

standpoint of economics. V. Tsarev, Doctor of Geological and Mineralogical Sciences, and R. Povileiko, Candidate of Technical Sciences, writing in the Economic Gazette, stated unequivocally: "According to our calculations, the gas from Yamal will always be a losing enterprise... A sober assessment of the engineering aspects of the possible development forces one to conclude as follows: to preserve the supporting properties of the tundra surface, one would either have to build freezers with a gigantic area, use "floating" platform methods of drilling for oil and gas, or even build dikes that would surround the northern part of Tyumen' territory or conceivably even the entire Yamal. Now, this would be in the realm of engineering and construction fiction, because there would be a 4-fold to 10-fold increase in the cost of such a development and we simply don't have the potential. Development would mean the loss of the invested capital and could not be continued, in consequence of which the gigantic projects would turn out to be a tragic farce."

These scientists are not alone in their opinions. So, as you see, the problem goes far beyond the question of whether we should or shouldn't build a railroad to Yamal.

There is yet another side to the question: the ethnic one. Even if the remainder of the country views the suggested ecological disaster in Yamal with sympathy, albeit somewhat obliquely, for the Nenets it could mean literally the loss of their homeland. It is immoral even to discuss this topic, let alone theorize whether it would or would not be advantageous.

But the departments do not give up. The Yamaltransstroï trust has sent a telegram to the USSR