

is whether the native population will survive in regions with gas deposits. As these deposits have been developed the indigenous peoples have been squeezed out of their native lands, the area of their traditional existence has shrunk considerably. We have been deprived of places to pasture our reindeer, deprived of hunting and fishing grounds ... There has been a significant worsening of the already impoverished living conditions of northern peoples, and all of this has had a disastrous effect on their development. For this reason, cardinal measures are essential, a comprehensive State program is needed in which priority is given to the indigenous ethnic minorities of the North."

Q. "And what is your program as a deputy? What have you already achieved?"

A. "The main part of my program is to achieve normal living and development conditions for indigenous peoples of the North in the period of their rapid industrial growth. A great many problems have accumulated in medical services and public education. In actual fact, these problems are common to everyone.

I am quite alarmed when I think about how the people have, quite frankly, "drunk themselves into a stupor" in recent years. The anti-alcoholism campaign, like all such campaigns, has yielded no tangible results. Clearly, we need to become more deeply involved in the life, the culture, and everything that has an impact on the social well-being of the people. Today our primary task is the ethnic regeneration of each people, even the least populous. Their culture is as fragile and vulnerable as the flicker of a campfire in the tundra. We must not allow it to go out."

Q. "For the past 20 years the Yamal North has been the principal supplier of natural gas. If I'm not mistaken, two-thirds of that produced in the entire country comes from your region. Has this changed the life of northern peoples?"