

Surprisingly, included among supporters of such a decision are some of those who only yesterday glorified BAM as a symbol of courage and heroism, and who loudest of all shouted: "Get on with the main line of the century!" Today they have "restructured" and shout with the same readiness: "This is a risky venture!" As if in collusion, journalists from various newspapers keep reminding us that "BAM is a mistake, a road that leads to nowhere and which needs no more of our money..." Sometimes the argument goes like this: sausage is getting more expensive, there's no money with which to purchase meat from abroad, and we're building BAM... Narrow-minded logic to be sure, but one that persists.

And what is particularly distressing is that nobody is bothering to object or raise a fuss. The USSR Academy of Science's scientific council on BAM - which all these years has been painting us pictures of the bright prospects that awaited Siberia and the far East with the construction of a second Trans-Siberian railway - has ceased to exist. Scientists have also restructured, writing volumes of scientific studies on BAM, defending hundreds of dissertations, altering their line of inquiry and that mess they managed to get themselves into and which they've left to others to get out of.

The Central Committee of the Komsomol [All-Union Leninist Communist Youth League] is also taking the catastrophic decline in BAM's prestige extremely calmly - a railway of which it was so proud. The Komsomol's biggest construction project was not even recalled during the celebration of this organization's 70th anniversary.