

"The living conditions here are extreme. First of all, the temperature range is wide: from minus 60° in winter to plus 40° in summer. Within just 24 hours the temperature fluctuates on the average up to 20 degrees. Secondly, as the northerners say, we have ten months of winter here, all the rest is summer. And thirdly, we are rather high above sea level, hence the rarefied air and oxygen deficiency. A person coming from the country's western regions feels as if he has ascended a mountain. His body is under constant stress and, at times, a small jolt is sufficient to cause a breakdown."

I assume, the health of the BAR personnel is also affected by the social and living conditions?

"Of course. We have been aware for some time that people get sick less frequently where there is concern about their well-being and at least some comfort. In Urgal and Severomuisk there are good comfortable settlements, in Kicher even the ordinary panel residences have water and sewage service, but here, in the BAR capital, we still have many unheated railroad cars and panel structures with the "facilities" at times hundreds of meters away. In the temporary buildings, as a rule, there is dirt, lack of sanitation. No wonder that people get sick."

From the inventory of the Main Administration of the BAR construction:

Total housing - 1.670.000 square metres.  
Occupied by 143,000 persons. Temporary dwellings included in the above figure - one million square metres, or four thousand residential railroad cars occupied by 100,000 people.

(Statistics of December 15, 1987).