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EXTRACTS FROM THE SOVIET PRESS ON USSR FORESTRY
AND FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 1988

Enquiries or comments on this publication should be directed to:

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FORESTRY

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TIMBER AND WOODWORKING

First Results and Projections in the Restructuring of the Timber Industry

(An interview with M.I. Busygin, USSR Minister of the Timber Industry)

Q: "Mikhail Ivanovich, forestry enterprises have been operating under the conditions of economic reform for ten months now, so I presume we can already tell to what extent the hopes set on the new methods of management have been justified?"

A: "Compared with the corresponding period of 1987, industrial production has increased by almost 5%. I am happy to say that this was achieved as a result of an increase in the productivity of labour (7.5% instead of the planned 3.6%). The average monthly wage of the workers in this industry has increased by 6.6%. The production plan for roundwood, marketable pulp, paper (including newsprint), cardboard, wood fibreboard and consumer goods other than foodstuffs has been fulfilled. We cannot help but rejoice in this, but there are serious shortcomings as well. In the report of the USSR State Statistics Committee on the country's social and economic development for the first nine months of 1988, it is stated that unsatisfactory work of forestry enterprises during the third quarter prevented us from consolidating the positive results achieved in the first half of the year. The indebtedness of the enterprises within the system of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry in timber production since the beginning of the year amounts to 2,600,000 m³ (300,000 m³ of lumber). The "Dal'lesprom", "Irkutsklesprom" and "Krasnoyarsklesprom" associations only just failed to achieve their timber production targets.

"The list of shortcomings goes on, but it would be futile to dwell on this. It would be more useful to examine why it occurred, where we fell

short. We began the reform when we were already into the Five-Year Plan, when the structural positions of the plan had already been determined and outdated prices and centralized methods of resource distribution were still in effect. And if we add to this the tenacity of management stereotypes and the determination of certain officials to preserve the status quo in centralized methods of administration and put old content into new forms of work, it becomes clear why the new economic mechanism is spinning its wheels.

"Dependence - not only in the economic sense but psychologically as well - is as strongly entrenched as ever. We have long been paid for the working process itself, rather than for concrete results. This cannot be allowed to continue. Self-financing is a tough system, but at the same time it is more democratic and economically and socially just. We must have the courage to put it into practice, and then go on to the next form of self-financing. As I have mentioned, things are moving slowly as of now. We still have about 280 unprofitable enterprises, and unprofitableness is incompatible with the principles of radical economic reform.

"Another difficult area is the introduction of leasing contracts. We find this being practised by only 400 of the crews engaged in primary extraction, conversion and hauling the timber from the forest, cross-cutting it into lengths, and chip production. Many managers of associations and logging enterprises underestimate the importance of the leasing system. Meanwhile, the results of those who have gone over to leasing speak for themselves. Take, for example, the Badzheya forestry enterprise of the "Krasnoyarsklesprom" Association. According

to the results of the last six months of 1987, direct losses of this enterprise amounted to 118,000 roubles, but when the leasing system was introduced, it made a profit of 17,000 roubles over a six-month period. This may not be a large profit, but it is the trend that matters here. There was also a significant improvement in other technical and economic indices of the enterprise. Output per man-hour, or the productivity of labour, increased by almost 20%, the average wage went up by 16.5%, and the expenditure per rouble of commodity output dropped by 7.5%. The results have been just as gratifying at the Verkhnesinyachikhinsky plywood and board combine of the "Sverdlesprom" Association, the Mezhevsky forestry enterprise of the "Kostromalesprom" Association, and the "Krasnodar" and "Yugmebel" associations, in a word, wherever the leasing system has been introduced."

Q: "It's no secret that some of the clauses of the Law on State Enterprises are almost ineffectual because they are constantly being countermanded by all sorts of administrative directives. The order placed by the State is a good example. At many of the enterprises it covers 100% of the production plan.

A: "On the whole, I think that the Law on State Enterprises is somewhat ahead of its time, but it was necessary to enact it. Our enterprises, our economic system and the national economy all needed such a law. Being an example of what is worth striving for, it impels us to advance more quickly. However, as I have said, it is ahead of its time. There is still no law on leasing, and we still have to solve the problems concerning taxation, pricing, etc. Naturally, all this interferes with developing the law to the fullest.

"As for orders placed by the State, the situation there will change significantly. A "Provisional Statute on the Procedure to be Followed in Drawing Up State Orders for 1989 and 1990" was recently approved. Henceforth, an order will be issued in the form of a directive only for the delivery of the main types of products required by other sectors of the economy. The State order will not include the products required within a given ministry, and these constitute a significant proportion in some enterprises.

"There will be material incentives for working collectives which successfully fill State orders and contract deliveries. For example, the portion of the profits being channelled into the State budget will be reduced by 10% in favour of the enterprises."

Q: "As we know, major changes have taken place in the structural make up of the Ministry. Would you tell us about these changes in greater detail?"

A: "The essence of the structural changes lies in assisting the administrative bodies to find their place in the new system as quickly as possible, master the new operating methods, and restructure their interrelations with the enterprises. In doing so, we are pursuing three main goals: successfully implementing the economic reform, accelerating scientific and technical progress in the industry, and, consequently, ensuring that the national economy has all of the timber and paper it needs.

"A new general system of management has been developed and introduced in the forestry sector. Instead of 36 central subdivisions and 12 All-Union

associations, the new structure envisages 24 directorates, as well as 5 territorial production associations. The new system of management is based on the territorial-sector principle.

"Right now, it is important that the new forms and methods of operation mesh with the new organizational structures. I think that the other important question is how to get the Ministry and the working collectives to develop a common interest in achieving the end results. Exhortations and best wishes are not enough. As we know, people have to be interested in what they are doing. Therefore, I think it is very important to establish a truly autonomous self-financing relationship between management and the enterprises. We must develop and introduce a system ensuring expert assessment of the economic effectiveness of the solutions being adopted - a system which would envisage the form and extent of the responsibility in both directions, from top to bottom and vice versa. This could be achieved, for example, by calculating the real savings of money and resources resulting from initiatives introduced by managerial staff, and rewarding the latter appropriately. At the same time, there must be a corresponding tightening of responsibility for negligence that results in losses being incurred by the State and the enterprise. In a word, we must make sure that profit-and-loss accounting and the new relations resulting from it are not restricted to the production sphere. They must also be fully reflected in the management sphere and utilized directly in each link of the Ministry."

Q: "Can we expect the structural transformations to be of help in eradicating bureaucracy?"

A: "I don't think the question can be put in quite that form. Bureaucracy cannot be overcome by even the most competent restructuring, just as it cannot be overcome by formidable decrees and decisions. In my view, the strength of a bureaucracy lies in the fact that it consists not of particular individual, but rather of certain character traits of a person whose ideas are not consistently bad. Bureaucracy is first and foremost an attitude of mind, an unwillingness and an inability to accept responsibility, and making a fetish of the importance of a document or paper. This means that we must strive to bring in a system and conditions that would promote a new way of thinking and teach people to accept responsibility for tasks assigned, improve their professional skills and make them more competent. Consequently, I would say that while structural transformations cannot eradicate bureaucracy, they will help us to fight it more successfully. The first results of our work under the new conditions have shown this to be true."

Q: "Mikhail Ivanovich, the current need for all-out intensification of production makes it urgent and extremely important to improve health care for the workers, prevent diseases, and thereby reduce losses in working time. What does the coming year have in store for the workers of our industry in the way of housing and social improvements?"

A: "For many years, production targets always came first, regardless of anything else, until we began to understand what an enormous mistake we were making in allowing production figures to push the people and their everyday needs into the background.

"The housing problem is still acute. More than 270,000 families are waiting their turn to acquire housing, or improve their present living conditions. There are still many dilapidated and unsuitable houses to be seen. The Ministry has ruled that all the industrial complexes coming on stream must definitely include services for the public, even at the expense of capital investment by the State. We submitted a proposal to the USSR Council of Ministers that enterprises of the timber industry be radically restructured with priority given to development in the social sphere. This will be accomplished by the construction of new and the reconstruction of old residential buildings and public services and amenities. The projections are that by 1996, the level of improvement of housing in forestry settlements will have reached 60%, and that of public services and amenities - 90%. At that time, there will no longer be any dilapidated and unfit housing anywhere. The enterprises and organizations of our Ministry have found a way to channel tens of millions of roubles into housing construction in 1989.

"Much depends on local initiative as well. It is time to show more effort, enterprise and persistence in the improvement of one's own living conditions. Workers' councils can play a significant role in this. Here are a few examples. At the Ponazyrevsky forestry enterprise of "Kostromalesprom" Association, the workers' council headed by Yu. Luk'yanov, himself a worker, insisted that the houses in the settlement be renovated and a grocery store built on a priority basis. This will be accomplished by December 1st, with the progress of the work strictly monitored. If all the workers' councils were to take similar action, we would solve our social problems more quickly."

Q: "The question of improving working conditions stands at par with social, everyday problems. Our editorial office often receives letters from people who are not merely complaining, but expressing their indignation at the condition of the machinery in the forestry industry. They write that the machines and mechanisms are unwieldy, inconvenient, unreliable, and lacking in the most elementary comforts for those who operate them. How long will this go on? When will our scientists and designers of forest machinery put their shoulder to the wheel?"

A: "These claims are fully justified. Forestry science is in great debt to the workers of the industry. We at the Ministry are fully aware of this. A number of measures have been taken to improve scientific work in this field, i.e. scientific organizations have gone over to full profit-and-loss accounting and self-financing, the management structure in this field of science has been improved, and temporary design collectives have begun working on the solution of these problems. The activities of the scientific organizations are based on management principles that treat the results of scientific research as a commodity, and the preamble to a contract - as the sole document governing the inter-relationships between the scientific organizations and the client in the new conditions. However, I have to say that these measures have yet to result in any radical changes. Furthermore, in the work contracted with our enterprises there is a tendency for a greater emphasis to be placed on topics of local interest which are largely irrelevant to our sector. We are also observing an increase in the volume of work contracted with organizations of other ministries and departments, usually at the expense of promising fundamental research projects. A weak spot

in the activity of the scientific organizations is their lack of contact with the production sphere, and with institutions of higher education and theoretical science.

"We must take decisive steps to improve the management of scientific organizations in the forestry industry. The first of these has already been taken. A list of organizational-technical measures, advanced technological processes, machinery and articles recommended for introduction in 1989-1990 has been drawn up.

"It envisages a rapid increase in the extent to which ganged machinery will be used at felling sites for felling, skidding and trimming. In 1990, this will amount to 56, 60 and 74% of the total volume of these operations respectively, and at some enterprises 70-80%. The use of ganged machinery makes it possible to free 350-400 workers from hard manual labour, calculated per million cubic metres of timber.

"The working conditions of the workers at the lower landings of logging enterprises are being improved by introducing automated cross-cutting lines and grading conveyors. By the end of the current Five-Year Plan, the volume of work being performed with this type of machinery will increase by 40,000,000 and 12,600,000 m³ respectively, which will free more than 6,000 workers from manual labour. At the same time, logging enterprises will be equipped with new types of machines with improved ergonomic parameters and electrohydraulic systems of control.

"Major improvements in working conditions will take place in the next few years at sawmilling enterprises, including extensive introduction of

automatic log-grading conveyors, as well as lumber-grading lines. The volume of conveyor log-grading is expected to increase by 3,500,000 m³ over two years of the current Five-Year Plan. Machinery for automatic sawmills is being designed on the basis of band saws involving the use of microprocessing technology. An experimental model of this machinery will be built next year, and serial production of it at our machine-building plants is planned for the 13th Five-Year Plan."

Q: "A session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR recently approved the plan for 1989. What does this plan signify for the timber industry?"

A: "The first and probably most important feature is that the plan for 1989 envisages a further intensification and expansion of the restructuring of timber industry. This will be manifested first and foremost in establishing the conditions that are necessary to make the enterprises and associations independent. The percentage of the State order that enterprises are obliged to fill will decrease substantially. It will be no more than 35% of the overall volume of production, while the number of centrally planned production targets will be cut to 37 (compared with 96.6% and 148 respectively in 1988).

"Consumer's goods other than food, as well as newsprint and a number of other items will be included in the State order to the full extent of production. I intend to pay special attention to the need for keeping a tighter rein on deliveries of pulp and paper products within the timber industry. For the most part, these products will not be included in the State order, but will be delivered in accordance with set quotas and contracts drawn up between the suppliers and consumers. Naturally, the importance

of the contracting system as the main economic link between labour collectives will increase. Under these conditions, I would say that the drawing up of delivery contracts promptly and completely will not only be important economically, but politically as well.

"Another very important feature of the plan for 1989 is that although it is based on proposals submitted by the associations, there is no question that the targets of the Five-Year Plan will be taken into account. Above and beyond these targets, the plan calls for the production of bond paper, wallpaper, furniture and consumer's goods other than food, as well as the rendering of services to the population. The main nomenclature of products, including the volume of production of merchantable wood, is planned at the level foreseen in the Five-Year Plan.

"Ensuring a consistent and dynamic increase in the output of paper and other wood-based products makes the complete utilization of waste, both in the logging and the sawmilling and woodworking branches of the timber industry, a matter of exceptional urgency. In the coming year we must reach a turning point in the campaign against all types of losses, starting at the felling site. These include undercuts, wood left at felling sites, losses due to inefficient cross-cutting at logging terminals, wood strewn along timber transport roads, and losses during timber floating. From now on, all of these resources will be taken into account in the production plan. They are bound to contribute significantly to the balancing out of the latter.

"The productivity of labour is to increase by 103.6% in 1989. As in past years, the total

increase in industrial production is expected to come from the increase in labour productivity.

"In carrying out the plan, special attention should be paid to economy in the use of resources and, on the basis of this, reducing the cost of the finished product. We have begun to overlook this factor, even though it is one of the most important, for it is the cost of the product that reflects all of our successes and failures. We must carefully keep track of how we use up our raw materials, fuel, electrical energy, manpower, etc. from day to day, not just at the end of a month, quarter, or even year, when the accountants sum up the results and it is already too late to change anything.

"Another equally important task is the systematic improvement of the financial situation of the enterprises and associations. We are looking ahead to the extensive application of the second model of self-financing through profit-and-loss accounting. At the same time, we must pay special attention to the efficient distribution of the profit from this form of management, the observance of the proper correlation between the rates of wage increases and the productivity of labour, the timely renovation and modernization of the fixed assets, and the further increase in the technical level of production.

"The next question pertaining to the improvement of the financial situation is the liquidation of unprofitable enterprises. In the logging industry, practically every second enterprise is unprofitable.

"It is necessary for ministries of Union Republics, associations and enterprises to develop

clear-cut plans for eliminating the unprofitableness of enterprises. Next year, there should not be a single one of these enterprises remaining. This means that we should be taking steps to amalgamate economically weak enterprises with strong ones, or to lease those that are unprofitable. In cases where this does not help, the extreme measure, liquidation, must be resorted to in accordance with the USSR Law on State Enterprises.

"A very important feature of the 1989 plan for the development of the national economy is its social orientation. This gives rise to a whole series of tasks for the timber industry.

"In the first place, our enterprises and associations are being called upon to increase further the production of consumers's goods and services. The output of such commodities other than food is expected to rise by almost 800,000,000 roubles, and the various services to the population, by 15% in 1989.

"Secondly, the public demand for forest-based products is growing every year. This is due to the expansion of private house-building, and to collective cultivation of orchards and gardening. We must do whatever is necessary to find the additional resources. Each and every enterprise has the potential for this. All that is needed is the initiative and enterprise.

"Thirdly, we still have to act to speed up the technical re-equipping of commercial and public catering enterprises, bring into service distributing cold-storage units, warehouses and forest products stores (centres), organize a wider network of proprietary stores, and expand commercial facilities

- primarily by vacating the space occupied by administrative and management services.

"Fourthly, we must work towards improved implementation of the sector program for the development of subsidiary agricultural enterprises during the 12th Five-Year Plan by actively utilizing leasing and family contracts.

"Fifthly, we must pay special attention in the 1989 plan to the development of a material foundation in the social and cultural sphere, using all sources of financing to ensure that residential buildings, pre-school establishments, public schools, clubs and cultural establishments, hospitals, walk-in clinics, etc. are brought into operation as planned.

"Now, a few words about the future prospects of this sector of the economy. This is truly a boundless topic, and so I shall deal very briefly with only some of the key points. The future of the timber industry lies in the rapid development of chemical and mechanical wood processing technology, the further intensification of both the timber industry overall and the consumption of forest-based products, and the extensive use of softwooded, broad-leaved species. But priority, as I have mentioned, attaches to the development of wood processing. For example, in the next ten to fifteen years, using 1990 as the base year, we plan to increase pulp production approximately 2.2-fold, that of paper and cardboard 2.1-2.3-fold, of wood-particle board 2.1-2.3-fold, of plywood 2.4-2.6-fold, and of wood-fibre board 1.9-fold. To achieve this goal, we'll have to work particularly hard in the years of the next Five-Year Plan. It is precisely during this period that we must carry out a number of important measures and assemble the equipment and materials

that will enable us to accomplish our program of developing the timber-industry within the very short time frame envisaged."

Q: "Mikhail Ivanovich, the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry is often criticized for ecological violations. You have been personally reproached for this. What can you, as Minister, say about the possibilities of resolving some particularly urgent ecological problem?"

A: "How could anyone think that I, as a citizen of my homeland, could remain indifferent to the fate of our forests, lakes Baikal and Ladoga, or any other lakes and rivers? However, my wishes alone unfortunately cannot solve the problems that have accumulated over many decades. It is unfair to accuse our Ministry alone of all our misfortunes. The decisions to build many of the enterprises without a well thought-out nature conservation program were not the Ministry's alone. It was said that the interests of the State came first, that Nature had more than enough resources and would withstand the pressures. But it has not withstood them.

"How did this happen? First of all, nature conservation is costly. Over the past twenty years (from 1966 to 1985), the portion of the capital investments allocated for nature conservation amounted to about one billion roubles. Naturally, this is not enough. So, to some extent, I am glad of the criticism, for it has helped to direct public attention to our problems. In 1989, 261,300,000 roubles will be spent on nature conservation. This is substantially more than was spent during any of the preceding years. Secondly, there is another problem that cannot be glossed over. For years, we

have been teaching the managers of our economy (and not only them) to adopt a consumer's approach to Nature, and so a certain stereotype of thinking eventually formed in relation to these matters. We have to get rid of this stereotype, and teach our economic managers the new, ecologically literate approach to Nature, utilizing for this purpose a wide diversity of means. This, by the way, was discussed at the last board meeting of the Ministry.

"Definite changes have been taking place recently in the organizations and enterprises of the timber industry. At the planning institutes, positions of Chief Ecologists have been created, nature conservation departments established, and proposals submitted which have to do with the specific character of the organizations in our industry to be concerned with research, design, start-up and adjustment activities in the environmental protection field. These and other measures are subordinated to a single goal: to achieve a fundamental turning point in nature conservation activity, and make it multidisciplinary. At the last board meeting, it was decided that ecological programs are to be developed for all the sub-sectors of the timber industry complex. The formulation of these programs, or rather their implementation, will mark the beginning of a new stage in the solving of ecological problems in this sector of the economy. One other significant decision was reached at the board meeting. In order to upgrade the responsibility attaching to nature conservation practices, it was considered desirable to make the senior managers of enterprises and organizations of the Ministry more strictly accountable, with economic pressure applied should this be necessary.

"A few statistics are in order. Supervisory bodies have sanctioned the shut-down or restriction of production at 22 enterprises of the pulp-and-paper industry. Of the total amount of effluents discharged by the pulp-and-paper industry, only 19% is regarded as adequately purified, and the trend recently has been towards an increase in the discharge of contaminated sewage, rather than a decrease. At only three per cent of our enterprises does the contamination not exceed the maximum permissible level. Only three per cent! Very little progress has been made towards utilization of waste water residues. We have spent many years talking about the different ways of dehydrating and burning the residue, but we have no reliable series-produced equipment for this, and none is on the drawing boards."

Q: "In a word, you have nothing against constructive criticism. In connection with this, I would like to hear your response to the statement made on the pages of our newspaper by Tamara Andreyevna Andreichuk, a delegate to the 19th Party conference, who works at the Oster forestry enterprise. She directed her criticism at the Minister of the Timber Industry, and would like to know your reaction to it."

A: "Tamara Andreyevna apparently had in mind the speech by the First Secretary of the Krasnodar regional committee of the Party, Comrade Polozkov, who, in speaking about the restructuring of this branch of the economy, expressed doubt that the "Yugmebel" Association should continue to exist. Immediately after the conference, the Deputy Minister, F.G. Limer, departed for the Krasnodar Krai. After a detailed discussion of this question with the leaders of the regional party committee and

the "Yugmebel" management, it was decided that the "Yugmebel" Association is needed under the present conditions, when a new model of economic management is being developed and, because of this, commodity technological specialization is becoming particularly important. On the other hand, the forms and methods of work of the association and its enterprises should become increasingly self-supporting in character.

"The Krasnodar Association has been selected for the development of a model of the self-supporting principles of management. The preliminary work on making the transition to an improved model of self-financing operations involving the use of leasing contracts and, in some subdivisions, cooperative forms, is nearing completion there. During this quarter, a contract between the "Yugmebel" and "Krasnodar" associations will be drawn up with a view to establishing the mutual economic responsibilities of both parties, and to give the "Krasnodar" Association greater independence in the use of earnings, both for the development of the enterprise itself, and for the improvement of its social and everyday life.

"After this model has been tested by the "Krasnodary", it will be introduced at the other enterprises of "Yugmebel" with the experimental results taken into account."

Q: "Mikhail Ivanovich, permit me to ask you a personal question in conclusion. If it's not a secret, what is your most cherished dream?"

A: "It's no secret. I want our country to have enough wood and paper so that each and every person can choose the furniture they desire, or wallpaper for the home, without having to stand in

line for it. I would also like the structure of our forest exports to consist of at least 77% of chemically and mechanically processed wood products and only 23% of timber, instead of the other way around, as is the case today. It is my cherished hope that all of our workers will have comfortable homes and be prosperous. I would like their work to bring them joy and the desire to manifest all their capabilities and knowledge. As you can see, my dream is a realistic one, and it's worth living and working for."

Lesnaya Promsyshlennost'

November 15, 1988

Pages 1 and 2 (slightly
abridged)

Translated by the Secretary of State Translation
Bureau, Multilingual Services Division

Call for Substantial Increase in Logging Harvest in
First Four Months of 1989

The Board of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry and the Presidium of Central Committee of the Trade Union have reached the following conclusion: the logging sector is fully capable of embarking on a crash programme during the winter of 1988-1989 and of harvesting 100 million cubic metres of wood in the first quarter of 1989, and 116 million cubic metres by May 1.

This will necessitate an immediate acceleration of haulage volumes, from the current per

diem total of 650,000 cubic metres to 1,000,000 cubic metres by December 10.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 29, 1988

Page 2 (Excerpt)

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

be taken to raise the level of interest within the workers' collectives in increasing the output of products.

That was two months ago. Have there been any changes?

"Judge for yourself, says the general director of Sevzapmebel', A.I. Chudovskii. "Since the start of the year our enterprises have overfilled the plan for furniture production by nine per cent. In other words, deliveries to the trading organizations have exceeded the task assigned to us by two million roubles."

According to Chudovskii, full saturation of the market will occur by 1995 and much is being done to achieve this. An increase in wood base laminates production - from 120,000 to 600,000 cubic metres - has been foreseen. New capacities are unfolding at the Priozersk Furniture and Woodworking Combine (the former pulp mill), at the Nevskaya Dubrovka and Baltika combines, and at the Ust' Izhora Plywood Combine.

The start which has been made on cooperation with foreign partners is proving immensely helpful in solving the problem. The association recently received a loan in convertible roubles at Vneshtorgbank (Foreign Trade Bank). The funds are being used to acquire three wood base laminate plants.

During the last few days I have visited many of the enterprises of Sevzapmebel'. The system of profit-and-loss accounting is beginning to operate in full force at the grassroots level in the Neva Association, at the Inturist and Novosel combines, and at furniture factory No. 2.

With the help of cooperative members a narrow chink has been filled in Sevzapmebel' - the supplying of glassware and mirrors. A cooperative is now at work, replacing the mirror factory, the enterprise having been leased.

The Baltika Furniture Production Association has at long last been formed (formerly Furniture and Woodworking Combine No. 1). After a protracted period of rebuilding it has begun fulfilling the production programme and is supplying Sevzapmebel' with board and semi-finished products in the required volumes.

All this means that the changes on hand are for the better, which enables us to conclude that the "ohs" and "ahs" surrounding the shortage only add to the shortage. But it can even be squeezed a little, if we set about the task amicably.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

October 29, 1988

Page 2 (slightly abridged)

Brest

Can one buy furniture in Brest? I spoke with numerous residents of the city about this. The replies were identical: "It's very difficult, almost impossible".

One is immediately reminded of the proverb about the cobbler who lacked shoes. For in Brest a furniture factory has long been in operation, specializing in the production of suites of furniture, as well as articles for vestibules. But

perhaps it is working below capacity or its products are too dear?

"Not at all," retorted the director of the factory, G.V. Ignatovich. "In a single year we produce 17,500 suites valued at 15 million roubles. The retail price is between 542 and 868 roubles, depending on the cost of assembly. Despite the interruption in the supply of materials and equipment, particularly wood fibreboard and plastic veneer, during the first half of the year the factory collective succeeded in fulfilling the plan. We are making the transition to full profit-and-loss accounting.

About two years ago a number of production oriented innovations were made here. The furniture became less material-intensive and more technologically efficient in serial production.

Evidently, the citizens of Brest would have been more than content with this furniture. This is because, in disposing of its output the factory has its own boss: the Ministry of Trade. In accordance with the latter's multiple purchase order, 40 per cent of the suites are being distributed by way of the Oblast centres of the Belorussian SSR, with the remaining 60 per cent routed to the Central Asian republics, town in the Urals region, Siberia, etc. This goes by the name of inter-republic deliveries.

Here then is the reply to your question: "Can one buy furniture in Brest?"

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October 29, 1988

Page 2 (Full text)

Buryat ASSR

The Buryat Furniture-and-Woodworking Combine (BFWC) decided to find out what potential purchasers thought about a new set of upholstered furniture known as "Aras", which is soon to go into serial production. Residents and visitors to the city were literally "drooling" while walking around the display pieces. The testimonials book contains numerous laudatory comments, such as "Thank you. We were delighted." "I was pleased with 'Aras'". "Let's make sure that this furniture doesn't remain a museum piece."

Let us say at once: they know how to make furniture in Buryatiya. And this is also the tone set by BFWC. They're riding high on the popularity of the "Era-2" combination wall cupboards, and the "Zhuravushka", "Uyut" and "Yashma" sets. The only thing amiss is that there isn't enough furniture.

The first complicating factor is that no one in the republic knows how severe the shortage is. For example, specialists at the State Institute for the Planning and Projection of Enterprises in the Woodworking Industry have come up with the following: in order to put matters right, by 1990 we shall need to produce 33 million roubles worth of furniture annually - (at present, 21,500,000 roubles worth is being produced).

The trade office expressed a different view. "We drew up a short questionnaire and used it as a basis for analyzing demand," said T.N. Serebryakova, Deputy-Director of Wholesaling for Roskhoztorg (RSFSR Office for Wholesale Trade in Household Goods). "Our position is that we shall only put an end to the shortage when there is a

stable output of furniture valued at 45 to 47 million roubles annually."

Even the articles themselves are in dispute. The producers are claiming that today the demand is already being fully met for at least four of them: No. 37 chairs, bed-sofas, wooden bedsteads, and bedroom suites. The trade office concurs only with respect to the chairs.

"All these disagreements are occurring solely on account of the fact that no one is keeping track of the demand," says the acting head of the Consumer Goods Department of Gosplan for the Buryat ASSR, O.R. Alkhunova. "As a matter of fact, it is not only here that this situation exists, but throughout the country as a whole. In my opinion, it is high time to establish self-financed regional centres for studying the demand, initially shall we say, for durables.

It would be a useful step, especially for enterprises that have become self-supporting. But for the present it is clear that in Buryatiya we still have a very long way to go before the market is saturated with furniture. It is therefore important that no time be lost in instituting an on-site search for reserves, and arranging for intelligent specialization and cooperation among producers.

This summer, a new group of furniture producing shops was commissioned as part of the BFWC. The workers' collective is successfully mastering the machinery and already it would appear that in 1989 they will be able to produce an additional two million roubles worth of articles over what was foreseen by the plan. But this will necessitate the help of skilled workers. At present,

however, the Zabaikalles Association and the Ministry of the Timber Industry are backing away from requests.

Or take another example. For a long time the Oimurskaya furniture factory has been working in the Baikal region. In the current year 160 employees will produce no more than 800,000 roubles worth of furniture. On the other hand, the Selenga furniture plant - located not far from there and a sub-unit of the BFWC - is producing 4,200,000 roubles worth of goods with the same number of people.

Facts such as these are plentiful. They offer convincing evidence that there is no clear-cut policy for correcting the shortage, that we are groping our way.

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Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

Kiev

The citizens of Kiev are recalling that not long ago there was a boom in sugar sales. Since then, however, they have gradually become accustomed to the coupons which are needed to obtain the most common product in the Ukraine, which has suddenly become scarce. Now, just as suddenly, a shortage of furniture has developed. Our readers are phoning in to ask what has happened.

The writer brought this to the attention of V. Butkovskii, the director of the largest furniture store in the republic, which is located on Friendship of the Peoples Boulevard. Here, in the course of a

month they sell a variety of products, ranging from tables and chairs to expensive sets of furniture, with a turnover of almost four million roubles. Yet as recently as June the store was in trouble with the plan. There was a cash deficit of some 250,000 roubles.

How is it that a very large retail store can be at one with the plan overall, while the line-ups at the entrance are growing?

In the trading hall there is a crush of people, but the rooms where the sets of furniture are displayed are deserted. This is because even the display units have not been on the market for ages and moreover, the sets of ordinary dining room tables that are there won't be offered to you anyway.

"How will you fulfill the plan if you don't have anything to trade?" - I asked the director. Besides myself, there were four other people in the room.

Butkovskii grins, as if from a toothache:

"They instantly buy up everything we receive. And all day long there are scandals."

Standing next to me and having noticeably cooled down after a "confidential chat" with Butkivskii is Kiev resident A.A. Rudenko. A week ago he had acquired a much desired collapsible set of children's wall bars, a product of the Fastovskaya furniture plant, which is just outside Kiev. A friend of his who is a carpenter, assembled the wall bars in exactly a week. And then it was discovered that the colours of the facade surfaces in the set

were all different. But to purchase this a cool 450 roubles were needed...

Fortunately, the director and I managed to combine forces and help Aleksander Alekseevich. But what about the hundreds of people who are milling about in the hall near the warehousing areas and are ready to buy up everything being offered? In Kiev the boom in furniture sales is assuming epidemic proportions. And now, rumours are being circulated about the next major increase in prices.

"The price of furniture is going up. Therefore, lay in store everything you can get your hands on." Taking this to the point of absurdity, my neighbour built a garage, but when it came time to buy a car, in place of a "Zhiguli" he filled the garage with furniture. As a kind of insurance policy!

For wherever a shortage occurs, speculation is inevitable. Darting about in the crowd are some suspicious looking "middle-men". They know everything: what, from where and when to buy. They are "on the job" from morning until late in the evening. I was informed in confidence that when there is a furniture shortage the middle-man, or to put it bluntly, the "queue vendor" earns more than three skilled workers.

The director is wringing his hands in distress. "I don't know what will come of all this. The first thing we need to do is put an end to the rumours about price increases. The only problem is, how?"

"And secondly", chipped in senior commodity researcher M. Dubinsky, "the furniture manufacturers need to be reorientated once and for all. For they

are the ones who are supporting these rumours: instead of concentrating on producing more pieces of furniture they have been focusing on expensive suites."

The retailers are right. An excellent nutritive medium has been created for the rumours. And now, everyone is in a state of perplexity. Everyone, that is, except the speculators.

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Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

Tomsk

In the spacious trading hall of furniture store No. 47 of the Tomsk Municipal Trading Network there is a resounding echo - a sure sign of an empty space. Neither queues nor furniture are to be seen. To make sure that the sales clerks don't become bored, the store has been supplied with "accessories" such as carpets and mattress covers.

"In the spring we obtained a three-room apartment. But what are we going to furnish it with", complains G. Kravtsova, an engineer. "Almost every day I visit this place and each time I return empty handed. My three children have to do their homework on the window-sills. We are being advised to have everything we need delivered from Moldavia or the Baltic region. But so many things would be arriving that my entire vacation would be spent on this. I just don't have that kind of time..."

Four enterprises belonging to different ministries and departments are engaged in furniture production in the Oblast. Their output is valued at just over 20 million roubles. Almost as much furniture again is being brought in as imports and from other parts of the country. All this is meeting roughly half of the demand. How does the industry expect to make up for the shortage?

In the view of the Tomsk people, the solution to the problem lies in developing the furniture combine of the Tomlesprom Association, which currently accounts for approximately 70 per cent of the articles so essential to the Oblast. During the last Five-Year Plan the Combine was made part of the Yugmebel' Association, which had begun supplying Tomsk with sets of facing panels. This step enabled the Tomsk producers to increase the output of cabinet furniture from 8,000,000 to 14,000,000 roubles over a three-year period. Subsequently, however, Yugmebel' began to disrupt deliveries of facing panels more and more frequently. It was for this reason that the Tomsk Combine came to be numbered among the backward enterprises. This year, the furniture production deficit has crept up by one and a half million roubles, with a corresponding disruption of planned deliveries. Is there any way out of this bind?

"Cooperation with Yugmebel' was essential", maintains E.F. Uskov, who was recently elected by the collective to be Director of the Combine. "But today it has become a hindrance. A programme has been developed whereby we are to increase to 22,000,000 roubles the output of furniture.

While production areas are available for the initial steps, we need to acquire the machine tools

and train the workers. The bringing on stream of new capacities is envisaged for the next Five-Year Plan, both through construction and through rebuilding and technical re-equipping."

In short, for some time to come G. Kravtsova's children will still have to do their homework on the window-sills.

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Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

Comment by the Newspaper's Department of Woodworking

So, as the popular song goes, "It's a great country, but from the southern rivers to the northern seas the picture is virtually the same: shortages of furniture everywhere and the queues getting longer."

About twenty million Soviet people have already obtained or are on the point of obtaining lots in market-garden or garden societies, which are gradually being built upon. And it is into these much desired cottages that the junk from our urban apartments is finding its way. How else to fill the empty corners! Here then is your first stimulus that serves to aggravate the furniture shortage. The second is that the country is embarking on a housing programme of unprecedented proportions. Not everything is proceeding in the way it was envisaged, but improvements are at hand. And to where does the happy settler direct his steps in the first instance? Undoubtedly to the furniture store.

The main question is this: until when in our society, which has declared concern for people's welfare to come before anything else, are living conditions to be dictated by production rather than the consumer? The question is by no means rhetorical. Hasn't it already proved impossible to predict the escalating boom in furniture sales and somehow moderate it?

The capacities of the existing furniture enterprises in the country are sufficient to permit an overall increase of almost thirty per cent in the output of merchandise. Currently, annual production is valued at about seven billion roubles, added to which is whatever amount has remained unclaimed.

It is true that for these, so to speak, free furniture capacities, there is not enough wood particle board and wood fibreboard and that veneer is also scarce. The disease is chronic and it has been known for quite some time that the resource base is in a lamentable state. This newspaper has long been sounding the alarm on this subject ("An Ineradicable Shortage - Or What Chance Will a New Settler Have of Buying Furniture in the Year 2000?" - March 29, '88; "Word Soon Gets Out" - April 9; "Queuing up for -- a Disappointment" - April 30, and others). Judging from the official replies received by the editors, remedial steps are being taken. In the main, they are predicting the start up of additional lines and the acquisition of new plant. References to this will be found in today's reports from our correspondents. But they are mostly speaking of tomorrow's reserves. What is to be done about the present?

As a very rough approximation, it is estimated that almost 20 per cent of the board

currently being received for furniture production is sent directly to the dump. Rejects! This situation, unfortunately, is by no means original: a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. The campaign to achieve a higher quality of output has not become the daily concern of the captains of industry, or of the Party and trade union organizations of the supplying enterprises.

Our readers have come up with a fair number of sensible suggestions about how to lessen the ruinous consequences of the furniture shortage. Take, for example, those rumours about price increases. We loudly proclaim our devotion to "glasnost", but what it comes down to is that, like babes in the wood, we are giving in to shady characters from the world of business and trade, and to old age pensioners selling places in the queue. It was recently announced on Moscow Radio that there would be no increase in subway fares until 1991. This put an end to the rumours. Why couldn't representatives of the USSR Goskomtsen (State Commission on Prices) or the Ministry of the Timber Industry inject precisely the same degree of clarity into the furniture question?

A fuller knowledge of the market requirements would open up more room for manoeuvre under the conditions posed by the shortage, if only within the republic, region or Oblast, initially. For this, however, studies of the demand would be needed, rather than guessing as to when a special governmental service was likely to be formed.

In the end, even such an ugly phenomenon the queue is also fully controllable.

It is therefore desirable to end on an optimistic note: after discussing the work of the Sevzapmebel' Association at the office of the CPSU Oblast Committee, the Leningradites have managed to get a grip on the situation that has arisen in furniture production. True, there is still a long way to go before everything has been put right. But the first attempt convinces us that the shortage is not as drastic as it is being made out to be.

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October 29, 1988
Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

Improved Air Purification Method for Use in Furniture Manufacturing

Today, many of the efficiency experts in the country's furniture-making enterprises are seeking a solution to the air purification problem. The dust extractors and ventilators used in the furniture industry do not ensure complete purification. The main source of the airborne dust is the grinding machine.

An efficient method by which all of the dust can be removed has been proposed by Ukrainian innovators. An additional connecting pipe is attached to the exhaust pipe of a standard dust extractor, and to the lower end of the attachment a cone-shaped fabric sleeve is fastened.

The heavy particles of dust rapidly lose velocity and fall into the connecting pipe. The lighter particles, upon rising, collect in the fabric sleeve, with the result that only clean air is discharged into the atmosphere.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 22, 1988

Page 2 (Full text)

PULP AND PAPER

Government Acts to Rectify the Paper Shortage

On instructions received from the USSR State Planning Commission (Gosplan), the composite department of Gosplan's wood chemistry unit has carefully examined the articles "The Illusion of the Limit to Subscriptions" and "Is the Paper Shortage Severe?" (Lesnaya Promyshlennost' July 14 and August 27, 1988) and reports as follows:

For the most part, the articles have correctly represented the situation that has developed with respect to the growth of the pulp-and-paper industry and the supply of paper for the publication of periodicals. In drawing up the 12th Five-Year Plan, based on the existing financial and material resources, annual growth rates of the order of 3 per cent and 5 to 6 per cent respectively were foreseen for newsprint and printing paper. In making these projections it was borne in mind that the growth rate of the periodicals would not exceed two to three per cent annually.

The removal of the restrictions on subscriptions during the period 1986 - 1988 resulted in increased runs of newspapers and magazines in the amount of 19,600,000 copies in 1988 in comparison with 1987. The circulations foreseen for the current year in the Five-Year Plan have been exceeded by 6.9 per cent for newspapers and by 8.9 per cent for magazines and have reached a level of 291 newspapers and 372 magazines per 100 families, which makes it possible to satisfy in full the demands of the readership. In the process, the subscription to "Argumenty i Fakty" has tripled, while that for

"Roman-gazetu" has risen by a factor of 1.4. The increases in the circulations of other magazines enjoying an increased demand have also been substantial.

The fact that the increases in the circulations of the periodicals have outstripped the growth rates in paper production has given rise to difficulties in the supply of paper.

With the object of eliminating the acute situation confronting the 1989 subscription drive, decisions have been taken which will result in a curtailment of exports, an increase in the production of newsprint and printing paper, a decrease in the funds allocated to ministries and departments for purchases of paper for office needs, and a reduction in the output of books and pamphlets enjoying a limited public demand.

These measures have made it possible to remove the limitations (in addition to the decisions taken earlier) on subscriptions to the newspapers "Komsomol'skaya Pravda" and "Trud", and to increase the circulations of a number of popular magazines.

To ensure that future demands for newsprint will be met, a government decision has been taken which calls for modernization of the paper mills at the Balakhna, Kondopoga and Solikamsk combines during the period 1989 - 1995. This will result in an increase in newsprint production capacities of between 540,000 and 580,000 tonnes, or a 30 per cent increase over current capacities.

There is also provision in the 13th Five-Year Plan to embark on the building of a Yeniseisk pulp-and-paper combine (Krasnoyarsk Kray)

which will come on stream in 1995 and have a production capacity of 400,000 tonnes of newsprint.

The realization of these measures will not only satisfy the requirements of the national economy for newsprint, but will also significantly increase the deliveries of it for export.

The concept for the development of the sector during the period up to 2005 also foresees a substantial increase during the 13th Five-Year Plan of production volumes of various types of printing paper (by almost 40 per cent), packaging and wrapping paper and board, and other pulp-and-paper products.

The development of the pulp-and-paper industry must be accomplished in such a way that it is based on the use of Soviet-made equipment which conforms to world standards and will be built at the earliest possible date through the combined efforts of scientists and engineers, machine builders and paper specialists.

(Article signed by V. Tatarinov, Deputy Chief of the composite department of the wood chemistry unit at Gosplan).

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'
October 11, 1988

Page 2 (Abridged to avoid repetition)

More on the Paper Shortage

As reported earlier, the limit on subscriptions has been rescinded for almost all the

central periodicals. Our newspaper has already devoted a number of articles to an analysis of the possibility of a lifting of the restrictions and, in our view, this has been generally helpful. Today we are publishing the responses of senior officials of USSR Gosplan (State Planning Commission), USSR Gossnab (State Committee for Supply of Materials and Equipment) and USSR Goskomizdat (State Committee for Matters Relating to Publishing Houses, the Printing Trade and the Book Trade), which support our conclusions.

Nevertheless, even though the government has found the requisite additional material resources for increasing the circulations, an acute shortage of paper will be felt for sometime to come. In order to eliminate it, much will be demanded of workers in the pulp-and-paper industry. Accordingly, we are intending to discuss in detail, during this year and 1989, important new matters and concerns with which we are faced. Read our newspaper.

* * *

"IS THE PAPER SHORTAGE SEVERE?"

Responses

(1) Gossnab (State Committee for Supply of Materials and Equipment)

USSR Gossnab has carefully examined the article "Is the Paper Shortage Severe?" ("Lesnaya Promyshlennost", August 27, 1988) and reports as follows:

Production planning and also the distribution of newsprint and printing paper is handled by USSR Gosplan. The situation that has developed in the supply of paper for subscriptions to newspapers and magazines in 1989 has been examined by USSR Gosplan and Gossnab.

The removal of restrictions on subscriptions during the period 1986-1988 resulted in a substantial growth in the circulations of newspapers and magazines in 1988 in comparison with 1987. The level of the circulations foreseen for the current year by the Five-Year Plan has been exceeded by 6.9 per cent for newspapers and by 8.9 per cent for magazines.

The plan for the production of newsprint in 1989 has been increased by 34,000 tonnes, or 1.9 per cent, over the amount planned for the current year. Similarly, an increase of 10,000 tonnes, or 0.9 per cent over the figure for the current year, is foreseen for the production of printing paper.

The Council of Ministers of the USSR has taken measures providing for an increase in the resources of newsprint. This will make it possible to lessen the strain resulting from subscriptions to

periodicals. Simultaneously, a decision has been taken to reduce the quotas of printing paper required by ministries and departments for office purposes and as documentation accompanying goods for sale, and also to curtail the publication of books and pamphlets for which there is little popular demand. The resources of printing paper thus made available will be directed towards increasing the circulations of the central magazines.

To ensure that the decision is implemented, steps are being taken to secure a supplementary mobilization of the requisite capacities for an increase in the production and an improvement in the quality of newsprint and for maintaining a stable supply of ligneous raw material to pulp-and-paper plants of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry.

In order to solve the problem of supplying the nation's publishing houses with newsprint throughout the period 1990-1995 the Council of Ministers of the USSR has taken steps which will enable a substantial increase to be achieved in newsprint production capacities.

The implementation of a series of measures by the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry and other departments will permit the achievement of a substantial increase in the ensuing years in the resources of paper for publishing newspapers and magazines.

The newsprint and printing paper required for the normal circulations are allocated to publishing houses in accordance with consumption norms approved by Goskomizdat. Moreover, Goskomstat (USSR State Committee for Statistics) maintains an annual inventory of residues of paper held by

consumers and suppliers, and the Ministry of Communications keeps a record of subscriptions to periodicals. The publishing houses submit a report on their activities to USSR Gosplan.

These measures provide us with a means of monitoring the use of paper, not only overall, but also in terms of the different kinds of it. In cases of non-fulfilment of production plans by enterprises of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry the publishing houses sometimes resort to the use of small quantities of newsprint instead of the paper normally used for books and magazines, but these changes are inconsequential.

Questions pertaining to control over circulation policy and advance lists of publications of publishing houses are handled by USSR Goskomizdat.

In addition, it should be borne in mind that in the current year the enterprises of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry are not coping with the fulfilment of planned assignments for the output of printing paper. During the first nine months of this year there has been a shortfall of more than 70,000 tonnes of printing and offset paper used for the publishing of magazines and sociopolitical and fictional material. In these circumstances priority is given to supplying the paper required for publishing sociopolitical magazines and textbooks, for special purposes and for export. Accordingly, failures in the fulfilment of a production plan have an especially severe impact on the provision of paper for publishing fiction.

In view of the foregoing, USSR Gossnab is requesting the editorial board of "Lesnaya Promyshlennost" to maintain a special check on

matters relating to the fulfilment of the production plan for newsprint and printing paper by enterprises of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry and to report its findings in the press. This request also applies to progress made in the construction, reconstruction and modernization of papermaking machines.

(Article signed by G. Merkulov, Deputy Chairman of Gossnab)

(2) Goskomizdat (State Committee for Matters Relating to Publishing Houses, the Printing Trade and the Book Trade)

Goskomizdat of the USSR has examined the article "Is the Paper Shortage Severe". We concur with the opinion expressed by the newspaper that the subscription campaign for 1989 could have been handled more efficiently and in a way that was less costly to morale. Consideration should have been given to the fact that unlimited subscriptions to a number of magazines and newspapers were in effect for several years and had "stabilized". Moreover, there was even a decline in subscriptions to some publications. In our view, consideration might have been given to the question of the efficacy of imposing limits on subscriptions to certain sociopolitical and fictional magazines, or alternatively, the Ministry of Communications could have been instructed to keep a close watch on them. Naturally, this would have necessitated additional expenditures of time and materials on the part of the communicators, but such a measure would have made it possible to determine, for specific periods, how rapidly the circulations of the most topical

publications were growing. In the event of a subscription beginning to significantly exceed the maximum possible level of supplying materials and equipment for a particular magazine, it would have been possible to "freeze" it. In that case, a true picture of the readers' interests would have been obtained, and limited editions would either not appear at all or would be very few in number.

(Article signed by I. Simdyankin, Deputy Chairman of USSR Goskomizdat)

(3) Gosplan (State Planning Commission)

The Department of Scientific and Technical Advances in Machine Building, of USSR Gosplan, has examined the article "Machine of the Past", published in the September 13, 1988 edition of "Lesnaya Promyshlennost'", and reports as follows:

With the object of satisfying the newsprint requirements of the national economy the Council of Ministers of the USSR has instructed the USSR Ministry of Chemical Machine Building and the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry to ensure modernization, during the period 1989-1995, of the operating equipment used in newsprint production at the Balakhna, Kondopoga and Solikamsk pulp-and-paper combines, thereby providing for an increase in the total capacity of these combines of 380,000 tonnes a year.

A proposal made by the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry has also been adopted. It provides for the commissioning at the Balakhna pulp-and-paper combine in 1991 of a papermaking machine with an annual productivity of 200,000 tonnes of newsprint.

In September of this year the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry and the USSR Ministry of Chemical Machine Building issued corresponding instructions calling for the timely commissioning of modernized and new papermaking machines for the production of newsprint at the indicated pulp-and-paper combines.

(Article signed by K. Oreshin, Deputy Head of the Department of Scientific and Technical Advances in Machine Building, of USSR Gosplan)

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 3, 1988

Page 2 (Full text)

Duplex Creped Base Paper Developed Experimentally for Instrument Sterilization and Other Medical Purposes

How workers in the paper industry are helping doctors in the fight against AIDS, infections in maternity homes, hepatitis "B" and other serious diseases, and why a remarkable new discovery by Lithuanian workers in the paper industry may be doomed to oblivion.

One of the authors of this article is closely familiar with the story of the Kaliningrad maternity home near Moscow. Every year, a wave of terror descends on the city. It is brought on by the infectious diseases that afflict babies.

The unsanitary conditions in urban and rural hospitals and clinics are the scourge of Soviet medicine. On 10 June 1985, the USSR Minister of Health issued an order prohibiting the sterilization

of syringes with water. Even those who know little about medicine are aware of why this document was signed. For many years, syringes and medical instruments were disinfected by boiling them in water for several hours. However, this has proved ineffective against certain dangerous viruses. For example, the hepatitis "B" virus retains its deadly properties even after prolonged boiling in water.

The high infant mortality and the uncontrollable outbreak of Staphylococcus aureus and other infections in maternity homes and gynecological clinics were proof of the helplessness of the medical personnel. Several years ago, the world was gripped by a deadly new terror: AIDS. Although scientists have joined together in the fight against this insidious virus, they have not yet been able to conquer it or give people some hope of protection against it.

Since 1 January 1986, syringes, forceps, clamps and other medical instruments have no longer been sterilized by boiling on electric stoves in clinics and hospitals (pursuant to an order issued by the USSR Minister of Health). Dry-heat and steam sterilizers have replaced the antiquated boiling method. This long overdue, but unquestionably beneficial innovation poses a problem for doctors, a problem which requires additional (and substantial) material outlays.

The instruments are now packed in cotton fabric or kraft paper when being subjected to heat treatment. However, cotton fabric scorches quickly in dry-heat sterilizers, and cannot be used over and over again. The bags made of kraft paper by in-patients of psychiatric clinics also have many disadvantages. First of all, they do not ensure

reliable sterility, and there is no guarantee that the bags made of this low-quality paper are non-toxic. We could turn, for example, to the western firm "Vipac Medical", the maker of Steriking. However, this universal packing for medical instruments is made of high-quality plastics which are very costly. It would cost millions in hard currency to supply all the medical establishments of the country with "Vipac Medical" products. Where do we get this money? We can't even afford disposable syringes.

The workers of the Novo-Verkyaiskaya paper mill unexpectedly came up with a solution to the problem of medical instrument sterilization. However, before describing the discovery itself, we would like to give you some background information.

Three years ago, the former USSR Ministry of the Timber and Paper Industries commissioned the mill to master the techniques involved in the manufacture of a new type of product, a base for duplex creped paper. One of the paper-making machines had to be reconstructed completely for this purpose. The mill workers successfully accomplished the task.

As was expected, however, the base paper that the Novo-Verkyaiskaya mill began to produce proved to be somewhat wider than required by the consumer: the Zhidachev Pulp and Paperboard Mill. Even before reconstruction work had begun, the Ministry had specified what was to be done with the unavoidable surpluses. It was decided that the by-product would be sent to the Zhidachev mill for recycling.

However, the by-product did not find a use, and began to accumulate in the warehouses of the

consumer. It was eventually written off as waste paper, even though this was costly.

The search for new ways of using the creped base paper continued. While the machine was still under reconstruction, the chief engineer of the factory, Antanas Skaisgiris, fell to thinking about the unique properties of the product that they would soon be manufacturing. You see, the base paper was to be used in the manufacture of cable winding. Very high standards are demanded of the paper. It is made of high-quality and chemically pure pulp. The production line is strictly regulated and the absence of impurities is guaranteed. The purest lake water is used in the production process, and the paper is dried at a temperature of 110-140°C. The chief engineer wondered whether it could be used for medical purposes. However, as there was no surplus, the idea had to be dropped. When the Zhidachev workers abandoned the thought of using the by-product, Skaisgiris again thought of the doctors, and went to see Romas Mitskyavichus, the assistant chief physician of the leading oncological clinic in Lithuania.

"That same day," says Skaisgiris, "Romas and I went to the factory warehouse. There I found several samples of the by-product, and suggested that Romas test the paper at the clinic. Several days later he had good news for me. The base paper had turned out to be highly valuable. It may help us improve the sterilization process and solve one of the most acute problems of Soviet medicine."

This first test of Antanas Skaisgiris' idea took place in the spring of 1987. Soon, the republic's sanitation and epidemiology station became involved in the documentation and scientific

substantiation of the idea. Samples of the base paper were then sent to the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of Disinfection and Sterilization. In July 1987, the chief physician of the Sanitation and Epidemiology Station of the Lithuanian SSR, A. Vaichyulis, received a letter signed by the Institute's Director, Prof. P.P. Lyarsky, which confirmed on the basis of test results that the types of paper sent could be used as packaging material for medical supplies. Despite the positive response, Skaisgiris' continued to look for new ways of using the by-product in the field of medicine.

When we met Skaisgiris' wife, herself a doctor at a gynecological clinic in Vilnyus, she spoke of yet another use that had been found for the by-product.

"My husband came home overjoyed," she said. "The product being put out by his paper mill had been assessed as suitable for use in the field of medicine. Resourceful as all women are, I straightaway set to thinking how this product might be used in my line of work, gynecology..."

The answer to this question soon became evident as several of the country's hospitals began to test the product of the Novo-Verkyaiskaya mill with good results.

For example, during the testing by doctors of the Lithuanian Clinical Hospital, medical instruments were wrapped in the creped paper and subjected to sterilization in dry-heat sterilizers for two hours at a temperature of 180°C. When the instruments were unwrapped, the creped paper was used as a sterile towel.

The tests showed that the creped paper was very durable, easily and tightly wrapped around medical instruments, and did not burn at temperatures of 180-190°C. After heat treatment, it acquires the shape of the instrument wrapped in it which is important for preserving the sterility.

Other advantages of the paper were described in even greater detail in a letter from the Deputy Minister of Health of the Kazakh SSR, Ya.A. Klebanov: "The paper is durable, highly resistant to tearing, and convenient to work with. Bacterial cultures taken from objects three days after sterilization tested negative. (In other words, the paper keeps things sterile for three days - Editor). The paper can be easily stitched on a sewing machine to make bags. As a lining, it is pleasant to the touch and does not stick to the body.

"It is highly economical. In the clinics alone, up to 1000 sheets and as many wraps worth 5500-6000 roubles are written off annually. Replacing them with paper ones would cut the cost to a mere 200 roubles. The use of this paper in treatment rooms, in gynecology and obstetrics would also free a vast number of sheets, liners and wraps for use in hospitals. It is far more hygienic and aesthetically pleasing than plastic liner and newspaper which are still used in gynecology. It can be used once, or several times if sterilized. This paper has proved to be a multipurpose product. Compared with the product of the "Kondrovobumprom" Combine, which puts out multipurpose paper covers and sheets that can be used only as liners and cost from 0.69 to one rouble a square metre, the advantage of duplex creped base paper is obvious. It costs only 0.05 roubles per square metre."

These comments eloquently and at first sight, fully describe the advantages of the former "by-product". However, physicians and workers at the Novo-Verkyaiskaya mill keep finding new uses for creped paper. In July 1988, toxicological testing of creped paper was completed at the All-Union Research and Experimental Institute of Medical Technology. In the conclusion of the report, which is signed by the Institute's director B.I. Leonov, it is recommended that base paper be used for the treatment of wounds, i.e. as a paper bandage. In the resuscitation ward of the Oncological Clinic of the Lithuanian SSR, it has been tested as an isolating cover for surgical patients, replacing the usual cotton sheets. It was found to be useful in the operating room as well.

"All of the doctors remain satisfied with our product," says Skaisgiris, "but the nurses are not very pleased with it. They say that the paper is somewhat rough to the touch. So now I am trying to find a way of making softer creped paper, though the surgeons say it is fine the way it is. I think that if there is a chance to make our product even better and the work of doctors easier, we should definitely seize the opportunity."

We visited several hospitals and clinics where the paper produced by the Novo-Verkyaiskaya mill is being used. The Lithuanian doctors are particularly pleased with it, but not only because Lithuanians came up with the idea. Rather, it is because the mill supplies the acquisitions department of the Ministry of Health of the Lithuanian SSR with packaged sheets of creped paper of convenient sizes. The medical establishments of other republics receive this paper in rolls and spools, and so the nurses at the hospitals and clinics have to cut the rolls into sheets, first with knives and then with scissors.

"We are very grateful to the Novo-Verkyaiskaya mill for the remarkable paper," says M. Penkratik, head nurse of Hospital No. 10 in Minsk. "Our only request is that it be sent to us in ready-cut sheets, instead of in rolls and spools. It would make life much easier for the girls working in the sterilization sector."

Similar requests have been received at the mill from other consumers.

"There is not much we can do," says Skaisgiris, spreading his hands in a gesture of helplessness. "We'd be glad to, but we're short of people. We are already taking workers off their regular jobs to cut paper for Lithuanian doctors."

"There is a way out however. Automatic paper cutting and packing lines are operating in this industry. These machines are manufactured by the Italian firm "Belomatik". One such machine requires one to two operators. If we had a similar line at our mill, we could easily provide all our clients with sheet paper that is also well-packaged. But where do we get the currency?"

Skaisgiris has a number of other interesting ideas. For example, he would like (and even knows how) to make bactericidal paper for the treatment of wounds from the base paper produced by his mill. Only a small machine needs to be added to the production line. However, it is unlikely that the mill will be able to acquire this machine on its modest means. Who will help with the finances is the question of the day. This applies not only to machinery. As we can see, the demand for this unique paper can become colossal, but the resources of the

mill are extremely limited. It has received a multitude of requests for medical creped paper for 1988. The total demand was for a thousand tonnes. The demand for this product will increase to 1500 tonnes in 1989, and possibly to 4000 tonnes in the near future. Only half of the demand for 1988 was met, i.e. only 500 tonnes of paper were produced for medical purposes. At the present time, the workers of the Verkyaiskaya paper mill can only meet the demands of the medical establishments of Lithuania and Byelorussia, and to some extent the Kazakh SSR, the Leningrad Medical Supplies Agency and Hospital No. 17 in Riga. All the rest are potential consumers who have not yet approached the mill because of a lack of information. It is quite probable that any day now the mill will receive hundreds of letters from hospitals and clinics throughout the country with orders for creped paper.

"The only other solution," says Skaisgiris, "is to expand production, either by modernizing and re-equipping one more of the machines for the production of creped paper, or by purchasing a new aggregate. The problem has gone beyond the bounds of a single industry. The USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry is not in a position to finance the reconstruction of the Novo-Verkyaiskaya mill today. It should go to the USSR Ministry of Health for assistance. After all, the workers in the paper industry can help solve one of the most urgent problems of health care. Perhaps the doctors can invest their own funds in the way that shareholders do?"

P.S. Speaking of money, as Chief Engineer of the mill, Skaisgiris received a bonus of 100 roubles for his innovative proposal, and two of his co-authors got even less. Considering that the use of one ton

of creped paper for medical purposes saves approximately 20,000 roubles or even more, not to mention the other important aspects of the discovery, the amount of the award is ridiculous, if not downright humiliating.

(Article written in Vil'nyus and Moscow).

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 24, 1988

Pages 1 & 2 (Full text)

Translated by the Secretary of State Translation Bureau, Multilingual Services Division.

...to produce cardboard, and that the necessary
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Pulp and Paper Combine and the Sovyetskoye
has been using cardboard produced at the firm
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and that even so, it had to find a way to
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Low Quality Cores Present a Threat to 1989 Newsprint Exports from Kondopoga

Newsprint from Kondopoga is highly esteemed, both at home and abroad. More than thirty countries buy it from us. In 1986, for example, deliveries for hard currency exceeded 30,000 tonnes.

But now, things are not looking too good: many firms are refusing to deal with us. Has there been a decline in the workmanship of the Kondopogans? Has the quality of their product decreased? Neither is true. It is simply that foreign buyers don't like the cores on which the paper is wound. Our cores are soft and quickly become crushed. Their wall thicknesses are variable and they have an unattractive exterior. We are all aware how difficult it is to remove all of the product from a poorly constructed core when using rolls in printing presses.

This is not the fault of the Kondopoga papermakers. A few years ago we acquired imported equipment, learned how to produce spirally wound cores and improved the sizing of the layers. All the same, we have fallen below world standards.

Nowhere in the country was there any thick paperboard weighing 250-300 grammes per square metre - the base stock for cores. This is why the Combine has been using boxboard produced at the Perm' Pulp-and-Paper Combine and the Suoyarvi experimental paperboard factory. It is made from waste paper with low strength and wide variations in thickness. However hard you try, you can't manufacture a high-quality core from it.

Naturally, we sounded the alarm. Three years ago we approached former Deputy-Minister G.F. Pronin with a request that arrangements be made to produce coreboard, and that the necessary

documentation be issued. Our request, it would seem, was taken seriously. In 1987 Pronin authorized the head of the Ministry's Planning and Economic Directorate to provide for the production in 1988 of 5,800 tonnes of paperboard for the packing of paper on automated lines, 18,800 tonnes of base stock for the manufacturing of cores and 5,600 tonnes of pasteboard for end bands. The Directorate for the Supply of Materials and Equipment was ordered to allocate the materials which were needed for core production on spiral winding benches. During the second and third quarters of last year our collective, together with the Technical Directorate and the Astrakhan Branch of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of the Pulp and Paper Industry (VNIIB), should have been conducting experimental production of cores and agreeing upon the technological normative documentation governing the base stock for them. It is even possible to name the official who was responsible for implementing the plan. He is B.S. Zhuravlev, who headed the former production directorate of the pulp-and-paper and wood chemistry industry.

Unfortunately, everything has remained as it was. The official sidestepped his responsibility and we were left high and dry. We have neither the paperboard we need, the documentation, nor good quality cores. It is holding up the manufacture of newsprint for export.

Meanwhile a possibility exists for correcting the situation. Our combine, on its own initiative, embarked on a search for core board. And it located some: it is produced by the Kotlass Pulp-and-Paper Combine, weighs 230-250 grammes per square metre, is of suitable strength and uniform thickness. We attempted to reach an agreement with

the Kotlass people regarding deliveries, but the directors of the Combine flatly refused to ship the necessary board, even at the prices stipulated. An attempt by the workers' collective at the Combine to influence the Kotlass authorities through the press came to nothing.

Again we felt it necessary to appeal to higher authorities. It didn't help. The Kotlass Combine responded by sending thin board weighing 175 grammes per square metre. It also failed to allot 250-gramme board to the Astrakhan branch of VNIIB which had developed the technology for manufacturing the cores.

The Soviet timber exports agency "Eksportles" is planning a major expansion in 1989 of Kondopoga newsprint exports in return for hard currency payments. The volume is to be raised to 50,000 tonnes. But this is hardly likely to happen. The Kondopogans will be unable to produce the necessary quantity of high quality cores and ensure that the paper is wound onto them to the required standard of excellence. It would appear that the foreign firms will again be refusing our paper.

This red tape is very costly. And who will assume responsibility for the drop in hard currency earnings? Could it be that as before, the Kondopoga Pulp-and-Paper Combine alone will be the loser?

Questions, questions, and still no answers. Meanwhile, the workers of the Main Technological Directorate for Pulp and Paper Production and Wood Chemistry, the scientific research institutes and the forestry enterprises are engaged in a round dance around the cores.

(Article signed by E. Dotsenko, Head of the Sheet Paper Shop, and I. Chernyavskaya, Head of the Central Laboratory of the "Kondopogabumprom" Production Association, Karelian SSR).

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'
November 19, 1988
Page 1 (Full text)

FORESTRY

Proposals to Plant Black Walnut as a Replacement for Mahogany

Visit the Maikop dramatic theatre and you will be surrounded on all sides by marvellous designs, drawings and ornaments. This wondrous beauty has been created by the greatest artist of all - Nature - in the wood of the black walnut. The veneer from it abounds in decorative properties, which are just as good as those of mahogany. And this valuable raw material - much prized by furniture makers - can be cultivated in vast areas of the southern part of the country - in the Transcaucasus, the Ukraine, Moldavia and Central Asia.

The black walnut is native to the eastern part of North America. In the Mississippi valley it reaches a height of up to 40 to 50 metres and a diameter of up to two metres. It was from there that the exotic species were brought to our country more than two centuries ago. Over a hundred more years were needed before the unusual plant began to bear fruit in small groves. In the Krasnodar Krai, for example, the first few saplings were planted in 1913 near the Gul'kevichi sugar mill. In the Krai as a whole, in the floodplain of the Kuban' and its tributaries almost three thousand hectares are devoted to the black walnut. The first industrial plantation in the country already exists on the

territory of the Kropotino forestry enterprise. It is from two of these specimens, felled on the enterprise's property, that the decorative facing of the curtain at the Maikop dramatic theatre has come. But this, unfortunately, is currently the only practical application of the valuable raw material in our country.

Strange as it may seem, it is ignorance on the part of the foresters that is preventing the black walnut from extending its range. This was indicated in the course of a seminar convened this summer at the Kropotkino forestry enterprise. Many participants, some of whom had even travelled there from the Northern Caucasus, learned for the first time from a paper presented by Doctor of Agricultural Sciences P. Alent'ev - a senior scientific co-worker at the Belorechenskii laboratory for the breeding of nut-bearing species - that the black walnut is superior in all respects to oak, beech, hornbeam and other valuable species. Moreover, it grows twice as quickly and is already mature at 50 years. Compared with oak, it yields almost twice as much veneer, but the price is 3.5 times as high. Not only is it more resistant to pests, but what is of prime importance, the texture of black walnut wood is just as good as mahogany, which we are buying for hard currency as facing material. If it were to become widely cultivated in industrial plantations, the furniture manufacturers would have all of the decorative veneer they needed.

Black walnut also confers other benefits. Its fruits are used in light industry, the food industry and for medicinal purposes. The kernal, for example, contains from one and a half times to twice the quantity of oils, proteins and vitamins found in the walnut Juglans regia L. The oil is used in

manufacturing chocolate, ice cream and cosmetics. High-quality pigments and chemicals are derived from the pericarpal sap. Even the shell is of commercial value. Plastics, linoleum and activated carbon are made from it. It was not for nothing that the noted forester and scholar A. Yablokov fought hard to ensure that the black walnut found a second home in the USSR. In Yugoslavia it is regarded as a highly profitable wood, and in the USA they worship it. Small wonder! Each cubic metre of the woods costs five thousand dollars!

In our country we are fully capable of expanding the geographic range of this tree: westwards, northwards and eastwards. A black walnut population has even become established in Moscow - in the Main Botanical Gardens of the USSR Academy of Sciences. After thirty years the trees have grown to a height of ten to twelve metres. Slightly to the south of there - in the Tula, Lipetsk and Voronezh Oblasts - the black walnut is bearing fruit. There is no question that the conditions are entirely favourable for cultivating it in Moldavia, Central Asia, the Ukraine and the Caucasus. Even so, only a handful of specialists and scientists are concerned with this valuable culture.

Of course, it is demanding of special attention. You won't grow it in sand, dry clayey, podsolich and impoverished soils. What are needed are river valleys and floodplains, soils with groundwater lying close to the surface, and piedmont areas. The aforementioned black walnut researcher Dr. A. Alent'ev has drawn up recommendations for the establishment of industrial plantations in the Northern Caucasus. According to his calculations, upwards of 500 hectares can be planted in the region annually. In the Krasnodar Krai a cultivation trial

is already under way which could be adapted to other regions as well. In particular, the Kropotkino foresters have learned how to grow black walnut on large plots, including the spaces between row plantings of other cultures. As a result, plantings in the Krai are currently increasing at the rate of 80 to 100 hectares annually. It is expected that in the very near future these areas will double.

They are aiming at establishing industrial plantations which will serve as a source of raw materials for the furniture manufacturers. But under the conditions necessitated by full profit-and-loss accounting a series of problems arise. In a planting, the expenditures required for tending black walnut will be greater than those for other species. These outlays, of course, are many times less than the funds that would be needed for the purchase of mahogany abroad. And naturally, the rewards are a hundredfold greater. But who should be made responsible for reimbursing the forestry enterprises for the additional outlays? It is felt that assistance should come from the furniture manufacturers for whom the foresters are preparing a raw material resource base. No one is willing to work at a loss. That is why only minimal attention is being paid to black walnut in Stavropol, the Rostov Oblast, Northern Osetiya, Dagestan, Checheno-Ingushetiya and Kabardino-Balkariya. Currently, they are planting only 10 to 15 hectares annually. A mere drop in the ocean!

Information provided by scientists at the L'vov Institute of Wood Technology indicates that black walnut also grows well in many regions of the Ukraine. But there too it is unpopular: they are planting a mere 20 to 30 hectares annually. Someone complained that there are no seeds. This is far from

the truth. The Krasnodar people are already in a position to sell 150-200 tonnes of seed annually. Such a quantity would be sufficient to enlarge the plantations to between 1,500 and 2,000 hectares. Later, as the young stands approached maturity, there would be a sharp increase in the amount of seed collected. Thus, in no more than ten years our own resources would make it possible to increase the area under black walnut to between 30,000 and 40,000 hectares.

Autumn has arrived - the season for collecting and storing the seed. The foresters of the Kuban' are intending to complete this urgent campaign well ahead of time. We shall be uprooting shrubs and trees that are inferior, ploughing the land and preparing the soil for planting black walnut. We have taken on the task of increasing the area under it by 200 hectares and more annually. The foresters of all the other regions, taken together, are currently planting just this area. The feeling is that the initiative and the experience gained by the Krasnodarites will not be in vain. The national interest demands that a substitute for the mahogany tree be widely introduced in the general forest lands administered by the State. Here, scientists of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute for Sylviculture and Forestry Mechanisation and specialists of both the USSR State Committee for Forestry and the Ministry of Forestry of the RSFSR must bring their influence to bear. Every opportunity must be used to ensure that the wood of this valuable species is obtained without purchasing it for gold. "Lesnaya Promyshlennost'" has already made mention of this. At this writing, however, the

walls of the forestry departments and institutes continue to be impenetrable.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

October 1, 1988

Page 2 (Full text)

Plantings of Siberian Pine in Tomsk Oblast

The season of reforestation work has ended in Tomsk Oblast. The foresters have given life to the taiga in an area of more than 20,000 hectares. It is mainly coniferous trees that have been planted. Special attention has been paid to plantings of Siberian pine and dwarf pine. Pinus sibirica is a capricious tree. Under natural conditions it reproduces poorly. The saplings must be raised in hothouses and then planted out. The forestry enterprises of the Oblast have now raised and planted out 23 million of these saplings.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

October 23, 1988

Page 3 (Full text)

Call for Additional Forest Inspectors in the Urals and the North

"The results of a large-scale air photo survey reveal that losses sustained in the felling and hauling stages are as much as 10 to 15 per cent in the forests of the Urals and the North. Each second cubic metre represents an infraction of forest management regulations." (Chairman of the USSR State

Committee for Forestry - Goskomles, Academician A.S. Isaev, in the course of an interview with the magazine "Agitator" - No. 17 (1988)).

Given this situation, the number of forest inspectors should be immediately increased. Even a small fraction of the fines that are levied would be sufficient to pay for them. If this were done, rather than just spotting the violators from an aircraft, it would be possible to catch them redhanded. It used to be that a part of the money raised from fines was used to remunerate the forest warden. Today, all these sums are credited to the budget of the republic. In any case, the wardens are not interested in fining people, since their best showing is to have the smallest number of forest offenses.

Currently, a forest warden's rate of pay, we are ashamed to say, is 80 roubles a month. What self-respecting breadwinner will want to bide his time in the forest for such a pittance!

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'
October 18, 1988
Page 2 (Excerpt)

Fire Prevention and Control - Aerial Patrols to be Made More Efficient

(Excerpt from an interview with Petr Fedorovich Barsukov, Deputy Minister of Forestry for the RSFSR and Head of the State Forestry Inspectorate of the RSFSR)

Q: "Petr Fedorovich, fires are causing a great deal of damage to the forests. Is fire prevention and control within the competence of the State Inspectorate?"

A: "Definitely. A forest fire is of course, a disaster of the first magnitude. This year, about 15,500 fires were recorded and 650,000 hectares of forest were destroyed throughout the Russian Federation. Losses to the economy amounted to more than 30 million roubles. But this figure indicates only the losses of directly marketable timber. Who can say that the losses were in terms of destroyed regrowth and also the animals, birds and cranberry patches that were killed. What is going to grow there in the future, when will this happen and indeed, will anything grow at all? At least 40 per cent of the fires are exclusively of human origin.

"The present situation is making it possible for agencies of the State Forestry Inspectorate to act in close concert with the law protection agencies. Reference to this was made at the recent plenary session of the Supreme Court of the USSR."

"Of course, our task does not only consist of taking punitive measures. Every year we print and disseminate hundreds of thousands of leaflets, billboards and pamphlets appealing for a cautious attitude towards fire in the forest. Also, co-workers of the Inspectorate present lectures and reports to collectives of enterprises and residents of logging communities."

Q: "What can be said about help given by aviators in preventing and controlling forest fires?"

A: "Under the new system the Central Aviation Base for Forest Protection and Forestry Services has been converted into a production-association for aerial protection of the forests. What has this yielded? Under the new conditions of management every enterprise will want to know on whose behalf it is working. Such an opportunity has now become available to the aviators. They will be able to spend accrued earnings on their own needs: acquiring equipment and spare parts and improving the ground service. It follows from this that major improvements are being made in the quality of performance of the patrol service and the effectiveness of the forest fire prevention program. Moreover, beginning with this year the fliers have been granted a greater degree of independence. Now that they are in charge of their own affairs they are no longer required to indicate where they are flying to, when and for what purpose. All that is necessary is to specify the forest block to be serviced by the aviation unit in question. It will be for the aviators themselves to decide how best to carry out a patrol or perform any forestry related task.

"The experiment has proved successful. This year the air service has functioned much more efficiently than formerly. There is closer contact with the Aeroflot administration and less "paper creation". For the present at least, allocations to us of aircraft, spare parts or fuel are no longer in question. Another thing is the quality of the aircraft themselves. They are presently fitted out mainly for patrol fights, landing firemen and delivering cargoes, rather than for direct participation in the extinguishing of fires. Judge for yourselves: a pilot has spotted something burning in the forest. Having five tonnes of water

on board, he dumps it on the fire and thereby eliminates the focus. Today, the most suitable aircraft for forest protection is considered to be the Polish "Dromedary". At that, even though it carries a ton of water, the latter is jettisoned over an area from 20 to 30 metres wide and 300 to 400 metres long and there is practically no effect. Studies are now underway with respect to the use of An-26 aircraft in the form of a cargo variant with much larger capacities for the extinguishing of fires. The Il-76 has been identified as a potentially promising aircraft in forest protection work. But all this comes under the heading of long-range targeting."

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'
November 3, 1988
Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

Complaint about Management of Forest Resources in Belorussia

Although much has been said recently about the need for improvements in the working arrangements, the number of unresolved problems has not diminished. In the Belorussian Republic the forest resources which are under the jurisdiction of our Ministry of Forestry comprise only 80.7 per cent of the total area of currently and potentially exploitable forest land. The remainder have been placed in the charge of non-specialized ministries and departments. They extend over a considerable area, almost 1,600,000 hectares, that is, every fifth hectare. It is extremely difficult to form an opinion about the standard of forest management in this fifth part, for in point of fact there are no

statistics. The implementation of the decision taken some time ago to transfer the forests belonging to state farms and collective farms to the Belorussian Ministry of Forestry has ground to a halt. It is high time to activate this process and make the local Soviets responsible for maintenance and rational utilization of the forests. The forests should be entrusted to those who are best qualified to ensure their proper use and regeneration.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 3, 1988

Page 1 (Excerpt)

New Forestry Institute at Sverdlovsk

An Institute of Forestry - of the Urals Division of the USSR Academy of Sciences - has opened at Sverdlovsk. Our correspondent met with its director, Professor S. Mamaev who is a Doctor of Biological Sciences, and asked him to talk about the tasks and objectives of the Institute.

* * *

"The Institute of Forestry will be concerned with a broad spectrum of scientific activities: investigating the genetic characteristics of regional forests, viability studies of the various species, organizing practical programmes relating to the breeding and cultivation of the most valuable species, and protecting the stands against pests. For this purpose both the Urals Experimental Forestry Station and the Sverdlovsk Botanical Gardens have become affiliated to the Institute.

The Institute will also be the site of laboratories for studying the negative consequences of industrial activity on the plant kingdom. The aim is to ensure that only the most resistant and productive forests will be cultivated. To this end, genetic reservations and nature preserves will be established. The Institute will also be closely involved with problems relating to the competent and careful exploitation and efficient regeneration of the region's timber.

Gifted young professionals will be encouraged to take part in the research activity. Some fascinating and interesting work lies ahead."

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 7, 1988

Page 3 (Full text)

Breeding of Fast-Growing Larch in Lithuania

On a cross-section of a larch sixteen annual rings were clearly visible. There would be nothing surprising about this if it were not for the fact that each of them had attained a thickness of one to

two centimetres, and that the cross-section measured more than 30 centimetres in diameter. This fast-growing larch was bred by scientists of the landscaping laboratory of the Lithuanian Forest Research Institute.

In the republic, forest massifs occupy almost 600,000 hectares. But felling for economic needs is constantly increasing. Industry and builders annually require about four million cubic metres of wood. This being so, the question arose: how can the productivity of the forests be increased? Fast-growing larch, in the opinion of the scientists, can substitute for valuable kinds of wood, which are being used for furniture production and the building of panel houses in rural terrain.

At the hamlet of Girionis, where the Institute of Forestry is located, 1,300 elite trees are being grown. They were selected throughout the republic as a whole. Their seed is being stored in a bank and will provide the Lithuanian forestry enterprises with the necessary material for growing saplings. Thanks to skilful breeding, the new plantings will inherit all the qualities of the elite trees.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

November 10, 1988

Page 3 (Full text)

New Inventory of Western Siberian Forests

The first survey detachments of the Western Siberian forest management agency "Lesproekt" (All-Union Association for Aerial Photography, Forest

Resource Inventory and Forest Regulation) have returned from expeditions. An inventory of the forests of Western Siberia has been made.

The maps that have been compiled show the exact positions of taiga massifs and protected zones, and point to sites which are rich in berries, nuts, mushrooms and medicinal plants. Detailed information has been derived on the state of the taiga and raw material reserves. During the last five years, the areas of the region which are occupied by pines have increased by almost 450,000 hectares. This is on account of increased planting volumes.

In areas of industrial development, human interference has had a noticeable impact on Nature. But this is not the only reason why fewer forests are indicated on the map of the Tyumen' Oblast today. It was discovered the earlier findings, also derived through aerial surveys, had been overstated. Recently conducted ground-based expeditions have made it possible to refine the figures. The inventory has also revealed that almost two-thirds of the forests in Western Siberia are mature and in decline.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'
November 17, 1988
Page 2 (Full text)

ENVIRONMENT

Dangerous Pollution Levels Reached at the Kotlas and
Volzhsk Pulp and Paper Combines

(Address Given by Deputy V.P. Kuchina, of the Kotlas
Electoral District, Arkhangel'sk Oblast)

"Comrade Deputies! Today the session is considering an extremely important matter. As a member of the preparatory Committee on the Wood-Chemistry Complex I took part in an examination of the USSR draft plan and budget for 1989 and would like to deal with the problems which are troubling the workers' collective of our enterprise.

The need to increase the manufacture of paper products for the national economy is well understood, but the Combine lacks the production capacities for implementing this task under highly mechanized conditions. At present, this is exhausting, monotonous manual work done by women. What we need are automated production lines, but our machine building people are not producing them in sufficient quantities. Is there a way out? The Combine has the necessary hard currency, and in realizing 50 per cent of its output for export, is seeking to establish direct links with foreign firms. But it is not being allowed to do this, even though the need is urgent. The equipment, as already mentioned, is completely worn out. This is adversely affecting both the quality of output and worker morale. The need for technical re-equipping of the shops has been a bone of contention with the Ministry for more than five years.

(All-Union Association for Aerial Photography, Forest

Continually worsening ecological problems are a further source of concern for the people of Kotlas and the Archangel'sk Oblast. The pulp-and-paper combines are now the main polluters of the aerial and aqueous environment. In our city, the atmospheric content of certain chemical compounds which are harmful to people's health is exceeding the maximum permissible level. The planned indices for effluent treatment are not being achieved. It is not only our Oblast that is affected by this problem. On the Vychegda River, in addition to our combine there is also the Syktyvkar Timber Industry Complex. I have learned that the same situation obtains there. In our view, all of the pulp-and-paper combines in the country are similarly affected. So far, there have been no scientific and technical solutions relating either to the utilization of surplus activated sludge, or to the removal of oxidizing organic pollutants from waste waters and of harmful components from the gaseous emissions entering the atmosphere.

Comrade scientists and machine builders! We are looking to you for concrete help in solving these problems.

At the Kotlas Pulp and Paper Combine a programme has been drawn up for technical re-equipping of the enterprise during the period 1988 - 1995 with first-priority to be given to the implementation of nature preservation. To this end, capital investments estimated at 200 million roubles will be needed. We, the workers, however, would be placed in jeopardy in the event of the programme being fully implemented. This is because, from January 1 of next year enterprises of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry are to become self-financing and self-supporting and will thus

themselves solve questions pertaining to the financing of their activities.

The Kotlas Pulp and Paper Combine is able to resolve this problem on its own. It annually earns about 160 million roubles in profits and has the lowest level of expenditures per rouble's worth of output for sale in the sector as a whole. But the achievement of technical re-equipping is dependent on norms being set by the Ministry for deductions from profits. They are being determined in such a way that no more than ten to eleven million roubles would remain at the disposition of the collective to finance its own needs, which include the provision of new housing and the development of social amenities. If these funds are invested solely for the solving of ecological problems, about 20 years will be needed. Judge for yourselves whether this is acceptable. Almost every third worker at the Combine (there are more than 3,000) is patiently waiting for an improvement in housing conditions."

(Address Given by People's Deputy G.S. Rybakova of the Zarech'e Electoral District, Mari ASSR)

"Improving the ecological situation is a serious problem. This is being tackled with great enthusiasm by the citizens of Volzhsk who often appeal to me for help. It was in this town that, during the years of the first Five-Year Plan, a pulp-and-paper combine was built. Since then, its capacity has increased two and a half times. The building of purification plants affording full biological treatment is to begin only in 1989. But is it not a fact that of the estimated cost of 60 million roubles, only two million will be

appropriated next year? At construction rates of this order the Timber Ministry will need more than thirty years before the capacities finally come on stream.

But the Combine is already dumping about 40 million cubic metres of untreated effluents into the Volga every year, as well as discharging almost 14,000 tonnes of harmful substances into the atmosphere.

Perhaps this meeting will enable us to bring the anger and disquiet felt by the citizens of Volzhsk to the attention of the Minister of the Timber Industry and request that immediate measures be taken to solve these problems.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'
November 1, 1978
Page 1 (Slightly abridged)

New Data Bank on Pesticide Residues

Almost any information on pesticides - their dispersion in the groundwater, soils and atmosphere, the amounts accumulated and their composition - can be obtained from a unique data bank, established at the Institute of Geological Sciences of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR. It has become an important tool for use by specialists in the campaign against the consequences of intensive chemicalization. The data bank marks the first attempt to harness science in the attack on problems resulting from the use of chemical compounds. Not only does it provide a glimpse of the true picture of

pesticide accumulation and dispersion, it also enables us to find ways of combatting the residues.

Lesnaya Promyshlennost'

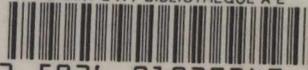
November 22, 1988

Page 2 (Full text)

New Data Bank on Pesticide Residues
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