

That virtually the entire population is suffering from cancer was reported to the authors of the article by the Chairman of a certain rural Soviet. Since his name is not given, we will leave these ghastly conclusions on the conscience of the anonymous interlocutor and will focus on better documented evidence.

The authors assert that the cause of this catastrophic situation is the elevated level of background radiation in the Chukotka. The background radiation is the result of nuclear tests conducted in the atmosphere in the Far North during the 1950's and 1960's. This information is said to derive from conclusions reached by the Leningrad Scientific Research Institute of Radiation Hygiene (LenNIIRG).

Well, associates of the institute did in fact visit Chukotka in the early 1970's and conducted selective studies. The northerners have not seen them since that time. And then, last year, the Leningrad institute once again recalled the studies. Why this all of a sudden? You need not look long for the answer: LenNIIRG had gone over to new methods of economic management and it needed self-financing injections. In their search for these, the institute's directors addressed a letter to the leaders of the autonomous Okrug, but the letter merely frightened them. We have seen this letter. In an effort to persuade the northern peoples to cooperate, the specialists laid it on thick, drawing on data collected many years ago.

And here is the opinion of those who have been working on the problems of northern peoples for a long time, and not just sporadically: