

State Planning Commission Heavily Criticised
for Its Views on Forest Resource Utilisation

At the present time, widely differing views are being published in our press on questions of forest utilisation and the organization of forestry. Even the administrative workers of USSR Gosplan (State Planning Commission) have become involved in this debate. We recall, for example, an article by V. Tatarinov: "The Rational Use of Forest Resources", published recently in the journal "Planovoe khozyaistvo". In our opinion, it is a shining illustration of how the administrative personnel of that agency are attempting to vindicate all of the nonsense and absurdities of the past years which inflicted enormous damage on the forests and on nature as a whole.

Of course, it is very convenient to manipulate figures about the purportedly vast forest resources of the USSR. Here we find V. Tatarinov informing the readers that 23 percent of the world's stocks of timber are located in our country. In the European USSR alone there are almost 23 billion cubic metres of standing timber, 9.5 billion cu.m. of which are mature. He goes on to say that if we were to fell annually the same proportion of the available stock as they do in Finland, Sweden, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria, then in the European part of the country it would be possible to obtain 430 million cubic metres of extracted timber every year, as against today's 206 million. This means that in Siberia and the Far East we might as well cease logging altogether. The point is that across the country as a whole we are logging only about 300 million cubic metres.