

Documents concerning the setting up of the "Norilskii nikel" State Concern were already in the hands of the government when the latter received a letter from V. Nikolaichuk, USSR People's Deputy. This deputy's particular opinion had the effect of a bomb blast in the region. He requested that the decision to create the concern be delayed, and his reasons deserve the most serious attention.

First of all, he expressed the fear that the concern was preserving its narrow sectoral orientation and that it was not including in its program solutions to the social problems which have accumulated in the Norilsk industrial region as a result of the intensive industrial activity of the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Combine. Secondly, in his opinion, the problem raised long ago of transferring the territory to full cost accountability and self-financing as a way of eliminating the accumulated social hardships had now been put aside in connection with the new plans for organizing a concern. And that is how things stood: on the one side, a group of people's deputies in favor of creating the concern, and on the other side the opinion of an "individual", who just happens to represent 126,000 voters. It was not so long ago that nobody would have argued over the idea. The matter probably would have been settled at some departmental level, the authorities would have made the decision, and the workers' collectives would have set about carrying it out without questioning. And