

"Look", military experts at Novaya Zemlya told me, "the American Senate only ratified in September of this year the 1974 treaty between our countries on the limiting of underground nuclear weapons tests, but in so doing it also advanced a series of conditions. Among these was the following: nuclear tests will be continued, and the national laboratories will be fully provided with all necessary financing for the conduct of nuclear programs. When our committees of the Supreme Soviet ratified this treaty they did not even invite specialists from Minatomenergoprom (Ministry of the Nuclear Power Industry) to their meetings nor heard their opinions and arguments. American expenditures on nuclear weapons are growing from year to year by 8 to 10 percent, while ours are decreasing by 15 percent. As a result, we aren't even able to create normal housing and living conditions for those working at the Novaya Zemlya test site."

I've seen the houses, clad in tin, of our scientists and military personnel in the village of Severnyi, on the shore of Matochkin Shar Straits, where the windows have been boarded up to prevent the wind and snow from forcing out the glass and frames. I have visited the rooms of the dormitory where those in charge live while tests are being conducted - and these tests can drag on for a month or two - and even here icicles hang from the ceiling.

Of course, one shouldn't be too surprised about this - it's the Arctic. What is surprising is why, even here, the living conditions of our people and their well-being are still enveloped, as before, in an icy indifference.

"Last year," Candidate of Technical Sciences K. Danilenko, a member of the State Commission on the Conducting of Nuclear Tests, related to me, "a motor vessel visited the dock of the village where we lived. This year, there wasn't enough money for it."