

specialists designed most of the northern gas fields. However, for reasons which to many have remained incomprehensible, "Vniigazdobykh", Saratov, was charged with the design. It soon became clear that this collective, which had no experience in large-scale modular (now prevalent in the Arctic) construction, was not capable of undertaking the project. Representatives of the directorate of "Yamalgazprom" communicated their concerns to the ministry and the central directorate, in addition to official written appeals, but to no avail. And when the time came to commission the project, it was discovered that the institute had nicely botched the assignment: it had not even prepared a technical and economic feasibility study.

The next round of stormy negotiations resulted in the Saratov people agreeing to deliver up the technical and economic substantiation without delay, and in the project being entrusted to "Yuzhniigiprologaz." But no sooner had the ink on this order had a chance to dry than new problems sprang up: the Donetsk designers proposed a fundamentally different method of gas collection and transportation. Their solution is advanced and much more economical than the preceding one, but it cancels the existing formulations and calls for more research.

Thus, according to the most optimistic forecasts, the project will not be ready before the end of 1988, not to mention the ensuing time required for its co-ordination, elaboration and approval by various authorities... Strictly speaking, builders will only then be able to proceed with the project, in which case it will be impossible to commission the fields in 1991.