

SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES

Child-care System Extended in the North

Although they will soon be 1-1/2 years old, the children of 30 female employees at the Obelektromontazh firm are staying home with their mothers. The firm's employees' council unanimously resolved to extend monthly child-care payments until children are 3 years old. Following this example, employees' councils at 12 more enterprises in Nizhnevartovsk adopted similar decisions. Their initiative received a vote of confidence at a session of the City Council and strong support from the city Party committee.

"I've reflected at length on why perestroika is being held back, even though it is clear to everyone that there is no real alternative to it now", said V. Sidorchev, First Secretary of the city Party committee. "In the years preceding the April Plenary Session, we experienced many noisy campaigns which clearly did not correspond to real needs and only served to create distrust towards the slogans of the moment, regardless of how correct they may have been. Not having seen any decisive changes or practical results, many people today have adopted a wait-and-see attitude: is it just empty slogans again? True, we need the latest equipment in factories, we want to buy Soviet-made products that are as good as imported goods, we want to go into a shop and see an abundance of foodstuffs on sale. Unfortunately, however, there are a great many gaps which, we must honestly admit, cannot all be filled at once. We cannot make everything top priority. We say that human needs are paramount, yet we continue the old strategy of assigning insufficient funds -