

whatever is left over - to the social sphere. The Nizhnevartovsk city Party committee decided to show people the real results of perestroika - not tomorrow, but today - to show them that only their active participation can change the existing situation.

"Someone may say," continued Victor Sidorchev, "that a few dozen mothers received a special favour. Well, so what? That's not at all the way things are. We regard the electrical workers' initiative as a serious first step towards a long-term program. We would like to eliminate nursery groups altogether, to create elementary classes from grades 0-3 in child day-care centres in their place, and to establish shorter workdays for working mothers at the start of the next Five-Year Plan."

I did not ask Victor Sidorchev why the Party committee and the deputies decided to deal with this problem. I believe it is clear. The "equality" enjoyed by Soviet women has been a standing joke for a long time.

"I would go further", added Sidorchev. "This innovative policy is not another burden for enterprises to bear, but is aimed at providing for the younger generation. If a child remains at home at first, then is placed in a familiar environment until the age of 9 or 10, he will be physically strong and emotionally stable, and capable of adapting easily at school. We also plan to change the current system with regard to schools. We want to do away with obligatory enrollment at a school in the district where one resides, since each school will now have its own vocational orientation. Children will have the right to attend the school which will prepare them for their future profession."