

flow of these sessions was "exploded" by a report from V. Anikin, depot specialist for new equipment. He was so ferocious in criticizing the shortcomings of the locomotive that I once reacted to his words by asking: "So then, this locomotive isn't needed in the North?" Vitalii Mikhailovich confused us even more by starting to heap praise on this "iron horse": "I'm not at all against it. What I am against is how everything is done today. We have to work the bugs out of the engine." He continues to hold this opinion.

And yet, I find this signature at the bottom of the letter. This means that times are really hard for the locomotive. What happened?

"Today, it isn't at all clear if the locomotive will be operating at our depot or for the Vorkuta Sector," relates depot economist T. Karepina. "It's quite possible that the railroad will give up on this engine altogether."

There is, of course, an alternative to the new generation locomotive in current series-produced engines, which are inferior to the new one in all respects. But the old ones have what is by today's standards a major advantage - price. They are five times cheaper than the 2TE121 locomotives. But just think for a minute about what kind of argument you're advancing when you choose between an inexpensive washboard and an expensive washing machine. The high price is still no cause for refusing to buy. The expense of acquiring the new locomotive can only be justified if it is fully utilized. Unfortunately, there's a lot in the way of this in the arctic sector of the Northern Railway. Especially the wretched state of the track facilities and the backward condition of the stations, which would have to accommodate trains of a length that makes operation of the powerful locomotive economically feasible.

Some specialists had raised this point at meetings and on the pages of newspapers from the very beginning of testing: It's not enough to build maintenance shops and reconstruct depot bases. What is also needed is to