

TRANSPORT - RAIL

Important Talks in Vorkuta

The minister of railroads, N.S. Konarev, has completed his visit to Vorkuta by holding major discussions with workers of the Vorkuta Railroad Centre and representatives from enterprises of the entire railway division. The discussions focused on the social development of the centre and on the working and living conditions of northern railway workers.

The minister familiarized himself in detail with the affairs of this coal mining region's "railway shop". He reviewed the progress of reconstruction that was begun last year and visited homes destroyed by the hurricane. The increase in coal mining in the Pechora Basin and the startup of new mines was not accompanied by a corresponding development of railway transport in the region. The notorious "residual principle" for the planning of capital investments began to spell troubles for the transport of the coal being mined. But it was particularly harmful to the development of the social aspect of transport.

The enterprises have no normal public amenities. The hospital and school are in a depressing state, and the railroad towns have many seriously deteriorated and improperly built homes. Today, the rebuilding of stations has begun, which is long overdue. But there are no prospects for upgrading production capacities among train car and locomotive workers. The problems of housing construction in Vorkuta appear equally insoluble.