

Let us start from the very beginning. Try to get an airplane ticket for the North in early winter or spring - it is just about as hard as to get a ticket now for the south. Let's say you got one and you make it, say, to Dikson. You need to go further? Then you will have to travel, as they say by stopover. You wait until someone organizes a charter to your destination. Maybe they will take you. You might wait a week, even a month. This is a problem just in itself. Dikson is not Sochi; you can't spend the night on a park bench. There are only 20 places for flight passengers at the hotel...

Well, here you are at last. Where are you going to stay? If you're lucky, in a temporary barracks built many years ago. But more likely in a truck or a tent with walls that freeze through. A nice little frost covers the floor, while at the ceiling your ears burn like in a steam room.

And supplies? A. Kurygin, director of the polar hydrometeorological station on Zhokova I. remembers how ten years ago canned meat alone was brought in in dozens of brands. There are still brands today. In "Arktiksnab's" catalogues. In reality, all you can get is canned stew. How much powdered eggs can you eat in peacetime? The problem is not transportation. The "Sever-88" high-latitude expedition was able to get fresh potatoes in to its base on the ice, but on Sredniy I., the crossroads of the Arctic basin, the only bulbs available are dried.

In the Arctic basin regions, it is sometimes easier to get foreign stations on the transistor radio than it is to receive "Mayak". In some places, you will never catch a word of Russian on the receiver. The mail service is bad. An airplane makes a mail drop once in two or three months. It would be possible, it is true, to transmit at last some central publications by