

### Appointments

V.I. Mel'nikov, formerly First Secretary of the Komi Oblast Party Committee, has been appointed Minister of the USSR Timber Industry. Speaking before the USSR Supreme Soviet, Meln'nikov commented on the current state of the industry and, particularly, on the everyday social and working conditions facing its workers, before outlining his views on future developments in the industry. He noted that although the Soviet Union has the world's most extensive timber reserves, per capita consumption of many timber and paper products lags several times behind that of other developed nations.

V.I. Mel'nikov indicated his awareness of the poor living and working conditions faced by industry employees and vowed to make social development a top priority. He believes that all possible financial resources should be diverted to housing construction, for example, including funds obtained from cuts in proposed industrial construction.

Among other priorities mentioned by the speaker were: improving forest utilization; improving loose float operations on large and small rivers; and the establishment of an industry-wide engineering base. With reference to the unfavourable environmental consequences of current industrial activities, he proposed the implementation of a number of measures, including the observation of correct technical and production procedures in all timber industry enterprises, and the repairing of existing pulp and paper industry purification facilities, or the construction of new plants. This programme would be carried out in tandem with a further increase in the volume of production.