

N.G.: Subsidiary holdings are not concessions to fashion, but a necessity dictated by isolation from the mainland. And it would be an impermissible luxury, under our conditions, to bring in everything from the mainland. This applies to other goods, for example, certain building materials.

V.L.: As I understand, there is no problem with basic foodstuffs. But as the saying goes, "not by bread alone...", especially since home and hearth are so distant.

N.G.: As an arctic worker with a record of service I can state that the moral and psychological climate in arctic shift-team settlements depends much on how well people are provided with services and amenities. More than 50 years ago, when "Arktikugol'" was established, the first miners on Spitsbergen worked under extremely difficult conditions. They started from zero and did without much.

Today the available housing space in Barentsburg and Pyramid consists mainly of four-story homes constructed from locally-produced cinder blocks. We build using our own resources; we use furnace cinder, blocks of which are faced with special brick for durability. Naturally, housing projects are designed for northern, permafrost conditions. This year we will finish construction on three 300-unit apartment houses. By the end of the five-year plan, all arctic workers will be supplied with housing with all conveniences.

The settlements have Palaces of Culture, libraries with a total of 50,000 volumes, and sports centres with swimming pools. We plan to build