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Oct.
1989

DEPARTMENT OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA,
CANADA

INI F6/89
DATE 02 January 1990
COPY - 049

EXTRACTS FROM THE SOVIET PRESS ON USSR FORESTRY

AND FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES

OCTOBER 1989

Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures
OTTAWA

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TIMBER AND WOODWORKING

Ministry's 1990 Timber Extraction Plan for
Krasnoyarsk District Exceeds Available Resources

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(Telegram originated by senior employees of
"Krasnoyarsklesprom")

TIMBER AND WOODWORKING

Ministry's 1990 Timber Extraction Plan for Krasnoyarsk District Exceeds Available Resources

Text of telegram addressed to the Second Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR:* "The USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry (Minlesprom SSSR), as in previous years, is again exerting pressure on enterprises of the "Krasnoyarsklesprom" Territorial Production Association to adopt a plan for timber production and deliveries in 1990 that is out of balance with available resources of raw material by up to two million cubic metres, thereby condemning the collectives of the enterprises to disrupt deliveries to consumers and forcing them to perform ecologically unacceptable types of fellings. We are fearful that after consideration of the State Plan for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR in 1990 by the Session of the Supreme Soviet the pressure to adopt the unbalanced plan will be maintained by appealing to the will of the deputies. We request you to call upon the Ministry to observe the rights of the Association, as established by the USSR Law on State Enterprises."

Specialist comment

As is well known, the Law on State Enterprises entitles associations and enterprises to draw up and ratify their plans independently. Accordingly, by May of this year the enterprises and production associations of "Krasnoyarsklesprom" had drawn up and submitted a draft plan for production in 1990 of all types of output at the level achieved in 1988. At the same time, because of the total exhaustion of the raw material resource bases for the Iyuskii, Askizskii and Uibatskii timber industry enterprises (lespromkhozy) and the cessation of free floating of timber along the Oya, Kebezh, Kan, Mana,

* (Telegram originated by senior employees of "Krasnoyarsklesprom")

and Kolba rivers, in the plan for 1990 a decrease in timber production by 800,000 cubic metres was foreseen.

A detailed justification of the reasons for the decrease in the timber extraction volumes for 1990 was repeatedly made known to Minlesprom SSSR at various levels. In spite of this, without taking into account the submissions by the collectives, the Ministry is foisting upon the association a timber production plan which is neither secured by the existing capacities for timber extraction nor by the content of roundwood in the allowable cut. It has notified the association of preliminary volumes in the State order for 1990 in the amount of 4,221,000 cubic metres of timber and 2,316,000 cubic metres of sawtimber. This exceeds the submissions by the enterprises and the level already achieved by 2,100,000 cubic metres and is 500,000 cubic metres in excess of the proposed deliveries of sawtimber for export.

When the Krasnoyarsk people make a reasonable request as to how this level is to be achieved, they reply: "Increase the volumes of production and take less for yourselves". Such arbitrariness on the part of the Ministry and the unwillingness of its officials to take into consideration the situation that has arisen has caused legitimate indignation among the Krasnoyarsk loggers and it is on their behalf that this telegram is being addressed to the Supreme Soviet of the country, now in session. (Signed) V. Shubin, Head of the Department of Resources and Sales and

S. Slyusarenko, Head of the Planning and Economics Department, "Krasnoyarsklesprom".

Lesnaya promyshlennost
October 7, 1989
Page 1 (Abridged)

Massive Railway Tie-Ups Result in Underdeliveries of Forest Products and other Goods to Armenia

At the USSR Ministry of Railways the Minister N.S. Konarev held a press conference on the subject of the alarming situation currently existing on the Soviet railway network. Over a nine-month period in 1989, shipments of more than 21 million tonnes of freight, including more than 1.6 million tonnes of forest products, have been disrupted. Why is this?.

* * *

The Minister emphasised that the interruptions became worse in the third quarter. This is precisely when strikes and international disputes, and hence, interruptions in freight deliveries, normally reach a peak. Suffice it to say that in the timber sectors the entire lag in the plan for shipments occurred during the last three months, when 100,000 railway cars were "languishing" on the mainlines daily.

Transport by its very nature is an uninterrupted process. Allow one of the links to "get rusty" and this is reflected throughout the entire chain. Convincing evidence of this is once again afforded by the interaction between the

Azerbaidzhanian and Transcaucasian main lines. Between September 5 and 17, for example, the movement of trains by way of two junctions to the Yerevan sector of the railway was completely suspended. This means that in no more than 12 days Armenia was prevented from receiving more than 33,500 railway cars. On the North Caucasian Railway and on those of the Ukraine, Volga region and Southern Urals there were about 1,300 "abandoned" trains, that is to say, more than 100,000 units of rolling stock were excluded from taking part in useful work. Currently, there are about 260 such trains destined for Armenia.

In the circumstances, the Ministry of Railways had no alternative but to redirect the flow of railway cars. It decided to send trains destined for Armenia by way of a circuitous route on the heavily overloaded single-track line Tuapse - Adler - Samtredia - Tbilisi. Extremist elements of the People's Front of Azerbaidzhan demanded that the People's Front of Georgia close this lifeline to suffering Armenia, which has played such a vital part in restoring the latter's economy following the earthquake. The Georgians however, rejected their demand. In revenge, the Azerbaidzhanan extremists imposed a ban on the release of foodstuffs and petroleum products to Georgia: from September 10 to 30 not a single railway car carrying these products arrived there.

The Minister of Railways has devoted special attention to the use of rolling stock on the access routes of industrial enterprises. It is unfortunate that not even the extreme situation has persuaded the transport services of our sectors to exercise thrift with respect to each car, and to strive for reduction of enforced idleness during loading operations. Suffice it to say that since the beginning of the

year disruptions have occurred in the dispatching of 122,000 railway cars, this through carelessness on the part of the timber dispatchers. Such "generosity" can be extremely costly to forest-based industrial sectors, for we have not far to go until the finish of the year. We now have to make good a solid debt to the consumers: since the start of the year they have been undersupplied to the extent of 540 million roubles worth of forest products.

Lesnaya promyshlennost

October 14, 1989

Page 2 (Excerpts)

Above-Plan Igarka Timber Shipments Exchanged for Building Materials

The workers of the Igarka timber handling combine will have a heavy volume of work to do in order to resolve the housing programme. Its realization will not only require funds, but also building materials in short supply. But where are they to come from?

"Freedom to manoeuvre may help us", says N. Zolotukhin, the director of the Igarka Timber Industry Complex. "Pursuant to direct agreements we are sending to Noril'sk and Krasnoyarsk that portion of our output which is over and above the plan. In return we are receiving panels, cement and bricks. Consumers have also been identified who are outside the Krasnoyarsk Krai. We are about to send wood wastes to Kazakhstan and the Ukraine. What until recently was rotting at the dumps will be used as packaging for pipes and sanitary engineering articles in short supply here. The Igarka people have

submitted a proposal to "Lenfintorg" concerning the sale to Finland of short length pulpwood: this will make it possible to fill the shelves of retail stores with goods that are urgently needed."

Consideration is also being given to arranging for the output of soft wood fibreboard from wastes. One of the West German firms has suggested that combined production be organized. In short, the prospects for commercial manoeuvre appear to be good.

Lesnaya promyshlennost

14 October 1989

Page 2 (full text)

Some Data on the Need to Mechanize Product Handling
Within the Forest Based Industrial Sector

October 25th marked the opening of a nationwide conference on the subject of mechanization and automation of handling operations at enterprises of the forest-based industrial complex. The following article was written by the chairman of the organizing committee for the conference, Doctor of Engineering Sciences Professor B.A. Tauber.

* * *

Enterprises forming part of the country's forest-based complex, while differing markedly in technology, production volumes and types of end product, have one thing in common: their productive activities entail the fulfillment of timber handling tasks on a vast scale. This is particularly the case at lower landings of timber industry enterprises (lespromkhozy), in warehouses of woodworking combines

and in timber yards of pulp-and-paper mills, as evidenced by the following figures: volumes of work in the logging industry amount to between 1.3 billion and 1.6 billion cubic metres, in woodworking - between 350 million and 500 million cu. m., and in pulp-and-paper production - between 150 and 200 million. Numbers of people employed on these tasks are 140,000, 108,000 and 43,000 respectively.

Although volumes of work are heavy and large numbers of people are employed, mechanization of labour is still at a very low level and the existing machinery far from adequate. This is not only the case in the plots, but at lower landings as well. A total of 3,500 log conveyors are used in sorting and intra-warehouse handling, of which only 350 are fitted with automatic systems for offloading timber. Automated conveyors are used for the sorting of 18 million cubic metres, which is only 13 per cent of the total sorting volume. In all, 21,000 people are performing these tasks manually.

Productivity is greatest when wheel-mounted loaders are used in intra-warehouse handling in conjunction with log conveyors and cranes. Unfortunately, the loaders produced in our country are poorly adapted for work at lower landings.

As regards mountainside timber workings, here the most promising systems are overhead cable installations: they preserve the soil, the underwood and all the associated forest riches. In the western European countries, from 50 to 200 of these units are built every year.

In enterprises of the sawmilling, furniture making, board manufacturing and other woodworking sub-sectors, tens of thousands of people are employed

in manual and lightly mechanised operations. It is unfortunate that there is no sectorwide programme of mechanization for woodworkers. Paradoxically, it is precisely in the sawmilling enterprises that handling operations are most labour-intensive. Here, it is very important to introduce new technologies.

The mechanization of hoist-handling operations in the initial stage of production must be based on a crane system of unloading involving the use of grapples. In view of the diversity of incoming raw material various mechanisms are required: for unloading logs from flatcars - cranes with a lifting capacity of 10 to 12.5 tonnes, for half timber lengths - 16 to 20 tonne cranes, and for full lengths - 32 tonne cranes. At present, we cannot boast of such diversity.

Nor is there any equipment for the stacking of lumber, its kiln-drying and dismantling. We have no wheel-mounted loaders with jaw grapples. Generally, finished product warehouses should be assembled with sawmilling and drying shops. It would then be easier to introduce computerised address-distribution systems there.

A major step forward in the mechanization of handling operations would be the use of standardised bundling units. Cranes for working with them should be equipped with special hoisting devices, enabling the transfer to be effected under controlled or automated conditions.

It would seem that the furniture industry is most favourably placed with respect to mechanization. The level of it there averages 72 to 75 per cent, although this is on basic production tasks only as not more than 26 per cent of the handling operations are mechanised.

Mechanization and automation of quality control of output is also of great importance to furniture manufacturing. Currently, of the 24,000 people employed in this aspect of woodworking, a large proportion is concentrated in furniture factories.

Of importance to board-manufacturing plants is the correct choice of equipment for feeding chips, sawdust and lumpy wastes. For these purposes wide use is made of pneumatic devices. Unfortunately, in the USSR, we have failed to make any use of encapsulated pipelines for compressed air transportation of chips from nearby enterprises.

Inasmuch as the forest-based industrial complex has its origins in forestry, efforts must also be concentrated on the provision of new machinery there: multi-purpose machines that combine the production and handling operations and ensure ecological safety.

In our opinion, it is necessary to drastically reduce the number of production machines used in timber felling operations. This would make it possible to reduce the number of handlings.

As regards the transportation systems used in sorting plants, it is high time to change over to log conveyors operating at higher speeds and involving the automatic stacking of assortments at storage sites. This would do away with the need for cross-cutting and levelling assemblies. The LT-182 log conveyor is precisely what is needed.

For the clearing of water expanses used as sorting areas in unloading sectors and also of water reservoirs it would be highly effective to employ

high-output units involving grouped grappling of timber. The roadsteads and the moorings themselves should be equipped with bunching assemblies, end trimmers (tortsevateli) and floating foundations to enable the foregoing mechanisms to be used.

In conclusion it must be emphasised that in the forest-based industrial complex computerisation can and must have a sovereign role in the mechanization and automation of tasks. Universal robots, manipulators and robotised assemblies all have a part to play in the technical equipping of our sectors. Only by this means will it be possible to make a qualitative leap in raising the productivity of labour, perfecting the technology and resolving the social problems confronting the toilers of the forest.

Lesnaya promyshlennost

October 24, 1989

Page 2 (full text)

Exports of Green Lumber and Other Contract
Irregularities Costing Soviets Millions in Lost
Revenue and Fines

The USSR possesses the largest stocks of timber in the world. How do we rate on the world market for forest products? Frankly, rather poorly.

The forest resources of Finland only slightly exceed those of Karelia. Yet tiny Finland earns through its exports of forest products twice as much as the entire USSR.

The forest resources of the FRG are equivalent to those of the Vologda Oblast. Yet even the Federal Republic earns more from timber exports than our entire forest superpower.

A strange situation has developed: the cheaper a product is, the greater its share in Soviet deliveries to world markets.

For cheap pulpwood, for which the purchasers are paying at most 20 roubles per cubic metre, the Soviet share in world trade amounts to 40 per cent. In the case of plywood and pulp-and-paper products, which are many times more expensive, it is only 3 to 5 per cent.

The head of the sector of the RSFSR State Inspection Service which is concerned with the timber, pulp-and-paper and woodworking industry, V. Yugov, talks to our correspondent about the serious shortcomings in the production and shipment of forest products for export.

Enterprises of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry annually export to world markets about 19 million cubic metres of timber in the round (saw logs, pulpwood, mining timber and other assortments), 8 million cubic metres of lumber, about 100 million square metres of wood fibreboard and 400 thousand cubic metres of wood particle board, as well as 500 thousand cubic metres of plywood.

More than half of the lumber and a large proportion of the boards, plywood and timber in the round are shipped by way of seaports serving the timber trade.

A committee of the RSFSR State Inspection Service carried out an audit of enterprises producing timber for export in the Karelian and Komi ASSRs, the Vologda, Kirov, Kostroma and Perm Oblasts, and the Maimaksa (Archangel Oblast), Leningrad and Novorossiisk timber ports.

The audit revealed that these ports are falling down on their responsibilities for shipping timber to foreign markets. Due to widespread contract violations the State incurred a deficit of about 65 million roubles worth of currency during the period 1986 to 1988, as well as further losses in the form of fines. For the port of Leningrad, for example, for non-fulfillment of the terms of the contracts, fines amounted to about a million roubles in foreign currency.

To create the appearance that all is well in the shipment of products, and with the consent of the higher authorities, the administrators of the timber trading ports are supplying green timber to foreign markets.

During the period 1986 to 1988 the Novorossiisk port alone dispatched more than 330,000 cubic metres of green lumber. Some 65,000 cubic metres of this total were unsorted (that is, of a higher quality), with the result that the State suffered a shortfall of more than 600,000 roubles worth of currency. The vicious practice of selling undried lumber was also discovered in the port of Leningrad. Furthermore, the supplying of

foreign firms with inferior timber - a consequence of defects in processing and in the wood itself - resulted in heavy losses to the State.

Arising from the shipment of sub-standard products, during the current Five-Year Plan the port Novorossiisk has received from foreign purchasers 74 claims for compensation totalling 3,400,000 roubles worth of foreign currency. The resulting losses amounted to 442,000 roubles. Losses for the port of Leningrad due to the poor quality of timber shipments amounted to 423,000 and 262,000 roubles worth of currency. Claims for compensation were also submitted for cargoes from the port of Maimaksa. During the said period it had shipped for export 918,000 cubic metres of pulpwood that deviated from the standard requirements as to quality of trimming and barking of timber products.

The managers of the timber ports had resigned themselves to gross violations of the requirements listed in the technological-normative documentation concerning the pre-handling and storage of timber designated for export, and to serious shortcomings in organizing the work and loading the timber into the ships. Lateness in preparing the cargoes for shipment in the necessary assortment, inefficient utilization of machinery and not infrequently, the lack of a needed item in the stock awaiting shipment are causing substantial delays in ships being loaded. At the port of Novorossiisk, during the last three years almost every third ship of the 611 that were loaded was subjected to long delays in turnaround. Fines levied for delays in the loading of foreign vessels there totalled 659,000 roubles worth of foreign currency. The port of Leningrad paid 200,000 roubles in fines for idle periods, short loads and dead freight.

On January 1, 1988 the ports serving the timber trade went over to full profit-and-loss accounting and self-financing (khozraschet). This change over, however, remains to a large extent a paper exercise. Essentially, labour contracting and leasing within the industry has not yet been instituted, nor has the wage scale been tied to increases in product quality and economies in the consumption of material and fuel resources.

These and other forms of wastefulness are adversely affecting the economic activity of the ports and it is only the possibility of exacting fines from the suppliers that enables the port managers to "correct" their financial situation. During the period 1986-1988 fines exacted from suppliers accounted for 38 per cent of the total revenue of the port of Leningrad.

For the port of Novorossiisk, in 1988 alone income "earned" in this way exceeded two million roubles, 962,000 of which were credited to the material incentives fund.

The disruption in the shipment of goods for exports is in large measure also attributable to a lack of discipline on the part of the supplying enterprises. For many years now, not one of the territorial production directorates of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry which process products for the Mediterranean market has fulfilled its responsibilities for these deliveries. During the last three years alone the enterprises of "Tyumenlesprom", "Komilesprom" and "Permlеспrom" have underdelivered 150,000 cubic metres of lumber to the Novorossiisk timber port. On top of this, at the time of writing the managers of "Permlеспrom" have failed to deliver more than 30,000 cubic metres of

lumber (boards) listed in the State order for the current year. This is because officials of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry, after "formalising" the State order, are doing only a superficial check on its execution.

Major suppliers of products for export are the "Kostromalesprom" Association and the Luzskoe timber industry combine of "Kirovlesprom". Their managers have also acted irresponsibly in that, contrary to the requirements for first priority supplying of products for the export trade, they are concentrating on filling individual orders.

These enterprises undersupplied the port of Novorossiisk with 100,000 cubic metres of timber products listed in the plan for supplying the Mediterranean market with lumber throughout the period 1986-1988.

They are also underperforming with respect to the assortment of products. The enterprises of "Kostromalesprom", for example, completed the task of sawing up only four of the twenty standard dimensions of boards foreseen in last year's plan, the Luzskoe combine - only three of the eighteen. Progress has been particularly poor in fulfilling the plan for the sorts and dimensions in shortest supply. The timber is of low quality, the main defects being rough processing of the wood by machinery, worm-holes and exceeding the permissible norms as to sizes and numbers of knots.

Similar shortcomings were discovered in the production of northern grade sawn timber at enterprises of "Karellesprom", "Vologdalesprom" and other suppliers of export products to the port of Leningrad.

The committee of the RSFSR State Inspection Service found that the investigated ports and logging enterprises had failed to do what was necessary to implement the general instructions and guidelines for increasing the competitiveness of export products and servicing the orders for their manufacture on a first priority basis.

The audit also revealed that the directors of the All-Union "Eksportles" Foreign Trade Association of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry (General Director Yu. V. Vardashkin) are failing to monitor adequately the industrial and administrative activities of the Novorossiisk and Leningrad timber ports, and are of little help to the ports in the matter of establishing good working relationships with the timber suppliers.

This suggests that the time has come for the management of "Eksportles" to grant to the timber ports the right to go to the world markets independently and to assume full responsibility for completing assignments pertaining to earnings of foreign currency. Moreover, for the more successful conduct of export deliveries of timber it would be expedient to form self-financed associations that should be an integral part of the ports and the interested enterprises supplying these products.

"It is not only foreign currency that we are losing, but prestige as well" - a specialist comments

Our correspondent asked the deputy head of the Novorossiisk timber trading port (exports and commercial affairs) V. Yasyuchenko to comment on the results of the audit by the committee of the RSFSR

State Inspection Service and to talk about the problems and prospects of one of the leading enterprises of "Eksportles".

"The orderly work of the dockers is wholly dependent on the prompt fulfillment of their contractual obligations by our suppliers - the loggers and woodworkers. In recent years, however, we and our trading partners have been highly dissatisfied with the interruptions in deliveries of lumber for export, and in its quality. The plan for deliveries has only been fulfilled to the extent of 85 per cent. For example, over nine months of the current year we have been undersupplied with timber products to the tune of tens of thousands of cubic metres by such enterprises as the "Krasnyi Oktyabr" timber combine in the Perm Oblast, the Tyumen' -based "Tura" timber and woodworking association, the Asinovskii timber industry combine in the Tomsk Oblast and other "delinquent" elements of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry. Who ever heard of making the delivery equal to the amount shipped out, so that there should be no reserve stock of materials in the port? For these are precisely the conditions under which we are forced to operate (now enforced idleness, now 'all hands on deck'). Certainly, this is reflected not only in the promptness with which the ships are loaded, but also in job performance and wages, and of course, in the morale of our dockers, who are unquestionably working under very difficult conditions.

I have arrived at the view that it is more convenient for our suppliers to pay fines than to ensure the prompt delivery of timber products. Here, it would appear, there is very little supervision by the Ministry, as well as a lack of interest among its enterprises in increasing the production of export

commodities. The woodworkers no longer remember the genuine "export saw timber" for which our timber-rich country used to be renowned. Instead of four-metre boards, which are in increased demand among our trading partners, they are supplying us with lumber of any other length except this. Our failure to satisfy the requirements of consumers in the West is costing us hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of roubles worth of foreign currency. Worse still, our timber exports are held in increasingly low regard!

Yes, we are still receiving a goodly number of claims for compensation from our foreign purchasers, even though there have been fewer of them recently. For the most part the claims are for deliveries of inferior lumber. Here, we are continually being let down by the Buiskii and Neiskii forest-based industrial enterprises of the "Kostromalesprom" Association, the Chaikovskii water transport depot of the Perm Territorial Production Association, and the lespromkhozy (timber enterprises) in the Tyumen and Tomsk oblasts.

The port customarily receives more than 80 percent of its timber in the green state, even though according to the State standard the woodworkers are obliged to supply us with only dry products. But they frequently fail to fulfill their obligations and we are forced to do the drying ourselves, using our own facilities. Unfortunately, the dockers only have the capacity to upgrade a fifth of the incoming timber. The two Finnish driers are completely worn out. We were at the point of making a start on the construction of a Soviet-designed SP-5KM assembly, but the manufacturing plant at Izhevsk is dragging its feet in supplying us with technical documentation and equipment. Nor can we hurry the machine

builders, for they come under another ministry to whom we can't issue orders, even though there is a special decree of the USSR Council of Ministers stating that equipment for export materials must be manufactured on a first priority basis.

I consider that it is high time to transfer to our ministry all of the enterprises engaged in the production of machines for the timber and woodworking industries and the papermakers.

In our port, the proportion of manual labour is still very high, amounting to almost 70 per cent. There is a shortage of funds for mechanization and we have no packet-forming line, although the Vologda people have promised to supply us with one next year. This situation is made worse by the lack of domestically built ships adapted for transporting timber. The end result is that time is lost in the loading process and extra funds are expended.

A matter that is very painful for us is the delivery to the port of heavy timber in covered railway cars, primarily from the Krasnoyarsk Krai. True, there has been a gradual improvement in the situation, although covered cars continue to arrive here from Kansk. Incidentally, the railway workers frequently let us down. In Syktyvkar alone, more than 25,000 cubic metres of lumber have piled up, for with the eternal shortage of rolling stock there is no way they can be shipped out of there.

One can also understand the position of the suppliers. Their independence is currently only on paper: the 100 per cent State order (goszakaz) has put a stop to any healthy initiative. In my view, we should not be concluding agreements with territorial associations which have acted as a brake on economic

activity, or with the "ambassadors" of departmental bureaucracy at the various places, but with the logging enterprises and lespromkhozy themselves. Then for sure there would be an increase in mutual responsibility for the timeliness of deliveries and the quality of the materials to be exported. The loggers and the woodworkers, in receiving allocations of currency, would have a direct interest in bringing this about.

So as to improve and stabilise the overall situation with respect to export supplies of wood products, we decided to form an association that would consist not only of the port workers and our immediate partners, but also of the enterprises interested in this new approach. The initiative has already been supported by the majority of the territorial production associations and lespromkhozy, by the Krasnodar Gossnab (State Supply Agency) and the "Kuban" branch of the Moscow Consumers Society (MPO). In the workers' collectives the statutes of the future association have already been discussed and analysed. Not only will they give all of its members a capability to earn more foreign currency and freely dispose of the latter, by acquiring imported equipment or goods in short supply. They will also enable them to increase the output and substantially improve the quality of exports.

So as they say, we shall see what we shall see with respect to the advantages of the new system. However, not everything depends on us. It is necessary also for the management of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry to devote greater attention to those enterprises which are bringing to the country the foreign currency it so desperately needs."

Lesnaya promyshlennost

October 14, 1989

Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

PULP AND PAPER

Chronic Shortage of Boxboard Adds to Consumer Goods Woes in the USSR

To enable the Soviet market to be flooded at the earliest possible date with foodstuffs and other consumer goods, the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the first Congress of People's Deputies and the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted a resolution calling for priority development of group 'B' enterprises at the cost of a modest decrease in the growth of 'A' products.

Unfortunately, there is currently a chronic shortage of boxboard in the country, which presents a problem with respect to packaging. For example, this year there is not enough boxboard for the packaging of tea, long-stem macaroni, confectionery, medicinal preparations and other consumer goods produced by some 80 ministries and departments.

Also, with a view to reducing to the fullest extent possible spoilage of products due to inadequate packaging, the government allocated substantial amounts of foreign currency to provide for purchases of imported automatic packaging lines for tea, confectionery, macaroni, vermicelli, sugar and other foods. Additionally, enterprises of the defence ministries were tasked with the manufacture of similar lines. Furthermore, although a decree of the CC CPSU and USSR Council of Ministers dated November 22, 1987 quantified the volumes of output of products in the packaged form and the supply of packaging materials, including boxboard, needed for these purposes, and called for an early increase in boxboard production volumes, in point of fact this has not been done.

The situation has been further compounded by the government's directive to all ministries and departments to increase the output of consumer goods, as this greatly increased the requirement for boxboard for the packaging of goods other than foodstuffs. It turned out that neither the USSR State Planning Commission (Gosplan) nor the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry (Minlesprom SSSR) was prepared for the sharp increase in demand. Consequently, in this year alone the deficit with respect to boxboard has amounted to 260,000 tonnes (20 per cent of the requirement).

At the present time, not a single enterprise of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry is being built or rebuilt, which is a virtual guarantee of a further increase in the boxboard deficit. Moreover, not only is Minlesprom SSSR not increasing the production of boxboard. It is not even taking the necessary steps to retain the capacities already in place. For this year alone, citing ecological and technological reasons, boxboard production at Minlesprom SSSR enterprises has been cut by 57,000 tonnes.

The impression created is that the ministry responsible to the nation and the public for satisfying the demands of the economy for boxboard has given it up as a bad job. Judge for yourselves. In 1989 the "Svetogorsk" Production Association shut down a machine for the production of 22,000 tonnes of boxboard, citing ecological reasons. As of the first of January next year it is proposing to shut down a second machine also producing 22,000 tonnes. The same reason is given. The combine is claiming that the purification plants are overloaded due to the start up of toilet paper production and a deterioration in the entrapment of fibrous materials.

Meanwhile, one need not look far for an example of how to deal with the situation. The Kamenogorsk paper plant, which was formerly a workshop of the "Svetogorsk" Association and is located 20 kilometres away, was in similar straits. The sanitation-epidemiological station was planning to close it down by the beginning of the year. The "Komus" cooperative leased the Kamenogorsk paper factory and within the space of three months, jointly with the inventor, designed, built and installed a Kopylov filter, with the result that it succeeded in achieving the planned indices for waste discharge and obtaining authorization from the State Committee for the Environment to operate at full capacity.

The Department of Paper Products of USSR Gossnab has repeatedly appealed to the management of USSR Minlesprom, to Deputy Minister V. Chuiko who is responsible for the development of the pulp-and-paper industry, and to the management of the "Svetogorsk" Association, with a request that they make use of the positive experience gained and through the introduction of filters, hold on to the manufacture of 44,000 tonnes of boxboard at the Combine. However, at the Ministry and in the "Svetogorsk" Association they remain indifferent to the needs of the country. The "Komus" cooperative, by the way, is prepared to manufacture and help with the phasing-in of a Kopylov filter for the "Svetogorsk" Association.

Another example is provided by the Stupinskii board factory. There, specialised capacities have been created for the production of 175,000 tonnes of boxboard. It is planned to manufacture 35,000 tonnes of packing board and 140,000 tonnes of boxboard in 1990. In view of the acute shortage of boxboard, the Department of Paper Products of USSR Gossnab has repeatedly requested

Minlesprom SSSR to keep the existing capacities fully occupied with boxboard production. Both the Ministry and the factory, however, are insisting on pursuing their own narrow interests, at the expense of the public well-being.

How can the output of boxboard be increased when this is the position taken by USSR Minlesprom?

The valid requests from USSR Gossnab concerning the need to take immediate measures to develop the production of boxboard invariably evoke the response: "No funds". Yet, even though the correctness of this reply is not in doubt, the facts presented above indicate that besides funds, there must also be the desire and the will to solve the problems.

How then does Minlesprom SSSR propose to satisfy the country's requirement for boxboard - the principal packaging material for consumer goods? (Article signed by A. Naritsyn, Deputy Head of the Department of Paper Products at USSR Gossnab).

Lesnaya promyshlennost

October 24, 1989

Page 1 (Abridged)

ENVIRONMENT

New Environmental Monitoring Centre Opens in Tashkent

A centre for monitoring environmental pollution has commenced operations in the capital of the Uzbekistan republic. Housed in a new multi-storey building are laboratories equipped with the latest types of imported and domestically manufactured equipment. Hitherto the hydrometeorological service of the republic has been able to monitor the content of 160 harmful compounds in the air, water and soil. From now on, this list will be greatly extended. In particular, it has become possible to determine the presence of the toxic substances generated when garbage is incinerated and herbicides are being applied. The immediacy with which the state of the environment is monitored will be greatly increased.

Lesnaya promyshlennost

October 14, 1989

Page 1 (Full text)

The Price of Indiscriminate Felling - an Appeal for Reason

(An interview with the writer Lev Cherepanov, formerly Deputy Director of the Pashutina Timber Industry Combine "Boguchanles").

It is estimated that about twenty thousand essential articles are made from wood. However, it is often forgotten that the principal product of a

tree is oxygen. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that it is this that will determine the fate of mankind.

Judge for yourselves. Scientists state that sixty per cent of the oxygen in the atmosphere comes from trees, with the remaining forty per cent derived from the world's oceans. Moreover, these two sources are far from being equal in value. Forest oxygen differs from the oceanic kind in that it is ionized, is therefore better assimilated by the organism, with less of it needed for breathing. Trees release into the air bactericide-fungicide-protozoacides (BFP) - substances that kill or suppress pathogenic microbes. It is the BFPs that are protecting our lungs against fungal diseases. They are natural antibiotics.

Question. How much forest is required to provide each individual with life-giving oxygen?

A. In order to breathe, a person needs 400 kilogrammes of oxygen per year. Until recently, 0.3 hectares of forest were enough to supply this. However, in consequence of the sharp increase in the gas content of the atmosphere there has been a tenfold decrease in the amount of oxygen produced by a tree. Further calculations are simple: in our country, the area of forest existing for each inhabitant is three hectares on the average, which is barely sufficient.

In many other countries the situation is worse still. There is no longer enough forest, even for breathing! And by the end of the century each of us will have to settle for a small grove of trees measuring no more than 0.6 hectares. It is easy to see that for this reason alone, civilisation is on

the brink of a catastrophe. And the paradox is that even though fellings far surpass regeneration, mankind apparently prefers not to know this.

Question. The situation is indeed catastrophic. What are the chances of averting a global catastrophe - of saving the forests and thereby ourselves? Could it be that all this is somewhat theoretical in character?

A. In the USSR a forested area measuring two kilometres wide and eight thousand kilometres long is annually laid bare. This equals the distance from Moscow to the shores of the Pacific. Yet if it were seen fit to use branches, leaves and chips, which are usually discarded as waste, fellings could be decreased by two-thirds.

A forest is not only the main supplier of oxygen. It also takes up dust and aerosols, regulates the temperature and humidity, moderates solar radiation and lessens the force of the wind. By engaging in indiscriminate felling, we are disturbing the natural balance that has existed from time immemorial. According to global statistics, in roughly thirty years time the Earth will be completely without forests. The only way to prevent this is to take emergency action. Everywhere, selective felling should be instituted and a system of management followed which conforms to the teachings of G. Morozov, the founder of forest science.

The forest massifs need to be completely restored, as is already being done for example, in the Ivano-Frankovsk Oblast and the Baltic region. There they are replanting three times more than they are felling and getting a yield of four times as much

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