

this way because he knows full well that polar service will be reinstated--the administration will eliminate runs to the North and discontinue flights to the Arctic. It is no secret that profits are the reason. This would be a frightening loss.

Polar aviation is so necessary to the country! Let us suppose that some unforeseen and unpredictable medical assistance is required today in a remote settlement in Taimyr. What are we going to do? Wait until an aircraft arrives from Krasnoyarsk? But what if the weather en route is poor? What if there isn't a single machine on the ground at Khatanga itself? What it means is that people can die because of departmental foul-ups.

However, surely this is not all that is at stake. Formerly, pilots in polar aviation carried out regular daily cargo and passenger flights throughout the region and terrain permitting landed their planes close to the most remote little peasants' houses. Naturally, skilled pilots, aces in fact, were selected for this.

Moreover, the polar aviators took pride in their accomplishments and were respected for them since not everyone is capable of flying in the northern skies.

I repeat, I am in favour of reinstating the Polar Aviation Department. Also, I am in favour of inviting the very same M. Shevelev back to the controls. Sure, the veteran of the Arctic is no longer young, but he knows the job and will be able to train a distinguished new generation. I think that he will bring with him the old professionals he nurtured in his day. Think how effective it would be if the former polar aviator sat in the cockpit as mentor to one of today's pilots setting out to work in the North! Could such training possibly be bad?

I myself worked in polar aviation for almost 25 years. I flew in the Taimyr in An-2s, and Li-2s, and An-12s. I also had occasion to land on drifting North Pole stations and took part in three expeditions to the Antarctic. In brief, I know the business, as they say,