

TIMBER & WOODWORKING

Overview of M.I. Busygin's Tenure as Minister

The USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry has been increasingly criticized over recent months on a number of accounts: a bad environmental protection record; low production; inability to provide necessary consumer goods and services to the population; shoddy products. This has given rise to a leadership review. M.I. Busygin's record as Minister of the Timber Industry was discussed in detail at the July 10 session of the Supreme Soviet. Some points raised by Busygin, his supporters and his detractors are summarized below.

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Extracts from Minister M.I. Busygin's Speech.

The Soviet Union logs a total of 385 million cubic metres of timber annually. Of this, the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry takes roughly 215 to 217 million cubic metres. Approximately 70% of this is processed by the Ministry's paper industry and woodworking enterprises while 30% is supplied to the economy in roundwood form.

The timber industry introduced up to five million square metres of housing over the years 1986-88. Preschool facilities, schools, hospitals, clinics and clubs were also built. But this is not enough. There are currently more than 200,000 people on the industry's waiting list for housing. The Ministry has drawn up a programme of non-industrial construction for the Twelfth Five-Year Plan which calls for more than 2 million square metres of housing construction annually and for the construction of various social services buildings.

Popular demand for non-industrial goods such as furniture, wallpaper, skis, stationary, etc., is not being met, largely because of a shortage of