

Archangel Oblast: Northern Dvina System Heavily Polluted

The summer of 1988 proved to be warm and sunny in the North. Thousands of city dwellers languished on sandy beaches, which at times were as crowded as the Crimea or the Caucasus. But only a few ventured into the water, for on the local radio came warnings from the sanitation department: "The state of the water in the river is dangerous to health".

Archangel obtains its water supply from the Northern Dvina. After proper filtration it is again fit for drinking. The local authorities, however, foreseeing the inevitable, are already thinking of building an aqueduct, which will bring moisture from subterranean lakes over a distance of hundreds of kilometres. So it won't be long before the deep, but heavily muddied river will be intersected by another major waterway - one that is artificial and enclosed in a thick steel pipe, but on the other hand, as clean as tears.

For the moment, however, from all sides are heard the doleful complaints of residents about the lawless activities of various departments: "Stop, once and for all, destroying the Northern Dvina".

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WHO CRACKS THE WHIP?

Last year, navigation on the Dvina had ceased by mid-summer. Deep-draught passenger and cargo ships could no longer proceed upstream to Kotlas. The passengers were brought there by light, jet-driven motor vessels. For some time, the river