

3. Remoteness

A. Fomin, Chairman of the Sladkovsk District Executive Committee:

- Here we are discussing how to provide each family with an apartment or individual home by the year 2000. But I have to tell you, that if we do not provide comfortable housing for rural dwellers within the next two to three years, then nobody will be demanding it by the end of the century - there won't be anyone left to need the housing. In fifteen years, eight thousand people, one third of the population, have moved out of our district.

(Statement in the television studio)

They were delighted with our visit to the district; they could not remember ever having received journalists from a national newspaper. This is why they tried to show us almost every cow-shed, every village, and they even took us, for comparison, to the neighbouring Nzyvaevsk District of Omsk Region. And the comparison was definitely not in Tyumen's favour. The neighbours have had modern housing for twenty years now, and the farms are built by a rural DSK (housebuilding combine). As a result, the closest villages of B. Peschank and Pokrovka resemble developed urban estates, without having lost their rural flavour. The people of Sladkovsk paid for a road here out of their own pockets. The residents of remoter Tyumen' prefer to travel for both produce and manufactured goods to Omsk Region, or, as they put it, abroad.

In Sladkovsk District several villages, such as Vasil'evich, are already completely empty. And