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**EXTRACTS FROM THE SOVIET PRESS
ON THE SOVIET NORTH
AND THE ANTARCTIC**

JUNE 1990

Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures
OTTAWA

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ANTARCTIC

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way of the South Pole, and to this day the journey they completed seems impossible. At the beginning, the entire enterprise seemed foolhardy, banding together six people from different countries who were complete strangers to each other, spoke different languages, and differed sharply in temperament, customs and way of life. Nevertheless, in late July of last year the American Will Steiger, the Japanese Keizo Funatsu, the Frenchman Jean Louis Etienne, the Englishman Jeff Somers, the Chinese Chin Dakho and the Russian Viktor Boyarskii set out on their trek.

Along their route, which stretched over 6000 kilometers, aircraft had been used to set up food depots. Everything needed on the long journey was transported by dog sled, the men travelling on skis. On foot... It's easy to talk about this now, but during the expedition there were times when headquarters did not know for several weeks if the men were alive; radio signals could not penetrate the atmospheric interference.

Pravda published regular reports on the progress of this unprecedented expedition. One of our people accompanied them to the Antarctic, and another met them seven months later on the opposite "shore" of the frozen continent. Just imagine: travelling virtually on foot for more than 200 days. The dogs' paws were worn to the bone, leaving an endless track of blood. The men's cheeks hollow, their eyes inflamed from the snow, their nerves frayed and stretched to the limit.

But they endured and survived, and the world has paid them the homage they deserved. Upon completing their journey they were received by G. Bush and F. Mitterand and

ANTARCTIC

Meeting at Pravda with Members of the International Trans-Antarctic Expedition

They crossed the Antarctic from west to east by way of the South Pole, and to this day the journey they completed seems impossible. At the beginning, the entire enterprise seemed foolhardy, banding together six people from different countries who were complete strangers to each other, spoke different languages, and differed sharply in temperament, customs and way of life. Nevertheless, in late July of last year the American Will Steiger, the Japanese Keizo Funatsu, the Frenchman Jean Louis Etienne, the Englishman Jeff Somers, the Chinese Chin Dakho and the Russian Viktor Boyarksi set out on their trek.

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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."

Q. "The question I asked was somewhat different..."

A. "The ozone, you understand... The air here is extremely clean, and in great open expanses you can see very far off, as far the eye can see," Steiger responds.

Q. "A question for you all. A person undertaking such a long journey would need to be in good physical condition. But still, what is it that requires the most attention - the eyes, teeth, feet, psyche? During a long stay in the Antarctic how does constant motion affect the human organism?"

A. "None of us, as far as I know, underwent any special training," Boyarskii says. "None of us is a professional athlete. I think it is enough to be physically healthy to dare such a journey. All of us had a fear of the possibility of becoming ill, such as appendicitis or something even more serious. In our circumstances this would almost certainly have meant death."

Speaking next is M. Moammar, an oceanologist from Saudi Arabia who, together with his colleague and fellow countryman I. Alam, supported the expedition from the sea:

"We were aboard a yacht but we also went to the South Pole. We flew there. Since I am a person from a hot climate I was worried that the seemingly lightweight clothing manufactured by the American firm 'Gortex' might not protect me from the cold. Five minutes after I climbed into my sleeping bag I became hotter than anything I have ever experienced in our Arabian desert."

Q. "We were expecting your ship at 'Mirnyi' but we never saw it."

A. "A telegram came in from our Soviet friends saying that the ship which was supposed to accompany us in the ice could not get through to us."

"This ship just made it out of the Arctic by the skin of its teeth," remarked A. Chilingarov, deputy chairman of the USSR Goskomgidromet (State Committee on Hydrometeorology) who was coordinating Soviet support for the expedition."

Q. "A question for Jeff Somers: What did the dogs think of this journey?"

A. "For a dog, a one-hour walk each day with its master is a joy, but here their walk together lasted for days on end."

Q. "Viktor Boyarskii spoke about fear. What form did that take?"

A. "When you are in the Antarctic," Somers replied, "fear of some kind is always present. Sometimes this is merely a recognition of the dangers you face, and sometimes it is something quite different, often an indefinable fear accompanied by a powerful beating of the heart. It really hit me hard in September, for example, when we lost contact with the world for a half a month."

Q. "Keizo, you are the youngest member of the expedition. Do you expect to undertake a new journey?"

A. "Since I have spent all of the last five years travelling with dog teams I intend to continue doing this in the future. I would love to make a trip across Canada."

Q. "And how did this journey affect the personal lives of the expedition members?"

A. "I suppose that I, the eternal wanderer, have the most experience in family life and so the problem of separation and the joy of reuniting is a basic part of my life. But this expedition," says Boyarskii, "was unusual even for me. There were many risks, many more than before. The prize that greeted me at the finish at 'Mirnyi' - meeting my wife - was deeply moving."

"When I joined this expedition," responds Somers, "my motives at first were purely egoistic. But as our scheme began to draw more press attention and as I began to sense the enthusiasm of the expedition members and its numerous supporters, I began to realize more and more its true importance. For example, take the educational aspect: thanks to our journey, millions of children have learned many new things about the Antarctic. In American schools special courses were held on this journey, and hundreds of geography teachers came to the city of Minneapolis to see us off. Today, I feel that this expedition is not simply our achievement but belongs to millions of people."

"An expedition like this provides an opportunity to see the world differently and to see yourself differently," Steiger adds. "For many months you do not see your loved ones, your family and friends, you are cut off from the entire world. When you find yourself constantly in extreme circumstances, you become wiser. You come to understand many things that were unclear before. I can't say that I've changed radically - my values have remained as before, but they have been somehow strengthened."

"At the end of the trip, when I lost my way in a snowstorm, there in the snow I thought about my family, about my friends and about my own place in their life, and in life in general. I realized," Funatsu adds, "just how important it was to others that I remain alive."

"Since I am a glaciologist and had visited the Antarctic many times before this expedition," says Dakho, "my life has not undergone any particular changes. I have returned to normal life. I have completed another book, and I expect I may write others over the next year to year and a half. This year I will put together my research data and publish it in articles."

Q. "We would like to know why it is exactly that Kathy de Molle became the head of this arduous male endeavor? We noticed her charming smile, does this mean that she is glad that this is over?"

"There is a woman standing behind every man. But I think that, to some extent, this was an accident. I can talk about two stages in this undertaking. Physically, the organization of the expedition literally exhausted me. But then I saw how people are capable of cooperating, and this is a process in which both men and women should take part. We spent three years preparing this expedition. If there had not been unity among the different people, this event could not have taken place.

The greatest contributions to the success of the expedition came from the USA, the Soviet Union and France."

Q. "Do you regret your investments?" we ask J. Gore, honorary president of the firm 'Gortex'."

A. "For all of our associates this was a most extraordinary expedition. We are so delighted that we could do what we did. It was simply magnificent," smiles our guest.

Pravda

26 June 1990

Page 8 (abridged)

ARCTIC

Decision to Abolish Polar Aviation Directorate Considered Sensible

Today we are publishing a second opinion on the issue of resurrecting Polar Aviation. This time the author of the article is USSR Meritorious Pilot I.A. Levandovskii, who was awarded the "Badge of Honour" for his participation in air support for the nuclear-powered icebreaker "Arktika" and has participated in fifteen high-latitude air expeditions.

His article is in response to the article "Drooping Wings" by V. Kukharenko (Vozdushnyi transport, No. 63 of 26 May 1990).

As a specialist who has flown for almost 33 years in Krasnoyarsk Krai and has flown extensively in the North and in the Arctic, I am amazed by the kind of superficial and economically illiterate judgements about the significance of the erstwhile services of Polar Aviation, the cost of current air operations and the unified structural scheme for administration of air transport in the krai that we find in the article by V. Kukharenko.

I feel that it was a very smart decision to abolish the Administration of Polar Aviation.

This administration worked only for the Northern Sea Route, for the most part had airports along the arctic coast, and did not service such areas of the Enisei North as the Evenkiya region, the Taimir Peninsula or Norilsk. And how can one possibly compare the volume of operations of the entire Polar Aviation with today's operations of the Krasnoyarsk Administration in the Arctic and in the North? Today, this region is served by the An-12, An-26 and Yak-40 aircraft, by the still irreplaceable An-2, and by the Mi-6, Mi-8 and Mi-2 helicopters. We recently received a new Mi-26 helicopter, which is capable of transporting up to 20 tonnes of cargo both inside its fuselage and by external suspension. And how can one compare the economic aspect or the flight safety and comfort of a Yak-40 with an Il-14, an An-26 with an Li-2 or an Mi-8 with an Mi-4?

It is true that, due to the removal of the Li-2 and Il-14 airplanes from certain types of operations, service in the Arctic and Far North has deteriorated, but this is not our fault. To this day there are no new polar aircraft and helicopters and no one knows when there will be any. The Ministry of the Aviation Industry failed to ready replacements on time. The culprit here was the infamous 'residual' principle, first for the Air Force and then for Aeroflot. Somehow even conversion has still not yielded visible results. The An-74 has been "learning how to fly" for over ten years, but we still can't get hold of

one although we were supposed to have two already by the end of last year.

There are no skids or floats for the An-28. And why is it so needed in the North? In any case, since the beginning of 1990 the Poles have been trying to sell it to us at 1.5 - 2 million rubles per airplane. Meanwhile Aeroflot and the entire light aviation system is operating at a loss. At the Krasnoyarsk Administration every hour of flight of the Yak-40 generates a loss of 121 rubles (its total annual flight time is 54,000 hours). The losses for the L-410 are 105 rubles (yearly flight time 53,650 hours), 144 rubles for the An-26 (yearly flight time 32,400 hours). I could continue the list. Let me pose a rhetorical question. How is our nearly 20,000-strong collective to live, how is it to develop and solve social problems? Are we supposed to wait for the prices of aircraft, fuel and spare parts to come down or for passenger fares and freight charges to go up?

There is only one possible conclusion: there has been a major blunder in supplying aviation equipment to Aeroflot, especially in the North and Arctic. What is needed is for the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of the Aircraft Industry and the government as well, to change their policy and turn their attention to the North. It would be simpler to put our house in order and to supply northern air enterprises with modern polar aviation equipment than to resurrect the Administration of Polar Aviation. At least, we would have something to fly in... Our administration, for example, has qualified polar pilots who possess great experience and skill. And the ground facilities are being successfully developed.

What did we inherit from Polar Aviation? Dirt landing strips, converted buildings, crack-filled houses... What have we accomplished in 18 years?

At Srednii airport (Severnaya Zemlya) we built a new hotel, a large-panel housing plant, a garage, and an instrument landing system.

The airport at Dikson has an artificial landing strip, a modern landing system, a large garage, a twin track snowplow, a hangar, a ramp, a boiler, a school, warehouses, a fuel and lubricant warehouse, and a repair and construction administration. Three times as many residential units have been built as existed under Polar Aviation, and the new housing is well-furnished. At Dikson Aviation Enterprise as it exists today, life in the Western Arctic would be unthinkable without the Mi-8 helicopter fleet.

Khatanga airport has a hard-surface landing strip, a hangar, an air engineering base, a modern hotel, well-furnished housing, a fuel and lubricant warehouse, a garage, a twin track snowmobile, and a renovated terminal building.

Alykel airport at Norilsk is a modern airport which can accommodate Il-62 and Tu-154 airliners and Il-86 airbuses. In corperation with the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Combine, we are beginning a radical renovation of the Dudinka airport, which will be able to accommodate all of these liners.

In Igarka we have built an artifical landing strip which can handle all types of aircraft (previously in spring and summer the Li-2 airplanes took off from a dirt airfield). There is a large ramp, hotel, boiler, a new wing to the terminal building, a twin track snowmobile, a fuel and lubricant warehouse, and a modern landing system.

I could cite other examples at Turukhansk, Tura, Baikit, Vanavara, Podkamennaya Tunguska, Eniseisk, Motyginno, Boguchany and other northern airports.

So, who has done more? Polar aviation during its entire existence up to 1971 or the Krasnoyarsk Administration since 1971?

The fact that Mi-8 helicopters fly without full loads is purely an organizational issue for the customer. It's no use waiting for some kindly benefactor to come along and settle everything. What needs to be done is to build helicopter ports and night take-off sites and then the helicopters will be utilized to full capacity.

As far as housing is concerned, it is a fact that over 4000 aviation workers in the Krasnoyarsk Administration are in need of improved housing. We are building a substantial number of houses but more are needed. And how is it that aviators in Igarka - a city with a large sawmill and trans-shipping combine - are unable to build houses out of wooden beams using their own financial resources? They could, if there was the will to do so. The money is there. What is needed is initiative and firmness in handling the housing problem. Last year alone collectives engaged in self-financed construction projects were allocated an additional 6 million rubles from the material incentive fund!

... I have been flying in the North all my life. Polar experience is never wasted. It is as essential to pilots of the Il-86 as to pilots of the Mi-26. The North and Arctic are excellent schools for developing skills, courage and innovativeness. You can always recognize a polar pilot by his distinctive manner, no matter what kind of aircraft he has flown.

In concluding my response to Kukhareenko's article I'd like to say that, clearly, it would be worthwhile to think about a more rational structure for the administration of air transport in the Far North. And if something like a new Polar Aviation is to be created, it would be altogether possible to use our administration as the basis for this.

I. Levandovskii
Head of the Krasnoyarsk
Civil Aviation Administration
Vozdushnyi transport
5 June 1990
Page 1 (abridged)

ENVIRONMENT

Protection of Northern Inhabitants Discussed at Murmansk

Yesterday in Murmansk the regional trade union conference on social and economic problems of the North concluded its work.

The conference participants worked out a program of concrete actions to protect Northerners and to improve their material situation. For many years exploitation of natural resources in northern regions was carried out without regard for social and demographic conditions, had a deleterious effect on the ecology, and resulted in a dramatic worsening in living conditions of workers, especially native inhabitants. Numerous appeals from local authorities to the governments of the country and the republic requesting they adopt immediate measures to head off a crisis brought no success. It is precisely this fact that compelled the recently created Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) to come to the defense of the interests of workers of the Soviet North.

A series of documents adopted at the conference point to concrete ways out of the difficult situation.

To monitor implementation of the resolutions adopted by the regional conference, a commission is being formed composed of representatives of all trade union organizations in northern Russia. Conference participants addressed an appeal to the supreme soviets of the USSR and RSFSR to lend support for developing a system of guarantees for social protection of Northerners during the initial stages of the transition to a market economy.

Also participating in the work of the conference were V.K. Gusev, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, leaders of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, and representatives of central ministries and government departments.

MINERAL RESOURCES AND MINING

Europe's First Diamond Deposit Discovered in Russian North

There was a moment when Napoleon's power might have begun to crumble had the Emperor not received a loan, for which he pledged his own diamond-the "Pitt".

I was to be met at Archangel airport by a man who is sitting on a diamond operation worth billions of dollars. As I was flying there I was wondering just who had found it necessary to conceal information about the fabulous riches discovered in this ancient coastal land. In a region where, in the past, you couldn't find poor peasants, the villages have become deserted and are falling into ruin. A reverse migration has developed - from the White Sea region to Central Russia. Those who departed their native region never even suspected that they were leaving behind a jewel of a land, in the literal sense. If the people had known the whole story, maybe they would not have given up their comfortable perch and would have waited for the bad times to pass. But what would have been the use, given that the geologists' telephones were bugged and they were forbidden to speak about the precious stones they had found. "The KGB made their dissatisfaction known to us when we forgot that," said G.I. Luchnikov, a leading diamond geologist for the "Arkhangelskgeologiya" Association.

I don't know what's going on in our country. What kind of masters of the land are we? If we really were the masters we wouldn't be keeping the diamonds in the ground while pennies are jingling in our tattered trousers. The Australians discovered diamonds at the same time in their country and are already developing them to the utmost. It has been more than ten years since the geologists E.M. Verichev and A.F. Stankovskii discovered a rich "vein" on a hot summer's day in the steep bank of the Mel River - the water had receded and the vein lay exposed. Lady Fortune was smiling... No matter what else you make of it, this was one of the discoveries of the century, deserving of the most prestigious award.

These were my thoughts as I got off the plane. At the airport an oblast committee person was kind enough to offer to drive me to the hotel in the official "Volga" sent for him. But I scanned the shiny black automobiles looking for "my" car. After all, they had promised to meet me. Suddenly, someone called out to me. Beside a small light blue "Zhiguli", stood a tall smiling man who had apparently picked me out among the passengers.

"Levchenko," he introduced himself presently. Seemingly catching the astonishment on my face, he explained: "We're renting the car, its owner is at the wheel."

Sometime later I found myself in an old wooden house, home base for Vitalii Alekseevich Levchenko, head of the Archangel Multidisciplinary Scientific Research and Planning and Design Department of the institute "Yakutnioproalmaz" (Yakut Scientific Research Institute of the Diamond Industry). I thought to myself: "Big ideas and the eternal mark of poverty. There's no getting around it - as things now stand in Russia we need faster and more substantial results." In some translated piece I read that diamonds have always been the final salvation in times of social upheaval. Truly, they are at all times a staunch bulwark of the economy.

"And how far is the deposit from Archangel?" I asked.

"A hundred kilometers northeast, near the Zolotitsa River."

"Are we flying or going by car?" I asked Levchenko.

"The road is a mess. We'd do better to request a helicopter. But for my part, it's six of one, half dozen of the other."

And he has the job of developing construction there - cities, quarries, recreation areas, roads... I still see no evidence that the government is heeding the urgent demands of the times. We asked the oblast committee of the CPSU for a favour, and now we are into our third hour creeping along a dirt road that would daunt the devil himself. Mikhail Lomonosov probably had it easier in his wagon trains hurrying to Arkhangelsk for the auctions. They creaked past these very woods, and it was about this same region that the coastal peasant and brilliant Russian scientist would write: "I have concluded that there is an abundance of natural wealth in the Earth's interior in the Far North." He roundly berated these who, as in our own time, asserted that diamonds could not be found under these geological conditions and there was no reason even to look for them here. The deposit we are travelling to is named for M.V. Lomonosov.

Astrologists say that we Russians came from the North Star. Personally, it does have a home-like glow about it for me that is somehow mysteriously beckoning. I am sure that in answering its call we will make many more discoveries in the North and that to the five diamond-bearing pipes of the Archangel region we will add the main ones, which the geologists are already groping for.

"We consider these the 'tail'. Further along we should find the mother lode," Luchnikov said to me. "So far we've just located the offspring."

At these words my heart was delighted. And suddenly I was seized by the thought: "Maybe we are holding back on this matter out of a concern about adding more on - there's no way we can cope with five pipes." Even if you don't see or sense the very real present-day concerns, you can't help but think about how we squander our riches. Shall we be selling raw diamonds again? And will others, outside the country, cut them and turn them into gems? It is as if we didn't know the value of precious stones.

Half of the Archangel diamonds are of gem quality (a great rarity). Selling them abroad as raw diamonds would be criminal. If we were to produce the (finished) gems it would ease the hard currency situation: even the smallest stones are 200 to 300 times more valuable than an equal weight of gold. And the largest are hundreds of thousands of times more valuable. Why can't we cut them ourselves? For the diamond, if one pays attention to its magical properties, sharpens the wits. I think that foreign partners could also be found for this business. The alternative is to continue to trudge along this road paved not with concrete and asphalt but with potholes. And that we continue to indulge merely in cerebral contemplation of our projects: "On this lake we will build a recreation centre for diamond miners." Levchenko drew a brave picture of the future, but my vision of this future was dimmed by the issues, unresolved by the government, which are keeping the wagon at a standstill.

Archangel is striving to have its own independent diamond works. True, many people are talking about this, but the specialists are not attracted. Nobody wants to live in a suitcase for along period of time, but we are no closer to getting away from the system whereby people are dislodged and deprived of what is in the end of the most important thing - a secure and permanent corner they can call their own. Hospitals, shacks, tents, railroad cars... Clearly, these diamonds have been something of a calamity for local authorities. Construction of an ore-dressing combine will be disruptive to the ecology and this worries the local population. What particularly concerns the coastal residents is the fate of the salmon in the Zolotitsa and of the pine forests which approach the White Sea. In an effort to save the river, it is to be diverted somewhat along a short section through an earthwork canal. Plans have also been drawn up for a fish hatchery. New diamond mining technology, it was explained to me, eliminates all chemicals, but I say to myself that the "Greens", who are zealously engaged in saving the fragile northern ecology, need to keep a sharp lookout and demand that the Main Administration of the Diamond and Gold Industry (Glavalmazoloto), operate with complete openness.

The air is filled with the scent of pine. The forest stands on sand and quickly takes up the moisture from the ice and snow still melting in the ravines. Summer proper has not yet arrived, and the thickets exhale cold air. For this reason, one senses all the more acutely the virgin state of nature in these parts and the concern about its fate expressed by the local ecology groups. Already, we are travelling along the kimberlite pipe, diamonds lie below us. And among them are lilac-coloured diamonds, the first ever seen on Earth.

We make a sharp left turn to enter the geologists' camp. A few moments later I meet A.I. Ivanov, head of the 17th Expedition of the Nevskoe Geological Production Association. Ivanov is young and Intelligent, and he speaks unhurriedly about the pipelines they have discovered (theirs account for three of the five) while we await V.A. Medvedev, the local "patriarch". Valerii Anatolevich was on the verge of giving up his life as a prospector and had secured himself housing and a warm spot in the Ukraine, but people summoned him to these forests, counting on his experience, knowledge and intuition. He responded immediately. And those who had thought of him were not mistaken.

"Let's go, it's not far. We'll show you the diamonds," Medvedev suggested.

Soon we find ourselves in the geologists' living area. Also located here is an experimental laboratory and ore-processing complex protected by a high fence with barbed wire. I can understand these people's excitement - after all, they are showing me what is perhaps the most important and most mysterious of precious stones, rich in legend and lore. And, most importantly, diamonds that they have found. I didn't think I would see so many - you could pick them up in handfuls. And some of them are large.

"Fifteen carats, and this one is also fifteen," explains the head of the special section M.A. Boidalo. "This one is gem quality, this one, too..."

"Look at them under the microscope," urges Medvedev.

My god, I never thought that stones could have such a spell-binding power - I can't tear myself away from the eyepiece. And still the enigmatic light that the hand of the master jeweller extracts from the diamond could not distract me from the thought: "How welcome they are in our current state of poverty." And the stones shone to my enraptured glance - honey and cinnamon-coloured stones, yellow ones, transparent ones; greenish, violet and pink ones...

"And where are the lilac-coloured diamonds?" I ask, even though I'm actually seeing all of the others for the first time.

"They've been sent for expert examination to Lvov where our best diamond specialist lives."

The camp store, which I visited next, was desolately empty. Cans of fish - which are still being fed to the animals - fermented fruit juice in 3-liter jars, eggplant paste, bread - that's all. How people survive is anyone's guess. And this a few hundred metres from fabulously precious stones.

Ahead lay the road back. What would I hear upon my return to Archangel? We had directed appeals high and low, but silence, not a word from the government.

About the magical properties of the diamond it was written long ago: "It must be obtained freely, without compulsion or coercion. Then it has the greatest power."

Pravda
14 June 1990
Page 8 (abridged)

Accumulation of Coal at Vorkuta Angers Miners

A State public commission has begun work in Vorkuta to monitor implementation of decree no. 608 of the USSR Council of Ministers.

The commission's findings regarding implementation of the agreement between miners and the government may help to reduce the internal tension in this polar city.

Just what the situation here is like one can judge from an interview of June 9 on the program "Vremya". V. Tukan, deputy of the Vorkuta City Soviet, and V. Kopasov, its first deputy chairman - who prior to being elected to this post was head of the city workers' (strike) committee - informed the television viewers that the shipping of coal from Vorkuta was in bad shape and if the depot reserves were not brought down to a normal level by July 1 the miners would act on the decision of their conference and strike.

This conference took place in April. At that time there were over 900 tonnes of coal - three times the normal level - stored at the "Vorkutaugol" (Vorkuta Coal) Association's warehouses. This was the result in part of a snowstorm that had lasted several days and had interrupted operations on the Northern Railroad.

But can it be true that there had been no change up to the day the television interview was aired? The answer to this question comes from V. Golikov, director of the "Vorkutaugol" Production Corporation:

"Half a million tonnes remain at the coal depots," he said. "Ninety thousand tonnes of this are in coal heaps at the 'Yuzhnaya' mine in the form of unprocessed power plant coal intended for local use. Everyday we receive 800 freight cars from the railway people. Some of the mines are already having difficulty filling this enormous flow of empty cars. The coal levels at their depots are at normal

country. The schedule calls for three flights per week. Passengers will now travel to the capital without the annoying change of planes.

levels or below. The 'Vorgashorskaya', for example, is now no longer releasing its excess coal, accumulating it instead to fulfill the plan for the third quarter."

Izvestiya

13 June 1990

Page 3 (full text)

Vorkuta Coal Begins to Move

First it was the bad weather, and then the irregular flow of empty open rail cars since the beginning of spring placed the miners of Vorkuta and railway workers of the Northern Line in a difficult situation. Nearly a million tonnes of coal have accumulated at depots. Since the mined coal has not been sold, the mine's current accounts are short of funds. And then the miners threatened an unusual strike action: if the coal is not shipped out we will go on collective leave.

In May the Vorkuta Branch substantially improved the situation by shipping fuel to customers. What helped in particular was introducing the use of shuttle trains to the Cherepovets Metallurgical Combine.

There currently remain more than 500,000 tons at coal depots of Vorkuta. This is a lot, above the level allowed, but judging from all indications, the miners' collective leave will not take place since railway workers intend to maintain the current pace in June. Now, even the miners can no longer keep up with the daily pace of loading, which amounts to 805 cars.

Gudok

21 June 1990

Page 1 (full text)

MISCELLANEOUS

Balloon Crossing of Taimir Peninsula Planned

Only an aerostat is capable of flying to the Putorana (Nature) Preserve, insist representatives of the "Phoenix" centre for scientific and technical creativity of youth, which specializes in aerostatics. In was they who inititated the international ecology flight "Enisei-90". Members of the expedition will be crossing the Taimir Peninsula in a balloon.

"It was no accident that we selected a relatively unknown area," says expedition member engineer Sergei Grishin. "Unfortunately, here too one can already see the traces of human activity. Irreversible changes lie before your eyes in the tundra. Destruction of the natural vegetation, noise pollution, and high energy costs today make it impossible to view all-terrain vehicles and the helicopter as irreplaceable transport devices. The goal of our flight is to demonstrate the possibility of using lighter-than-air devices in the North. The expedition will get under way in mid-July. In a parallel operation, a scientific research group will spend approximately one month working in the Putorana Preserve.

Vodnyi transport
28 June 1990
Page 4 (full text)

TRANSPORT - AIR

New Air Link Naryan-Mar-Moscow

Naryan-Mar. In forging a new air link between Naryan-Mar and Moscow aviators have brought this trans-Arctic city significantly closer to the centre of the

country. The schedule calls for three Tu-134 flights per week. Passengers will now travel to the capital and back without the wearying changes of aircraft.

Gudok
3 June 1990
Page 4

TRANSPORT - WATER

Increase in Flow of Passengers Through Salekhard

Ships of the Ob - Irtysh Steamship Line are journeying further and further northward. At the end of May crews of the tugboat motorships of the port of Salekhard began transporting cargo from Salekhard to Nadym, Nida and Yar-Sale.

Things have grown lively on the ferry line between Salekhard and Labytnangi as the crew of the motorship "Moskovskii-3" opened the navigation season in an orderly fashion. This year river workers of the port of Salekhard are opening a new passenger line: Salekhard - Gor'ki - Lopkhari. A test voyage of a "Meteor" will take place in June along the northern route Salekhard - Salemal - Panaevsk.

Vodnyi transport
16 June 1990
Page 1

Increase in Container Cargo Operations
Expected at Provideniya Seaport

As everyone knows, the navigation season on the Chukotka is short-lived. Given the conditions, operations should be prepared as thoroughly as possible, and all

aspects of the up-coming encounter with the sea must be thought out in advance. This was precisely the topic of a conversation our special correspondent had with Yu. Bukhonov, deputy head of the harbour fleet of the Provideniya Maritime Commercial Port.

Q. "What is the status of your organization's readiness for the navigation season?"

A. "Maintenance work on the passenger and transport fleet is virtually completed. The tugboards 'Burun' and 'Kapitan Belomestnov', the roadstead cutter 'Chaika' and the ship SPA-005 are ready to sail. We are awaiting the arrival of the motorvessel 'Inzhener Kazandzhi' from the Nakhodka Ship Repair Plant. We will also be getting so-called "new blood": construction of the bulk cargo transport 'Provideniya', with a capacity of 350 tonnes, is drawing to a close in Arkhangelsk. The ship has an expanded range of navigation, its own cargo-handling facilities, and other facilities which enable it to unload freight on an unequipped shore.

The locations of ships for the navigation period and the level of operation for each ship have been set, and a number of leasing agreements involving our ships have been outlined. In short, we are ready for work, and ready for a new way of working."

Q. "The Provideniya Maritime Port is now on a self-financing basis, and that means suddenly a new way of working..."

A. "Yes, self-financing, but it's too early to say that this economic model is running smoothly. First of all, not everyone has what you would call identical or equal starting conditions. For example, while the crew of the tug 'Burun' is already in its second year of operation under a collective contract, the 'Inzhener Kazandzhi', which transports passengers along the Chukotka coastline, is incurring annual losses of 250,000 to 300,000 rubles.

Or take the crew of the NMS-37 oil spill cleanup vessel. Its harbour fleet is maintained entirely at the expense of the other ships, we don't receive any subsidies for it. And we don't need State money. If the fines collected from polluters of the bay were not forwarded to some abstract address but were used to solve ecological problems, this would be another matter entirely.

We are, of course, attempting to find additional cargo for the fleet to carry. If we sit idle from one navigation season to another - and our navigation season is short - the harbour fleet will simply go to ruin. For this reason, we are actively leasing our ships. The tug 'Kapitan Belomestnov', for example, has concluded an agreement with a ship repair plant of the Kamchatka Steamship Line.

Q. "Chukotka has begun participating in the lighter program. How is this program working at the port of Provideniya?"

A. We are working with two barge carriers - the 'Alekssei Kosygin' and 'Sevmorput'. Generally speaking, this program is working well both for us and for the crews, who have virtually no idle time ashore. For our part, we have constructed a lighter holding base in the port, so we are awaiting their arrival. By the way, the nuclear powered 'Sevmorput' is due to open the current navigation season. Unlike certain other ports, we are not afraid of this ship, we understand that the stories about possible radioactive contamination are greatly exaggerated. In my opinion, this is a good, reliable ship, and it will have a big future in the Arctic."

Q. "And finally, one last question: what does the up-coming navigation season mean for the collective of the harbour fleet?"

A. "First and foremost, as I said earlier, we will continue to look for ways of improving the efficiency of the fleet's operations. This is our number one task. In addition, plans call for a large influx of cargo in containers during this navigation season. We will be handling the 'Sevmorput' nuclear-powered ship for the first time in the context of containerized freight. We feel that this experiment will yield positive results. Consequently, a series of additional measures have been developed for the port for handling and storing containers."

Vodnyi transport

5 June 1990

Page 2 (slightly abridged)



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