

What, then, is the root of the problems with non-traditional power engineering? As many deputies noted, it is time to re-evaluate its economic significance. The opinion is common among many industrial executives that production of electrical power from non-traditional sources is unprofitable, or at least cannot compete with thermo-electric or hydro-electric power plants. But let us look at the economic prospects of organic fuel extraction. If, say, a decade and a half ago developing a new field to extract one ton of oil cost the state 46 rubles, in 1985 the amount was 88 rubles, and by 1990 expenditures will be already 129 rubles. The same increase in expenses is also characteristic of the "blue fuel" -- natural gas. The situation with coal is better. But if it is taken into account that in the last few years it has been necessary to mine coal with considerable mixture of sulphur and other harmful substances and that this seriously increased the cost of exhaust gas purification, then expenditures for thermo-electric power plants will only increase with time.

We should also adopt a critical attitude towards our notion that, once a hydro-electric power plant is built, the energy costs nothing. As a rule, the man-made lake that forms after a hydro-electric power plant is constructed floods the best agricultural land and water meadows (millions of hectares of such land have been flooded in the RSFSR alone). Because of this, the agro-industrial complex annually loses billion or rubles. And what is most surprising is that our bureaucratic compartmentalization allows power engineers not to take these losses into account in any way. They think that "hydrokilowatts" still cost pennies.