

"The simple and inexpensive An-2 biplane lost its "floats" in 1983. Industry suddenly stopped producing them. But how can one possibly abandon hydroaviation in the North? Here, there is a river or lake close to every village and a very small number of airfields and landing sites. Are pontoons for the An-2 such complicated technical devices? No, this is an intentional policy on the part of the Ministry of Civil Aviation to pump money out of its northern clients."

"But surely there are other aircraft besides biplanes..."

"Of course. A helicopter can reach any location, but the inexpensive and useful Mi-4 helicopter has been removed from service, and the MI-8 that replaced it is very expensive. What's more, one flying hour with the An-2 has become more expensive. And our traditional pursuits - reindeer farming, fishing, hunting and so forth - are such that increased costs for air transport lead to a worsening of the already low standard of living of northern ethnic minorities. Even the wealthy geologists and oil workers are grumbling and try to avoid air transport wherever possible. Moreover, northern sovkhoses, which survive on subsidies, simply cannot afford aviation at all now. But how can one get along without it where we live?"

"One can understand why one of your first demands as a Deputy was directed to A.N. Volkov, the Minister of Civil Aviation. Both the demand and the response were published in our newspaper. Did this response satisfy you?"

"I and other deputies from the North addressed yet another demand to A.S. Systsov, Minister of the Aviation Industry, regarding new aviation equipment for the North. We found the responses from both ministers quite formalistic."