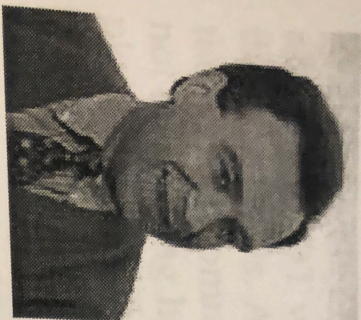


... a polluting aspirin factory in 1990, for example, left the entire country without aspirin. The factory was reopened. Even some regional environmental groups stop short of calling for plant shutdown. Their own livelihood would be wiped out.



Ilya Tsyrllov--
Environmental
cleanup by private
industries is
"bureaufantasy."

"Instead of closing down factories, the government wanted us [scientists] to find medical solutions to the illnesses," says Ilya Tsyrllov, formerly with the National Academy of Sciences and now senior research scientist at the National Cancer Institute. "Or they wanted us to develop a migration approach. People would work at an aluminum factory for one year and then be sent to a different industry. In my opinion, this was totally inhumane."

In 1992, 6000 businesses were brought to trial for allegedly polluting, according to an August 1993 article in the liberal Russian newspaper *Gazeta*. Eighty-four percent of the defendants were found guilty, but few financial conditions throughout the country, few could pay. As a result, the courts allowed the companies to use a portion of the fines to implement environmental protection measures. Russian experts estimate that if existing environmental protection measures were levied on all of the country's industrial businesses, 60% of them would go bankrupt.

In the meantime, Russians and their children continue to get sicker and die younger than counterparts in other industrialized nations. In 1988, more than 1 out of 2 school children to be in poor health; 18% suffered from intestinal disorders, 30% from chronic respiratory diseases, the southern Russian city of Magnitogorsk, iron-ore mines and the nearby steel factory. The community in which 9 out of 10 children suffer from pollution-related illnesses such as asthma, allergies, and even cancers. Nationwide, worker absenteeism due to illness averaged 4 million per day in 1989.

From: Ilya Tsyrllov ibtsyrllov@icloud.com
Subject: 1994 paper in EHP
Date: November 14, 2021 at 11:12 AM
To: xenotoxit@optonline.net
Cc: ilya Tsyrllov ilyairina@optonline.net

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