

"So, are you saying that the knot was drawn so tight that there was no other way to cut it?"

"One could say that no such knot even existed. Minor problems have remained uncorrected because the contractor - Construction and Installation Unit No. 700 of the Urengoigazstroj Trust - simply did not have time for it, apparently because for ten years now, despite everything, we have been "taking up our posts" and keeping the flights going. There remained at most one and a half to two weeks of work on the power supply: to complete construction and implementation of four transformer substations, and to provide a reliable link between the external substation and our distribution point. But, judging from the current topsy-turvy state of our allied enterprises, they simply are unable to cope with this."

"Does this mean that you will be closing the airport to the 'Tupolevs'?"

"If nothing changes, yes, and I am certain that the collective supports me in this, despite the direct losses which we will be suffering. It seems that we have no other way out."

This "Novyi Urengoi" issue is not new in our newspaper. The first time we dealt with it was as early as 1982 ("Successes and Long-Standing Problems", No. 60 of 20 May). "It appears that the residents of Novyi Urengoi will have to get by for yet another winter," the article asserted. In fact, they have had to get by for another seven years, and it is precisely this circumstance which has compelled Smiganovskii to take a decision which will be painful both for the city and for the aviation enterprise. This decision is hardly likely to generate enthusiasm