

And So What Is to Be Done?

I don't think the sleepy silence can last too long in these parts. Industrial enterprises will be built here; it's getting more difficult to find space for them out west, where some areas have become over-industrialized. Soon people won't be able to breathe because of the noxious emissions of industrial giants. But out here in the east we have a vast territory where in pre-BAM times, the density was 1 person per square kilometer. There is room for expansion here. And for the time being there is a builder. This expansion has been outlined and planned in accordance with a long-term comprehensive program for the development of the productive forces of Siberia and the Far East in the period up to the year 2000. BAM lies at the core of this program. And it would only be fair to have the newly-built railway line subsidized not by one, but several departments, who, in fulfilling the program, are responsible for developing the BAM zone. This will compel them to more energetically get on with their work in the east.

Be that as it may, before deciding whether we need BAM we must decide the bigger question of whether or not we need a "Far-East" State program. Will we fulfill it? Because if we do need it, will it be minus its first line, minus BAM? And if we don't need it, we must come clean before the people and say: Sorry, you were invited here by mistake. The Far East doesn't need your help for the time being; let the "deposits" remain "sealed" pending better times. And let us not compound our mistakes by investing money in a useless railroad, building cities with no future, or erecting houses for nobody.