

other heads of state, and were warmly welcomed in private meetings with A.I. Lukyanov, Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and E.A. Shevardnadze, USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On a visit to Pravda the members of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition, their organizers and sponsors responded to our questions.

Q. "We would like to hear from Will Steiger, commander of the expedition. What can you say about your epic adventure? How would you assess it?"

A. "I am amazed that we were able to cross the Antarctic. In my opinion this was not simply good fortune, it was more than that. We had the support of many millions of people throughout the world, and this enabled us to accomplish what many people felt was impossible."

Q. "Tell us, please just how severe are the ecological problems in the Antarctic?"

A. "O-o-oh, if they become severe it will become bad for all of us. Atmospheric pollution could cause the ice to melt and this could change all of life on the planet. The Antarctic is unquestionably fated to play an important role in the future of mankind."

Q. "At the 'Mirnyi' station on the eve of your finish, some interesting data were recorded: it seems that the air on the sixth continent is four to five times cleaner than Arctic air. Did you sense this or not?"

A. "We did not feel the direct effect of the 'ozone hole' (in the most dangerous sense when ultraviolet rays strike you) for we had completely protected our faces against the merciless sunlight. Our clothing, however, was awfully faded, and the dogs became an entirely different color. This indicates how intensive the ultraviolet rays are."