

## TRANSPORT AIR

### Polar Taxi

That is how aviators have dubbed the AN-74. Created by the Antonov Design Bureau, it is excellent at flying in high latitude regions of the Arctic. During the past year the crew of an AN-74, led by USSR honoured Test Pilot V. Tkachenko, set eight world records, one after another. The most impressive of these, for specialists, was attaining an altitude of 11,560 metres and carrying a cargo of 15,256 kilograms.

And then it was time for another take-off from an airport near Moscow. The destination this time was the Far East. The airliner was in the air for eleven hours before landing at the airport of Sovetskaya Gavan, on the shore of the Tatarskii Strait. This flight took place at the beginning of May, at a time when spring in the Far East gives only faint signs of its approach.

Although the day proved to be sunny, as those who participated on the flight recall, a piercing wind all but upended the guests leaving the plane and those who had come to meet them. A considerable number of people turned out to greet the test flight crew that accomplished this record long-distance flight.

No airplane of this class had ever before succeeded in making such a long non-stop flight. But now the difficult night time cross-country flight was over, and applause and friendly 'hurrahs' rang out over the airfield after the successful landing. The congratulations, flowers and handshakes went first to