

dimensions of the focus. Medvezh'ye is, in its surface dimensions, five to six times larger than Gazli, and at Medvezh'ye the stratal pressure has fallen by half in the course of ten years. We see an even larger deposit at Urengoi, where the pressure has also been dropping rapidly. Yamburg is also "approaching " such a state.

A group of specialists spent some time on the Baikal-Amur Main Railway Line (BAM) in order to study deformations in buildings and to determine their causes. The photographs that the group took were literally shocking: railway station terminals collapsing in three parts, like a magazine foldout, walls cracked from side to side and top to bottom, lakes of water inside homes, buildings bound in metal belts...

All of this is the result of building with no account taken of the permafrost. Can no one really have known what permafrost is like? Not likely. All of these phenomena were described by Russian engineers as far back as a hundred years ago, and in the very same places. As we can see, the buildings are new, but the mistakes are old. As if there were no science of building on permafrost, no engineering geocryology, or a whole Institute of Permafrost Science of the Siberian Branch, Academy of Sciences USSR, at Yakutsk. Staggering ignorance!

But just where is competence to come from if our builders have no permafrost services? It is no accident that the mistakes of the Baikal-Amur Main Line are being repeated in northern Tyumen', where expensive, high-precision compressor stations have also begun to fall apart already, particularly at the Medvezh'ye field. At first, the losses here were