

# TECHNICAL NOTES <sup>A13005-F8</sup>

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY

U. S. FOREST SERVICE

MADISON, WISCONSIN

No. F-8

## MANUFACTURING FURNITURE FOR EXPORT TO TROPICAL REGIONS

Furniture as well as other wood products used in the tropics is subjected to the attack of insects known as termites. This attack is excessive in South America in the coastal regions north of Rio de Janeiro, and is so certain and so severe that, in the opinion of the Forest Products Laboratory, it is useless even to think of exporting wooden furniture to those regions unless the wood used is naturally resistant to termites or is treated with a poison which will prevent the attack of these insects.

There are a number of species growing in Brazil and other tropical regions which are naturally immune to termite attack and which are used in those countries almost exclusively for the manufacture of furniture. None of the cabinet woods which grow in this country, however, possess such immunity.

Of course, in order to compete with the furniture now used in these regions the United States product must be equally durable. One way of making it so would be to import cabinet wood from the region in question, make it up into furniture here, and return it. A similar practice appears to have been very successful among European furniture manufacturers before the war, when much of the furniture sold in Brazil is said to have been manufactured in Europe from Brazilian woods.

Another possibility that may be considered is the use of some of the cheaper domestic furniture woods for backs and cores, after thorough impregnation with a poison such as mercuric chloride, and the use of Brazilian termite-proof woods in the form of veneer for facing.