber and other materials required for the manufacture of lumber and pulp, the building of logging roads and effecting operational repairs are not large enough.

Perestroika calls for new economic thinking, not only on the part of the workers in our sector but also on the part of the central planning bodies - USSR Gosplan and USSR Gosstrib. It must find

expression in a fundamental change of attitude towards solving the underlying problems in the development of the forest based industrial complex.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'
September 16, 1989
Pages 1 and 2 (Abridged)

Imports of Woodworking Equipment from Yugoslavia

A pleasant surprise awaited journalists who assembled for the planned signing of the first contract concluded during the "Lesdrevmash-89" international exhibition. Instead of one agreement, two were signed.

While western firms are still undecided over whether to make a deal with Soviet partners, the Yugoslavian representatives, based on many years of experience in establishing contacts with the USSR, decided to sign a trade agreement with two of our organizations for the sum of 750,000 roubles.

The pioneer in this is the Yugoslavian firm "Sloveniyales", which has long standing and fruitful ties with the Soviet Union.

"Sloveniyales" is an international organization, engaged in trade, engineering, production, mediation and consignment work. The world renowned firm does business in 70 countries. Its products are known in the USSR, Poland, the GDR, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Egypt, Venezuela and China.

The contract in question pertains (a) to the delivery to the USSR of equipment for a number of woodworking combines and (b) to the production of environmentally clean equipment for various of our industries. It would seem that the first swallow has alighted on the shore of integration. Will it be followed by others?

Lesnaya promyshlennost'
September 21, 1989
Page 3 (Slightly abridged)

Underdeliveries of Lumber to Armenia (September 1989)

<u>Lumber</u>	Planned consignments	67,200 cubic metres
	Delivered to date	34,850 " "
		(51.8 per cent)

Underdeliveries of joinery products

"Tsentromebel' and its subordinate 'Kalinindrev'"	21,000 sq. metres
"Vologdalesprom"	13,700 " "
"Kirovlesprom"	13,200 " "
"Kostromalesprom"	4,500 " "

Associations disrupting scheduled deliveries of lumber

"Krasnoyarsklesprom"
"Komilesprom"
"Kemerovoles"

Agencies that had not yet begun to ship lumber

Minlesprom of the Ukrainian SSR
Minlesprom of the Lithuanian SSR
and the associations
"Amurlesprom", Karellesprom",
"Sevzapmebel'" and "Kazmebel'prom".

Lesnaya promyshlennost'
September 7, 1989
Page 1 (Gist)

Joint Ventures Existing and Planned for the Timber Industry

A. The principal tasks and goals of an exhibition are traditionally subordinated to the establishment of business contacts and to the broadening of scientific, technological and economic trading relations between Soviet and foreign commercial and scientific circles.

The Soviet Union has at all times expressed a readiness to expand cooperation in science, technology and trade on a mutually advantageous basis. Under the new conditions, however, new opportunities will occur for the realization of these tasks. The growth of industrial cooperation and direct links in our country, and also the founding of joint ventures means that the Soviet Union is becoming an even more promising partner for foreign business circles. This combination of factors will lend to the present exhibition a distinctly commercial character, since it will offer highly favourable conditions for the establishment and strengthening of scientific, innovative and business contacts.

In 1988 alone, 14 protocols and agreements were signed in our country which provide for the establishment of direct industrial and scientific and technological ties with Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Cuba, Mongolia, Czechoslovakia, Laos and Yugoslavia.

The "Lenles" Association and the "Valmet" Company jointly designed and manufactured the prototype of the "Voith" grab harvester, intended for use in principal fellings and tending fellings. Three modifications of the jointly manufactured "Sofit" machines will be on display in the Soviet pavilion.

The year 1988 also marked the beginning of cooperation with the Austrian "Springer" Company in the rebuilding and technical refitting of the Segezha Sawmilling and Woodworking Combine. Discussions are being held with this firm on the question of arranging for cooperative production of log sorting lines. A similar project is being discussed for the Ust' Ilimsk Timber Industry Complex.

A number of companies in West Germany, Italy, Sweden and other countries are contributing to the modernization of Soviet furniture manufacturing enterprises. The British firm "Beloit Walmsley" and the Austrian "Voith" Company are supplying equipment for the technical refitting of our pulp and paper enterprises.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

September 12, 1989

Page 4 (Full text)

B. Several dozen projects for the establishment of joint ventures with firms in various capitalist countries are currently under consideration. They include sawmilling, woodworking and furniture manufacturing enterprises, and also joint ventures in the pulp and paper industry pertaining to the production of commercial bleached pulp, newsprint, paperboard, white paper goods, paper bags, etc. Interest in the founding of joint ventures is being manifested by some very large companies in Finland, Sweden, Canada, the USA, Austria, Italy, West Germany and Australia.

Some of the ventures have already commenced operations. Examples are the Soviet-Japanese "Igirma-Tairiku" enterprise in the Irkutsk Oblast for the production of high-grade lumber for use in house building; the "Consofin" consulting engineering enterprise, founded by the Soviet State Institute for Planning and Projection in the Paper Industry (Giprobum) and the "Jaakko Poyry" Company (Finland); and a Soviet-Swiss venture "SB Engineering" for the development and production, with the well known "Bison" Company (FRG), of integrated equipment for manufacture of wood-based boards by the continuous press method.

In 1988 the founding documents were signed for the "Chudovo-RWS" joint venture (the "Novgorodlesprom" Association and the Finnish "Raute" and "V. Shoman" companies) for the production of large-frame plywood, including the laminated variety. It is expecting to begin operations in 1991.

Two joint ventures were established in 1988 by the "Sevzapmebel" (Northwestern Furniture) Association: the "Lentek" and the "Finn-Stroi"

Company for building and contracting work, and the "Lenraumamebel'" and "Rauma-Repola" Company for furniture manufacturing.

It is planned to establish a further series of joint ventures involving the production of wood based boards and furniture, wheel mounted tractors, wallpapers, lumber and parquet, the manufacture of various types of pulp and paper products, and the organization of logging.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'
September 12, 1989
Page 4 (Full text)

New Credit Financing Arrangements Within the Soviet Timber Industry

The formation of "Lesbank" (Timber Bank) - a shareholder-type credit financing institution - was reported in the July 8, 1989 edition of "Lesnaya promyshlennost'" and resulted in wide interest among the readers. More detailed information became available during an interview with the Chairman of the Board, V.D. Sivulei. The following are the main points that were brought out.

1. In addition to the founders (the "Zakarpatles" Association and its enterprises and Uzhgorod State University), the following have become shareholders: The All-Union Foreign Trade Association "Sovbunker" (Moscow); The Moscow Commercial Innovations Bank "Interbank - Interznaniye"; The Ukrainian Scientific Production Woodworking Association (UkrNPDO);

The Technological Planning and Design Institute
(Ivano-Frankovsk);
The L'vov Forest Technology Institute;
The Directorate of Worker's Supply of "Zakarpates".

2. Any institution or organization contributing not less than 500,000 roubles is eligible to become a shareholder.

3. Shareholders will receive guaranteed dividends amounting to not less than 4 per cent annually on paid up shares. After three to four years the dividends may be as much as 10 to 15 per cent or even more.

4. Whether to admit cooperatives will be for a meeting of the shareholders to decide. Parallel with the main programme, which will be limited to State enterprises and institutions, joint stock companies will be formed within the enterprises to provide for contributions by individual workers. The minimum deposit will be 1,000 roubles for either a three or five year term. Interest of four and five per cent respectively will be paid at the end of these terms. For funds withdrawn prematurely the interest will be two per cent annually. Savings will be fully secured and all transactions will be in confidence.

5. Servicing of accounts will not be done as shareholders will have current accounts in a system of special banks.

6. The funds will be used for credit financing of measures to increase the volumes of production and services, make improvements to technological processes and achieve cuts in expenditures.

7. While "Lesbank" is the brainchild of "Zakarpates" and will have an elected Council to be headed by the General Director of "Zakarpates", analogous funds are already operative within certain of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry's other territorial production associations. These include "Karellesprom", "Permlеспrom", "Kostromalesprom", "Sverdlesprom", "Sakhalinlesprom", "Tsentromebel" and "Yugmebel'". More than 32,000,000 roubles have been redistributed through these funds.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'
September 14, 1989
Page 1 (Abridged)

PULP AND PAPER

A Plea to Cease Importing Wide Trim Papermaking
Machines and Manufacture Them Domestically

There are currently about 500 paper-and paperboard manufacturing machines in operation in the USSR. Most of these have already been in use for 35 years, and as many as 220 of them - for half a century.

The building of the largest factories in Europe (Izhevsk and Petrozavodsk) for the production of papermaking machines with trim widths of up to 7 metres was a major achievement in itself. Attesting to this are the B-15, K-09, KP-10, and BP-45A machines with trims of 6,720 and 6,300 mm, built at these factories and operating to this day.

Paradoxically, during the last 15 years these factories have not received a single order for similar machines, which is because of a shift in favour of importing machines with trims of 8,400 and 8,900 mm.

Today, these factories are only working at 50 per cent of their capacity for producing papermaking machines, and in some years, at even less. Their volume of output consists largely of spare parts and miscellaneous equipment.

There is a variety of reasons for this, including the very long period needed to build the machines. To improve their performance characteristics, experience is needed. If the programme for producing B-15s were carried to completion, this machine would rank with the finest

world models. But only one has been manufactured for the Kondopoga Pulp and Paper Combine and only part of one for the Skytyvkar Timber Industry Complex, notwithstanding the 15 that are planned. Such experience will not be enough for our machine builders to compete with the leading foreign firms.

It is evident that we have learned little from the mistakes of the past and have failed to draw the correct conclusions from them. The purchase from foreign firms of machines that are 8 metres and more in trim width obviously means a higher unit capacity. But has anyone made a comprehensive, in-depth economic estimate of the prospects of using them to advantage? Almost certainly not. While the productivity of a machine when manufacturing a particular type of paper is determined by the product of the width and speed of the web, over the last 200 years the width has only increased 10-fold, whereas the speed has increased almost 200-fold. This is because the latter is achieved at lower cost. Also, the percentage of rejects is lower on the narrower machines and it costs less to maintain them.

In the near future the problem of whether to replace or modernize about 30 machines with trim widths of 6 to 6.72 metres will have to be faced. Some of them will have to be replaced by new ones, but not with 8-metre machines, for, where would we get them? Either they will be made by our machine builders by taking them away from building the present-day machines, or what is more likely, both the replacements and the modernization will be accomplished mainly through imports. And this despite the fact that the two largest plants in Europe were built 30 years ago for the very purpose of furnishing pulp and paper mills with up-to-date equipment and that two research and design institutes

were established. The shift in favour of importing our papermaking machines is fraught with enormous problems. The nation will be faced colossal expenditures on maintaining the machines. This problem is already being encountered at the Svetogorsk Pulp and Paper Combine, and the Kondopoga Pulp and Paper Combine and Syktyvkar Timber Industry Complex will soon have to deal with it.

The point is that with the increase in operating speeds of papermaking machines, a problem virtually unknown to papermakers arises, namely failure of rotating components (shafts, axles and cylinders). Such components comprise not less than 50 per cent of the weight of a machine. To guard against wear failure of rotating parts, they must have a multiple safety factor. This in turn leads to unwarranted increases in the weight of the shafts. For example, the weight of a granite shaft for a machine with a 4,200 mm trim is 22 tonnes. With a 6,300 mm trim it is 40 tonnes and with a trim of 8,400 mm it is 61 tonnes.

It is questionable whether the safety factor of the rotating components in the wide trim imported machines will ensure their trouble-free operation for several decades to come. Attesting to this are practically all the newsprint machines purchased from Britain, Japan and Finland in the sixties. On the 8-metre machines the requirement for spare parts arises earlier than on the 6-metre ones. Of course, if our machine builders were able to manufacture today every kind of shaft for 8-metre machines the problem would not arise. But they cannot do this. The specialists are well aware that the production of drying cylinders for an 8-metre machine was mastered at the Petrozavodsk "Tyazhbummash" mill in the seventies. But this was at the cost of enormous

expenditures of currency, a strained situation in the collective, rescheduling of delivery dates and much else. As a matter of fact, in complexity of design, tooling-up and technology of manufacture, a drying cylinder is much simpler than such articles as a headbox, a granite press-couch with adjustable deflection and some other rollers.

We are left with the question: what must mills equipped with 8-metre machines expect when these giants "demand" spare parts? Most likely, vast outlays of currency, commensurate with the value of the paper being produced on them.

The practice of developing and reequipping the pulp paper industry through imports of increasingly wide trim and more diversely designed papermaking machines will inevitably lead to an undermining of the sector's economy and an increasing reorientation of pulp and paper machine building to production of output that is alien to it?.

Could it be that it is still not too late to cease importing 8-metre machines, until such time as this becomes the standard dimension in domestic machine building for our industry?

(Article signed by Doctor of Technical Sciences Professor I. Kugushev and Candidate of Technical Sciences A. Podkovyrin, Leningrad).

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

September 12, 1989

Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

West German Firm May Supply Machinery in Face of a Severe Shortage of Paper and Lack of a Soviet Machine Building Capacity

Due to the burgeoning demand for bleached paper products in the USSR, the inability of the Soviet timber industry to supply sufficient pulp, and the lack of domestically built machines for manufacturing many types of office products, an acute shortage of white paper is affecting all levels of society. This was made worst at the start of the school year, as many Soviet schools have begun enrolling six-year olds in their regular teaching programmes. Given the staggering increase in the number of full-time pupils, the authorities decided to introduce a system of coupons, to be exchanged for exercise books and copybooks. Although many children have nothing on which to write or draw, there may be a solution in the offing, as indicated by the following article.

* * *

The products of the West German Company "Bilomatik" have achieved worldwide renown. The links between it and our country go back many years. In the main, the firm specialises in the manufacture of modern production lines for the manufacture of stationery and other types of office products. Large consignments of such machinery were shipped to the USSR in 1974, as well as five automated lines in 1982 for production of school exercise books. A sizeable number of these machines have also installed in plants of the "Voskhod" Production Association, the output of which is probably familiar to every citizen of our country. But the requirements for bleached paper products become greater every year, while the production capacities, alas, have remained unchanged.

The problem has been exacerbated by the fact that the training of children in many Soviet schools now begins at the age of six, with the result that the army of schoolchildren has become much larger. Immediate measures were called for, rather than waiting until such time as our domestic machine building plants begin producing the requisite equipment. Otherwise, thousands of Soviet children might be forced into the position of writing their dictation and essays between the lines of a newspaper, as was the case during the war years. The only way out is to purchase the equipment and develop further ties with the "Bilomatik" Company, which has vast experience and has earned a fine reputation. Representatives of the firm are located in more than forty countries, including the USSR.

Displayed at the "Bilomatik" booth in the "Lesdrevmash-89" International Exhibition in Moscow were colourful, eye catching exercise books and various kinds of albums and notebooks, produced with such accuracy and elegance that the reporter found it difficult to walk past them. "One could imagine the delight of a child when he discovered such works of art - I can think of no other word - lying on his desk. They are in striking contrast with the familiar exercise books made of rough grey paper enclosed in monotonous dust folders, which have now disappeared from our shops".

Also exhibited were photographs of machines for manufacturing "all kinds of other office products". The machine for producing notebooks with metal clips, for example, can turn out more than 300,000 in an hour.

"We understand that you have a number of problems", said Richard Geiger, Bilomatik's representative at the trade fair. "We hope that,

once you have decided on the order in which to tackle them, we can collaborate with you on a continuing basis, and not only with respect to exercise books. Although as yet, no contracts have been signed at the Exhibition between Soviet representatives and our firm, preliminary talks with senior officials of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry and representatives of other major industrial enterprises in your country are going well".

Lesnaya promyshlennost'
September 19, 1989
Page 3 (Abridged)

Paper Shortage Made Worse by Non-Delivery of Railway Cars

Publishing houses are again experiencing a paper famine. Plans for publishing books and magazines cannot be met as printing houses have barely any newsprint in stock. What is the problem?

"Newsprint shortages have always existed, but the situation is complicated at present by the new planning procedures," says I. Kharitonov, head of the section for pulpwood and wholesale trade in pulp and paper products at the Council of Ministers' committee on supplies and technical equipment. "Since January, the plan for the national economy has specified only the annual output of newsprint, with the quarterly production quotas no longer indicated. The change had been well intentioned as the enterprises were offered a chance to organize their work with greater flexibility. However, they are taking advantage of this privilege in disregard of consumer interests."

Of course, it is difficult to bring to its knees, a large publishing house such as "Pravda", but even its specialists have become puzzled.

"Yes, we have had some surprises," says V. Rusakov, head of the newsprint section. "For instance, the Uglegorsk mill on Sakhalin is planning to deliver to us 2,851 tons of newsprint in the second half of the year, while the plan for the first half called for slightly more than one thousand tons. It is an obvious arrhythmia!"

But this is not the only reason for the deteriorating newsprint supplies. By now the "newspaper" enterprises of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry have stockpiles of over 13,000 tons of finished product. The fault lies mainly with the railroads. So far this year the Paper and Pulp Combine at Balakhna has seen no delivery of more than 400 railroad cars, while the Solikamsk Combine received no more than 850 railroad cars. The situation improved slightly during September. But apparently the credit for it does not go exclusively to the railroad people.

"Recently I had a look at the operations report," says A. Titova, a specialist at the Ministry of the Timber Industry. "The shipping of newsprint from Balakhna had increased abruptly. On some days they managed to unload from twelve to fifteen thousand tons instead of two to five thousand, as was the case in August. I phoned the enterprise and asked what had happened. They told me that they had had visitors from the Central Committee of the Party and the Council of Ministers. It was their assistance that made the difference. Some time later the report resumed its usual appearance. Apparently, the administrators of the Gorkii railroad assumed that the danger was over."

Is this not a trifle premature? For in order to empty the warehouses, storage platforms and shops packed with rolls of paper and deliver the latter to the consumer, it is not enough to fulfill the daily quotas for providing railroad cars. More cars are needed now to ship the excess stocks from the pulp and paper combines. Only then will the publishing and printing houses stop working haphazardly.

Interruptions in the work of the railroads in the Baltic republic, Moldavia and Transcaucasia, where thousands of railroad cars remain unloaded are also interfering with shipments of paper.

Sotsialisticheskaya
industriya

September 17, 1989

Page 1 (Full text)

FORESTRY

Forest Filter Belts Established Near Bulgarian Industrial Combines

Forest plantings are one of the components of an integrated programme of environmental protection and reforestation in the People's Republic of Bulgaria. About two million hectares of new agrarian tracts have been created there during the years of Socialist rule. Today, forests which before the war were relentlessly cut down occupy almost a third of the territory.

The forestry workers are receiving substantial help from scientific co-workers of the Institute of Forests, which is subordinate to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. With their assistance, "green filters" have been established in the vicinity of the metallurgical combines in Sofia and Perniki and the chemical combines in the cities of Devnya and Dimitrovgrad. The Institute is forging close bonds of collaboration with a Soviet research institute of silviculture and mechanization of forestry located in the Moscow suburb of Pushkino. The latter institute has assisted in the development of a method of establishing selection forestry in mountainous regions.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

September 9, 1989

Page 3 (Full text)

Trade Unions Discuss Health Hazards to Workers in
Diseased and Dying Forests

The City of Yaroslavl' was the venue for an expanded session of the forests committee of the International Association of Trade Unions of Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation Workers. The topic of discussion: The effect of the state of the forest ecology on workers in forestry and the timber industry.

A forest will take a great deal of punishment. In the process, people's lives are saved. At low levels of air, water and soil pollution it becomes a natural "vacuum cleaner." But all this is for a limited time only. When the concentration of gases and particles reaches a certain level, the trees can no longer cope. They cease to neutralise the pollutants and begin to accumulate them. Thereafter they themselves become sick and die, singly and in whole hectares.

Several decades ago, the first signs were seen in Europe of damage to forests by sulphur dioxide and fluorine. Subsequently, this became an index of critical ecological state. Today, forest biotic communities are in decline over hundreds and thousands of hectares...

These figures were cited at the meeting of the forests committee. In Poland, half of the forests are threatened with destruction. A third of the Hungarian oaks have sustained so much damage that they are of no value industrially. In the mid-nineteen eighties, several thousand hectares of coniferous forests in France had to be cut down and destroyed (burnt). Between 30 and 40 per cent of the forests in East Germany and Austria are diseased and dying...

This in itself is sad to relate. But let us not forget that in the forests - including those that are diseased and dying - people are working. In the process, they are subjected to the effect of the substances that have harmed the forest.

For a long time it was thought (indeed, many people continue to think so) that the toilers of the forest have a beneficial industrial environment. In point of fact, there is not a mine or a dusty workshop where it is necessary to don a respirator. Today, closeness to nature is by no means always a synonym for cleanliness and well-being.

Of course, the lot of a forest toiler never was considered easy. Now, to such elements as cold, snow, rain and wind, as well as the unfavourable effects of noise, vibrations, biting flies, encephalitic ticks and unnatural posture, is added environmental pollution. Recently, there has been an increased incidence of diseases of the skin and respiratory system. Ladislav Barninets, who is the Chairman of the Forests Committee and also of the Central Committee of the Trade Union of Czechoslovakian foresters and woodworkers, stated that a medical survey of several hundred woodcutters in Czechoslovakia who had worked with gasolene driven power saws for more than five years resulted in such diseases being detected in more than 18 per cent of them. (The comparable figures for diseases of the spinal column and anchyloses of the upper extremities due to vibration are 54.5% and 39%).

Also, there are indications of increases in skin and kidney diseases among Soviet forestry and timber industry workers. This is traceable to the state of the environment, since in a number of the localities it is necessary to work in diseased and

dying forests. They are being affected within a ten-kilometre radius of Bratsk and in some areas of the Urals, Georgia, Lithuania and other regions.

But of course, the committee members and the representatives of the other trade union organizations who attended the meeting were not there solely to regale each other with these facts and figures. They were there to determine, if at all possible, what could be done on the one hand, to improve the ecological situation and on the other, to protect people from the harmful effects.

There was considerable questioning, back and forth, as to how often medical examinations were conducted in the various countries, whether protective gear was issued and whether there were any compensatory bonuses. Although annual medicals are given in the USSR to employees in high risk occupations, these are of a general nature and take place in clinics. There is a need for other kinds of examinations, aimed at early diagnosis and treatment of specific occupational diseases.

It was clear from the discussion that it is not only in the forests contaminated by radioactivity following Chernobyl and those in the aforementioned ecologically threatened areas that human health can be affected, directly or indirectly, now or later, by unfavourable environmental conditions.

Although scientists understand in principle how fluorine, for example, affects humans at specific concentrations, there is currently no way of estimating its concentration in a forest. For it may be present in the air, the soil and the trees, have a tendency to accumulate and perhaps even to mutate. Indeed, it has recently come to light that sulphurous

gas, after being absorbed by a forest, is later given off as sulphur dioxide, which incidentally, is a carcinogen. The question is, at what concentrations, how, and precisely which organs and systems does it affect when a person is working in the forest?

In particular, there is no single answer to the question as to what is causing the increased incidence of skin diseases. Nor can we speak unequivocally of a specific treatment for this. In East Germany, workers engaged in felling trees that have been killed by acid rain and harmful emissions are given a free ration of fruit juices, for the vitamins they contain. In the USSR, there appears to be a need for joint studies conducted by the Institute of Labour Hygiene and the forest research institutes to work out criteria for use in determining safe and unsafe working conditions in diseased forests.

The truth is that the forests are not only suffering from global ecological pollution, but also from the activities of the very people who work in them. By this is meant not only the senseless destruction of forests, but also imperfections in the machinery, technologies and organization of production. An illustration of this is the gasoline driven power saw. Not only do the workers operating it have to put up with noise, exhaust, gasoline fumes and wood dust, but even the mineral oils used for lubricating the chains are becoming a source of soil and even water pollution. That is why the West German firm "Shtile" has recently perfected a harmless vegetable oil for use in chain saws. It is made from rape seed.

Dangerously Inadequate Firefighting Capacity
Demonstrated in Forests North of Tomsk

In May and June some 200 fires enveloped 2,500 hectares of the Tomsk Northland, which by July had become the "fire epicentre" of the entire Ob' region. By then, 250,000 hectares of forest had been laid waste by 464 fires. In three logging districts - Aleksandrov, Kargasok and Perebel' - an emergency was declared: fire had begun to threaten the pumping and compressor stations and the oil and gas pipelines. Smoke-jumpers were flown in from Irkutsk, Archangel, Yakutsk, the Amur Oblast', the Komi ASSR and Buryatiya to assist the local parachutists. The Deputy Minister of the RSFSR Timber Industry O. Rozhkov, the Head of the Forest Conservation and Protection Directorate P. Barsukov, and the Deputy Director-General of the "Avialesookhrana" Association A. Belyaev, set up temporary headquarters on the Tomsk taiga, so that problems could be solved "in situ".

Fires continued to rage throught July, with as many as 35 new foci reported on some days and more than 100 fires burning simultaneously. There were radio reports that in the vicinity of Raskino the flames had spread to the oil pipelines and in the Aleksandrov district fire was threatening the oil pumping station. The inhabitants of Berezovka made ready to evacuate the settlement.

At press time, about 700 fires had reduced to ashes and cinders more than 400,000 hectares of forested land. Losses exceeded 10 million roubles.

All this afforded ample evidence that a radically new approach to forest protection and conservation is needed. The present methods of

dealing with forest fires were described as cosmetic. The recent experience in the Tomsk region clearly demonstrated that the methods, arrangements and firefighting equipment currently employed were totally inadequate when fires were destroying tens and even hundreds of thousands of forest hectares. The forest protection army could be doubled or even tripled and the thousands of volunteer firefighters reinforced by the same number again without the desired effect being achieved. Immediate and drastic action was needed. The losses from forest fires were so great that even the most unusual and costly solutions would be justified and paid for many times over. If no such solutions were found within the country it would be necessary to seek them abroad. The USSR should copy, study and eventually purchase them for equivalent value in timber. It is common knowledge that in countries like Canada, the USA and Finland, no more than a dozen people are needed to put out a forest fire, since the lion's share of the work is done mechanically from the air.

"We have no comparable fire-fighting aircraft", ruefully admitted A. Chekerenda, the Commander of an air detachment. "Even though the USSR State Committee for Forestry has more than once concluded that we need a tanker aircraft, nothing has been done about it. The designers are proposing to build a special 15-seater light aircraft surpassing the role of the AN-2 currently used for fighting forest fires. How many months or years will have been spent on working up a fire-fighting version of the AN-26 with a cargo capacity of five tonnes?"

The situation on the ground was no better, either with respect to the forest protection service or the volunteer fire-fighters. It was sad to see the residents of Strezhevoi passing pails of water

along a human chain, in an attempt to put out a fire in a park area where the flames had not only engulfed the trees but had also spread to the underlying peat.

"We are exceedingly undermechanized when it comes to extinguishing forest fires", stated N. Pavlinov, Head of the Forest Conservation and Protection Directorate of the RSFSR Ministry of the Timber Industry. "We had high hopes for the ATs-10 fire-fighting machine designed 10 years ago for not just two, but six occupants. After supplying us with a miserly quantity of these machines, as of this year the factory of USSR Minstroidormash (Ministry for Building Road Construction Machines) has discontinued their production. And no entreaties, even to the point of offering high contract prices, have succeeded in persuading them to the contrary".

After meeting with the directors of the RSFSR Ministry of Forestry, one had the impression that many of them were resigned to the idea of forest fires being inevitable and have become reconciled to the resulting losses.

Word had been received that a group of senior officials of the RSFSR Ministry of Forestry, including two Deputy Ministers, was on its way to Tomsk. "Who knows, the visit could result in the firefighters being furnished with communications facilities, with new television towers designed for spotting forest fires rising above the forests, but not merely to the extent of six or seven a year, as the requirement for them is in the hundreds. And the staff aircraft may not only be fitted with radio, but also with video equipment".

Would that this were so. For the present, however, calmness reigned in the Ministers' offices, even though at the "fire frontier" there were shortages of what was needed most: dependable shovels such as those made of titanium, powerful forest pumps, rubber-lined water tanks and special clothing.

How could the situation be otherwise, when disbursements on aerial protection amounted to no more than 20 kopecks per hectare of forest lands? All this while the tundra was burning. For the present, however, one was powerless to put a stop to the tragedy.

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September 7, 1989

Page 3 (Gist)

ENVIRONMENT

Soviet Timber Industry and Yugoslavian Firm to Expand Cooperation

The "Sloveniyales" Company, operating at almost 200 sites in Yugoslavia and more than 70 in other countries, posted a total domestic and foreign trade turnover of 1,300,000,000 dollars in the last twelve months. Its vast programme includes processed products of the timber, chemical, pulp-and-paper, textile, tanning, pharmaceutical and other industries, as well as international financing operations and the training of specialists.

For many years now the Soviet Union has been one of its principal foreign trading partners. In some years the volume of turnover was in the 50-100 million dollars range in both directions. A substantial part of this pertains to wood and wood products. It imports lumber and pulping wood and exports furniture and special types of boards.

Cooperation with the Soviet market is handled by the firm's representatives in Moscow, who have a branch in Minsk.

At the "Lesdrevmash-89 Exhibition it is displaying equipment and high productivity woodworking lathes. For the efficient utilization of wood wastes, there are production lines for lengthwise and crosswise joining. In addition, "Sloveniyales" is proposing technological solutions for waste-free production, incorporating computerised control of the production processes.

In the environmental protection field, the firm produces a range of devices, including an air purification filter which is on display this year. Recently, an agreement was reached with the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry concerning joint efforts and development of equipment for air, gas and water purification.

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September 21, 1989
Page 3 (Excerpts)

Complaints About Pollution in the Southern Urals
(Original Title "Acid Rain On a Linden Grove")

In the West, any region where 200 kilogrammes of harmful dust fall on a hectare of land is declared an ecological disaster zone.

Onto a similar hectare the enterprises of the Ashi district in the Chelyabinsk Oblast' - a wood chemistry combine, a major local timber industry enterprise (lespromkhoz), an illumination engineering plant, two metallurgical plants and a furniture factory - are jettisoning more than 90 tonnes of dust, which is 450 times the international norm!

What is the lifespan of the inhabitants of Ashi? The answer is, five years less than the figure for the country as a whole. Moreover, they lead the southern Urals in the number of oncological diseases.

The water also is in a disastrous condition. The Sim River, the major waterway of the district, is becoming visibly shallower and decaying. This is hardly to be wondered at, for it

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.

Another example is the Ashi wood chemistry plant, where there are only 10 purification units for 150 sources of harmful emissions. The effluents entering the Sim River present an even more depressing picture. The concentration of copper and phenols in them is many times higher than the permissible norms.

In the past year the wood chemists have been very hard on the public, so much so that the prospect of closing down the chemical and retort production loomed large. But even though a contract was drawn up with the Southern Urals Metallurgical Construction Trust for the building of a return cycle water supply system, not a rouble has been appropriated in the eight months that have elapsed.

So what in fact is being done at Ashi to improve the disastrous ecological situation? As we are seeing, precious little. For even though an "Ecology Programme" has been developed at certain of the plants, neither the manpower nor the funds, and what is most important, the desire, are equal to the task.

It has now become clear to everyone that without heavy investments in nature and environmental conservation projects, we shall get nothing back. We need a realistic programme of investment, with control over disbursements vested in the local Soviets.

The scientists have a duty to face up to the problem and provide assistance to the practical workers. But what do we see today? The district does not have a single laboratory capable of investigating the composition of the atmospheric air. There are of course, specialists taking

measurements... But the inhabitants of Ashi (as also the other Southern Uralians), have no knowledge of the content of heavy metals and other harmful substances in potatoes, cucumbers and cherries etc. It is said that this information exists but is being kept secret. Are we not like ostriches which, by burying their heads in the sand out of fear, are plucked of all their feathers!

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Page 2 (Abridged)

New Environmental Monitoring Centre at Bratsk

An ecological centre has commenced operations in the "Bratsk Forest Based Industrial Complex". Henceforth, the administrators of the Complex will no longer be able to ignore the demands of the ecologists. The centre has brought together purification plants and instrumentation. Being supplied with its own transportation, it will be able to efficiently monitor the ecological safety of the town.

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Page 1 (Full text)

Withholding of Financing in Uzbek Republic for Environmental Reasons

Promstroibank (Industrial Development Bank) of Uzbekistan has refused to allocate funds for the building of a new industrial test installation in the

"Navoiazot" (Navoi Nitrogen) Association. This action was the result of a joint agreement between the financiers and ecologists of the Republic and stems from the fact that the plans for the new unit conflicted with expert opinion regarding the absence of damage to the environment. Similar arrangements have been concluded between environmentalists and Zhilsotsbank and Agroprombank. From now on, any ecologically harmful initiative will be able to be stopped, not only during the construction stage but also when it is being planned. The bank will have the right to levy punitive fines on both the customer and the contractor.

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Page 1 (Full text)

GENERAL INTEREST

Canadian Forester Interviewed at Moscow Trade Fair

"Hello there Lesnaya promyshlennost!", was the light-hearted exclamation from somewhere in the hall. Perplexed, we glanced round, in an attempt to discover who had surprised us with these words spoken in good Russian.

"I know your newspaper very well", a gentleman said as he approached us - a smile on his face, his hand outstretched in greeting...

So it was, in a somewhat unusual way, that we became acquainted with Jaroslav Holowacz, a Counsellor with the Canadian group. It turned out that he has taken part in all four "Lesdrevmash" exhibitions.

L.P. "Jaroslav, a few words about yourself".

J.H. "Don't be in such a hurry. To start with, I am requesting that you be interviewed at 'the boss's' - he is a representative of the embassy of our country", laughed Holowacz. "Seriously though, I was born in 1928 in the Western Ukraine. But fate had other plans for me. To cut a long story short, I found myself in Canada. I have been subscribing to your paper since I was thirty..."

L.P. "This is possible in Canada?"

J.H. "Oh yes! True, there are occasional delays in delivery... But that is not the fault of your country. Our postal workers are sometimes out on strike..."

L.P. "How much does it cost to subscribe?"

J.H. "I'm not exactly sure. I think you will see why. Periodically I place an order for almost 2,000 dollars worth. So I'm spending roughly 30 to 40 dollars on your newspaper".

L.P. ""Really! So are your outlays worthwhile?"

J.H. "Most definitely. I'm a special trade counsellor in the Canadian Ministry of Forestry. I specialise in Soviet forestry. Also, I am a member of the Soviet-Canadian Working Group on Forestry. All this means that I am very busy. I don't watch the clock, for I'm in no hurry to go home. Even when I am at home, I'm busy scanning the press. It takes an hour or two every day, even more on days off.

"I often make use of your paper in my numerous publications".

L.P. "In all likelihood, there are a few things you would like to say to our editing staff?"

J.H. "During the last two or three years your newspaper has undergone a remarkable transformation. More space is now being devoted to social matters. This is to be welcomed, but at the same time we mustn't forget about concrete economics. In every issue, in my view, there ought to be one article discussing and explaining in detail the industrial activities of a particular mill, plant, factory or association. This would facilitate a realistic search for new forms of cooperation between our countries.

"Besides the production oriented material, it brings me enormous pleasure to see the matrimonial announcements in the "Matchmaking Club". To all appearances, even my wife is seeking a new admirer there..."

L.P. "Tell us about your family, Jaroslav".

J.H. "I've already let the cat out of the bag. I'm married and have two grown-up children - a son and a daughter. Although they didn't follow in my footsteps, they both speak good or even excellent Ukrainian, for they completed Ukrainian school in Canada. We live in Ottawa."

L.P. "So what do you consider your nationality to be - Ukrainian or Canadian?"

J.H. "With us, such a question doesn't arise. But I'll tell you something. When I'm in Kiev, I experience an involuntary palpitation. Nostalgia grows with the years. So I don't allow myself to re-read Shevchenko's 'The Kobzar' (poetry). I fear the emotional impact".

L.P. "In conclusion, is there anything you would like to say to the readers of 'Lesnaya promyshlennost'?"

J.H. "I will start from a long way back. This is the thirteenth time that I have arrived in your country. I notice how people have changed. I am particularly struck by the fact that you have become better dressed, more attractive in appearance, freer in speech and at that, better informed. Your women are especially charming... But boorishness exists in every country of the world. You even find it here. So I would advise your readers to smile more and to be more considerate of each other".

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"Besides the production of material, it brings me enormous pleasure to see the material announcements in the 'Operating Camp'. To all appearances, even my wife is making a new chapter there. I hope to see you in the future. Tell us about your family, children."

"I've already let the cat out of the bag. I'm married and have two grown-up children - a son and a daughter. Although they didn't follow in my footsteps, they both have good or even excellent educations. My daughter completed a medical school in Canada. My son lives in Ottawa. I'll be sure to let you know as I talk to you. So what do you consider your role and how do you see the situation of the country?"

"With us, such a question doesn't arise. But I'll call you something when I'm in Kiev, I experience an involuntary political emotion. Hostility grows with the years. So I don't allow myself to repeat Shadrachko's (The Kobzar) words. I feel the emotional impact of his words and I'll tell you again."

"In conclusion, is there anything you would like to say to the readers of 'L'Espresso'?"

"I would like to say that I have a long way back to the country. I notice how people have changed. I'm particularly struck by the fact that you have become better dressed, more self-respecting, more aware of your rights and at that, better informed. Your women are especially charming and beautiful. You even find it here. So I would advise your readers to smile more and to be more considerate of each other."

Lenny's Gromyshchynsky
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