

SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES

An exhaustive investigation was instituted to find out who was the blame. Was it the "Kholmogortruboprovodstroi" trust, whose tractor driver rammed through the steel line, or the "Muravlenkovskneft'" department, whose ill-fated pipe had not, as it turned out, been laid entirely according to specification? Or was nature to blame?

I. Sidorov, state inspector of the oblast's nature conservation committee, has confirmed that such an accident did in fact take place the other day. About 600 tons of oil escaped--at first on the ground, but later, since there is an incline there, the dark oily mass spread to the ice and covered the taiga river Nyudyapyagun-Yakha. Measures have, of course, been taken: about 150-160 tons have been pumped up and the work is continuing.

But our source found it difficult to understand why the correspondent was interested in this very fact. Not too long before there had been a forceful oil blowout in Uvat district at the time of the most recent in a series of breaks in the Ust'-Balyk--Omsk pipeline. The wash was lethal to vegetation and inundated six hectares. In localizing the trouble spot and eliminating the break, hundreds of cubic metres of timber and a great deal of young growth burned. And a few months before that, oil that escaped because of another break in the very same area got into two nearby rivers...

Igor' Olegovich opened the official journal:

"Here is a recent incident which took place in Nizhnevartovsk district. Strictly speaking, however, it began last fall. A major break occurred in the territory under the 'Chernogorneft' administration. Our agencies issued the traditional instructions: "localize the break and eliminate the contaminant." This is done using various methods depending on the circumstances: for example, the entire mass is pushed into one place using bulldozers and is then either burnt or hauled away."