

brought up the most important problems arising in the life of the Party and of the country as a whole. He told them how excited he was, as he prepared to speak. However, he didn't get to address the Conference. He handed the text of his short speech to the Secretariat and in all probability it will be published with the other materials from the Conference.

During the breaks television and radio reporters asked many of the delegates the most important question of the day:

"What would you have said if you had been asked to speak at the Conference?"

Basin was also asked that question. Now, at the meeting, he actually repeated what he had already said on the All-Union radio.

During these years, for the newspapers, the Baikal-Amur Mainline Railway went from being the "construction project of the century" to being labelled an "undertaking the country doesn't need". What don't they call the BAM project these days - a "diversion of rivers type of escapade" and a "make-work creation". Although he himself would not call the project "a creation", but rather a safety-valve during a period of stagnation. In fact the work went ahead with an all-out effort on the part of everyone involved: The BAM workers are quite rightly offended by what the press writes: at the outset, the press rushed into print with stories about the end of construction work on the project, but now, the same press is trying to bury the BAM line, along with all the good aspects of the project.