

Recalling the meeting of medical personnel in Yakutsk, statistics were disclosed there which caused great indignation in many people in the audience. It turns out that over forty medical workers are registered with drug addiction clinics, dozens have been in medical "drying out" stations.

While analyzing the data related to the health of the indigenous population, we cannot leave unmentioned the serious ecological situation which still continues in the region. Here the measures to protect the water reservoirs, the soil, and the atmosphere from pollution are still not being implemented in full. For instance, in Noril'sk, Krasnoyarsk, Abakan, and Kansk the concentration of substances harmful to health exceeds the established norms in the atmosphere. In the last few years, dumping them into the atmosphere has increased by 18 per cent...

These facts lead to sad reflections. But first of all one thinks of the following. In the spring of this year, a medical landing party of the Ministry of Health of the RSFSR, the Lenin Soviet Children's Fund, and the editorial board of Sovetskaya Rossiya worked in the Chitinsk Region for a month. Today we can already say with confidence that the most valuable discovery of this action was the fact that the local Party, Soviet, and economic leaders finally became convinced that questions of health care are not simply the prerogative of physicians. They touch each and everybody. As to the Northern region, it seems this understanding has not yet been reached there.