

Nationwide Furniture Shortage Coincides with Major
New Housing and Resettlement Programme

Leningrad

Tens of thousands of Leningrad families are relocating from communal flats to separate apartments. And quite naturally, the first thing every new settler does is to hurry down to a furniture store. But alas, except for chairs and other small items, the initial visit results in nothing being acquired. "Black lists" have been drawn up, and there are night vigils at which names are called out.

At one of the new stores operated by Lenmebel'torg (Leningrad Furniture Trading Network), which is located in the northern part of the city, I strike up a conversation with departmental head V.N. Bushuevaya. "Our monthly sales of furniture amount to between 730 and 750 thousand roubles", she says. "We are overfulfilling the plan, but the queues are getting longer and longer. When we first opened, people were mainly on the look out for imported furniture, but today they will take anything, be it from Leningrad, Novgorod or Velikaya Luka."

In August the bureau of the Leningrad Oblast Executive Committee (CPSU), in noting the seriousness of the situation, looked into the question of whether the directors of the Sevzapmebel' (Northwestern Furniture) Association were doing an adequate job in surveying the reserves so as to meet the popular demand for high-quality furniture. It was suggested to Party committees and the bureau that more exacting requirements should be imposed on the individuals in charge of production, and that decisive steps should