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AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION

Baguettes for Northern Residents

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TRANSPORT WATER

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stage. Developing... and gas industry workers has become the duty of sectoral institutes, whose primary profile is finding oil and gas. As for the specialized planning organizations of the Oblast Agro-Industrial Committee, they are overbooked with other tasks.

What you get when the pastry chef starts making shoes is obvious to anyone. The plans drawn up by oil industry personnel for food industry workers are, of course, not distinguished by their quality. What's more, plans borrowed from more central regions of Russia are often simply 'hitched on' to the Siberian situation in a mechanical fashion, without any regard for local conditions. But those paying are happy even for borrowed plans - there have been cases where food enterprises were planned without any documentation at all.

"As early as 1981," recounts R. Katsen, director of the "Obnftgazstroi" Trust, "in response to strong pressure from local authorities, and

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION

Baguettes for Northern Residents

It has become natural to speak of the 'Tyumen North' in terms of oil. But daily bread always has been, and today remains, a current issue. Judge for yourself: while more than one and a half billion rubles were spent on housing construction last year in the Tyumen Oblast, the amount spent on the food industry was a mere 72 million.

It is true that economic organs are now beginning to turn their attention to the food program and are starting to allocate a portion of the monies to those working in the food industry. But is the money always used wisely? Unfortunately, the availability of money has not made the problem less acute.

Serious complications begin at the planning stage. Developing plans for food enterprises for oil and gas industry workers has become the duty of sectoral institutes, whose primary profile is finding oil and gas. As for the specialized planning organizations of the Oblast Agro-Industrial Committee, they are overbooked with other tasks.

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"As early as 1981," recounts R. Katsen, director of the "Obneftegazstroi" Trust, "in response to strong pressure from local authorities, and

without any documentation, we agreed to include a mechanical bakery in our plan. construction began only in 1983, based on a rough plan borrowed from Novyi Urengoi. The plan was re-worked to expand its scope in order to provide for the growing needs of the city. The facility was handed over to the State Commission in 1986, but production at the bakery, so far as I know, is still limping along."

Workers of "Kazymgazpromstroi" (Kazym construction enterprise of the gas industry) -- erected a similar "lame" dairy inherited from residents of the town of Beloyarsk, in the Berezovo Raion. The reason was the same -- an unfinished, out-of-date plan. Some of the problems with the food enterprises that are being built are related to the lack of agro-construction specialists in oil-industry bodies and customer agencies. So what is the solution? One possibility lies in the experience already accumulated of co-operation between Siberians and foreign firms, whereby finished assemblies and modular units are delivered to the oil and gas fields of Tyumen Oblast. Enterprises in the city of Tyumen are producing "super blocs" which can then be used to construct entire factories in the taiga and tundra. Can it be that it's not possible to build food enterprises in the same way?

Pre-assembled modular units of bakeries and dairy plants built in specialized enterprises is an altogether realistic concept. All that is needed is a show of interest, especially on the part of those in charge at the Oblast Agro-Industrial Committee. The modular method not only improves the quality of construction but also provides an additional advantage in time.

But top agrarian officials in the oblast, it appears, are not exactly eager to rush into action.

"There isn't an adequate supply of standard equipment," complains B. Prokopchuk, chairman of the Tyumen Oblast Agro-Industrial Committee (APK). "And on top of that, there have been delays in re-assigning the personnel of the now dissolved "Minleppishchemash" (Ministry of Mechanical Engineering for Light Industry, the Food Industry, and Household Appliances) to manufacturing plants."

And so it goes. It's just that the APK has apparently forgotten that expanding capacity for the processing of agricultural products is its direct responsibility.

A lot of good work is going on in the Tyumen Oblast. Its residents are good, hardworking people. One must not walk over their needs, especially when it's a matter of essentials, such as bread. One can, of course, cite good examples in the oblast: excellent "French" baguettes are being baked in Novyi Urengoi, for example. But what people want is to have them available everywhere in Tyumen Oblast.

Stroitel'naya Gazeta

23 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

CONSTRUCTION

A New Plant Opens

The largest mechanical repair plant in the eastern part of the country has begun to operate in the city of Neryungri, which is situated in the south of Yakutiya.

The plant will repair up-rated quarry machinery - coal freighters, ore carriers, power shovels and bulldozers. At present, these machines remain inoperative for long periods of time due to even minor breakdowns. The new plant will considerably speed up repairs of all kinds.

Trud

5 June 1988

Page 2 (full text)

And the Waiting List Keeps Growing

"Murmansk, now a major seaport and a base for the nuclear-powered icebreaker fleet, is playing an important role in the growth of external economic ties and development of the Soviet Union's Arctic coastline." This is how the role of the Murmansk Maritime Steamship Line was assessed in the resolution "On Measures to Accelerate Economic and Social Development of the Murmansk Oblast for the Years 1988-1990 and for the Period up to the Year 2005.," issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the USSR Council of Ministers.

The well-defined program of development for the oblast calls for accelerated development of the social sphere, especially in the construction of housing and cultural and public services. A similar program has been drawn up by the labour collective of the steamship line. In order to carry out this program and to fully meet the demands of maritime workers for housing by the year 2000, plans call for increasing new apartment openings from all financing sources from 150 to 400 per year. At the same time, one third of this construction will be conducted in accordance with the self accounting method using both funds and labour resources of the steamship line.

How should we carry out this program? At a conference of the heads of various departments it was decided to analyze the problem of housing development using the economic method. Four issues were brought up for discussion and, as the experts reported, no radical solution was found for any of them. And so it was still unclear who in fact would take responsibility for supplying equipment and materials to the building sites, how to organize delivery of these materials to the construction sites in strict accordance with the work schedule and make the qualified construction specialists available, or who would do the planning and what resources would be used.

It used to be that everything foundered on financing. There were no funds for housing construction outside of the plan. Now there are funds: in the last year alone 10 million rubles in profits from plan fulfillment went into the steamship line's bank account. But investing this money in construction (as paradoxical as it seems) has proved to be a difficult matter.

The steamship line, it is true, is already building two apartment houses for dockworkers of Murmansk and Kandalaksha. It has also allocated funds for, and is participating in the construction of two phases of the Murmansk Municipal Youth Housing Complex, which will provide apartments for 72 seamen. It has created a program for construction of its own youth housing complex and has allocated workers for this. Thirty workers have been sent to procure bricks from one of the factories in the oblast.

But this is only part of the job. The steamship line is running head on into a mass of unresolved issues. Housing means cement, metal, pipes and fittings, all of which are strictly stockpiled material. These materials need to be readily available or else you end up with the construction delays so typical during the stagnation period (i.e., the years of the Brezhnev régime).

The problem of labour resources is easier to solve. The steamship line is creating a single repair and construction administration by combining its smaller repair enterprises. This central administration can also be used to train construction workers. But time is required for all of this, and the administrative has already made plans to implement at least 1.5 million rubles in construction and installation operations during the current year. Is this level of operation feasible for an enterprise which as yet has no experience, no specialists, and no reliable material base?

Many are predicting failure. Some are of the opinion that construction workers of "Glavmurmanskstroi" (Main Administration for Residential and Civil Construction in the City of

Murmansk) could take on specific responsibilities to assist the steamship line. "Glavmurmanskstroi" has available extra equipment, planners who are not overly busy, and a school for training specialists. But, alas, no steps have been taken in this direction.

Meanwhile, the waiting list for housing at steamship line over the past few years has been getting longer, not shorter. The current 5-Year Plan calls for constructing 77,000 square metres of housing, and future plans call for between 135,000 and 140,000 square metres. These objectives are to be reached by strengthening the local base of the construction industry and by expanding the level of economic-method construction, which is expected to account for up to 30 percent of total new apartment openings. Combining forces is essential, but in practice each organizational sub-unit of the steamship line continues to hold on steadfastly to its own small repair facilities, in line with the principle: "it may be small, but it's mine."

A partial solution for the problem of housing in the towns of Dikson, Khatanga and the port Uмба is already available today for the steamship line. These localities have good experience in the construction of comfortable wooden apartment buildings of 12 to 16 units that are in no way inferior to brick or panel buildings. But local workers appear inert, expecting housing to be served up to them by planned capital construction.

How the long-term program for social and economic development of the steamship line is going to be carried out depends now on the energy, boldness and initiative of each individual. Very complex and multi-levelled problems stand in the way of its completion. But what matters most is that it is now

the labour collective itself which must shoulder the concerns of transforming plans into reality.

Vodnyi Transport
28 June 1988
Page 3 (full text)

Joining the Banks of the Anudinka

An iron and concrete bridge has joined the banks of the Anudinka, a tributary of the Arctic Kolyma River. For a long time summer flooding by this tributary had been destroying temporary structures erected over this water barrier. The new bridge is now open to traffic and it also has sidewalks for pedestrians.

Sovetskaya Rossiya
12 June 1988
Page 1 (full text)

ECOLOGY

From Siberia on Business

Boris Ivanovich Kolesnikov, director of the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Combine, is the direct opposite of Arkadii Filimonovich. Outwardly calm, he appears to glow with an inner fire. We might call him a modern-day warrior. And what is he fighting for? For human beings.

The paradox of this Arctic city is that the Polar Circle hasn't got the best of it: housing construction and the installation of social and cultural amenities are flourishing. And the reason is that, otherwise, it wouldn't work -- no one could last up here. And so you have to be pleased that people here manage to live and work in a very human way, unlike those places where the inhabitants use "remoteness" and "the strangeness of the North" in an attempt to cloak their own negligence, irresponsibility and inability to get on with the job. Norilsk's accomplishments in providing services and amenities to its population recently won the approval of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

But the problem of ecology has become extremely acute: Norilsk is in smog. It is worse off in this respect than more central areas of the Kray.

Speaking now is delegate V. Bykov, a metallurgist from a copper-smelting plant, who, together with Kolesnikov, is representing Arctic regions:

"Four years ago, I received the USSR State Prize for implementing what is in our day, the most advanced method for liquid bath melting of metal. The process is in fact universal: flexible, economical in use of resources, and highly productive. Most importantly, it makes it possible to utilize waste gases almost entirely. Today, our combine has in operation several Vanyukov furnaces, so named for the person who invented them. But only one of the furnaces uses waste gases, from which we obtain sulphur and sulphuric acid. The other furnaces continue to pollute the atmosphere. Every year we spend 20 million rubles on environmental protection. Is this a lot? I wouldn't want to say whether it's a lot or a little. You have to spend whatever is necessary."

Who's to blame that the people of Norilsk are breathing sulphur? Bykov? Kolesnikov? Or Durasov, Minister of Non-Ferrous Metallurgy? After all, everything around the city is dead. There are no fish in the lakes, and trees are dead for a radius of 50 kilometers. Seven million hectares of tundra have been damaged.

So it's easy to understand what the delegates from the North will be speaking for at the Party Conference.

The subsidiary enterprise "Enisei", with its 12,000 hectares, is the largest in Siberia. It guarantees 25 kilograms of meat per person. The combine provides its people with fresh mushrooms and carp, and sturgeon are farmed in ponds. A rose garden with 40,000 bushes guarantees a bouquet to virtually every person celebrating a name day.

Here there is an undeniable enthusiasm for what is known by that strange hybrid term 'sotskultbyt' -- sociocultural services -- a name one can tolerate only because of the human values it connotes. But how does "enthusiasm" square with plans, with production?

"The plan is going okay, and we're not complaining about the ups and downs ..."

Then, once again, they told us: "See the mushrooms growing here? You don't want to miss the foodstore here on the grounds of the combine, and have a look at the dining halls ..." They didn't feel it was necessary to mention that the morale of the residents and, consequently, the production figures were linked to all of this. And that's understandable.

Saunas have been installed in every workshop, and there are swimming pools and workout rooms. The enterprise's own furniture shop works better than the neighboring furniture factory. While on a national average one ruble from the wages and salary fund results in a few kopecks worth of finished products, the "Enisei" has already surpassed the goal for 1992 by three rubles. That is, it has returned three rubles for every ruble it received.

Anybody can understand that none of this is a simple matter. But how have people succeeded here when at other enterprises they have not? What does Romanov see as the reasons for the slow progress? "The idiocy of the bureaucracy." And he cites an example. At "Enisei", they have produced a nitrocellulose enamel which is the dream of every new resident. But it hasn't been approved because the

paint is whiter than that accepted as the state standard. And so it goes -- trying to deal with "paper people".

In order to bring the enterprise back into contact with people, Romanov had to replace one of the enterprise directors. This gave rise, of course, to anonymous letter writing. Now they have their fill of checking and rechecking, but, so Romanov believes, there was no other path to changes.

And finally another delegate from Krasnoyarsk -- the writer Alitet Nemtushkin, secretary of the regional Party organization for writers. For the time being, he has put aside artistic literature to concern himself with current affairs. The issue is a hydroelectric plant planned for the Enisei River. The Turukhan Hydroelectric Power Station should not be built, he contends, if only because it ignores the fate of an entire people -- the Evenk. You must not flood out a people and fence off ancient reindeer migration routes. You mustn't fail to consider the overall impact of a possible ecological disaster.

Another delegate from Krasnoyarsk at the Party Conference will be A. Maiorets, USSR Minister of Power and Electification. These two delegates from the same region stand on opposite 'banks' of the issue over hydroelectric plants on the Enisei.

We know that Alitet won't step down from his. But will he be able to get the minister to see that, no matter how many times you've taken the measurements, you still need to ask yourself whether you should cut at all? Especially when you are cutting live flesh.

OIL AND GAS

Work Begins on Developing New Urengoi Deposit

Two hundred kilometers south of Urengoi, gas workers have begun to develop a new deposit - the Komsomol'skyi.

This polar deposit of valuable raw material is part of the geological formation of Urengoi. Specialists believe that there are enough gas reserves here to provide the entire Moscow region, for example, with fuel and power.

"We have decided to build a gas works near the new deposit", we were told by A. Naberezhnyi, assistant general director of the "Tuymenburgaz" Industrial Corporation.

At the heart of the gas works will be elegant multi-functional block-towers costing ten million each. These units are just about as different from their predecessors as a integrated system is from a valve receiver. Their piping will consume one third the metal. The computer complex will be in charge of managing the entire elaborate process of extracting the gas and preparing it for the ultra-long-range journey to the country's center.

New technological devices will be used for prospecting. One of these is the drilling of strata from consolidated borehole clusters. This will reduce drilling time, the number of roads and the length of production flow lines.

"Earlier, tractors were used to transport the drilling unit from one borehole to the next. But

we thought: why not put our standard boring machines on rails?" says A. Naberezhnyi enthusiastically. "We could then move the two hundred ton machine from place to place without having to take it apart. According to our calculations, the entire operation would take 12 hours as opposed to the seven days it formerly required. Then, the "gaps" in the drilling would just about disappear. Eager to put the plan into action, the people didn't wait for help from the plant. They got some rails and pairs of wheels.

Sotsialisticheskaya

Industriya

8 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

Fuel from Condensate - Competing for the USSR State Prize

Scientists from Minneftegazstroi (Ministry of Construction for the Oil and Gas Industry), Mingazprom (Ministry of the Gas Industry) and Minkhimmash (Ministry of Chemical Industrial engineering) were nominated for the USSR State Prize in the field of Science and Technology for building the Gas Condensate Transportation and Processing Complex in the Tuymen' Region.

Two thirds of the hydrocarbon resources mined in the country today come from Western Siberia. Gas condensate makes up a significant portion of this - it is a most valuable raw material in the petro-chemical industry and fuel production. Suffice to say that a tonne of stable gas condensate is equivalent to two tonnes of petroleum.

When geologists in Tyumen' uncovered major reserves of this hydrocarbon resource, a new stage in the development of the underground stores of Western Siberia began. Plans were also made to construct a condensate-processing complex without slowing the pace on the construction of gas recovery and transportation facilities at the Urengoi deposit.

However, putting the idea into practice proved to be more difficult. Well-known solutions in both domestic and foreign experience did not work under polar conditions. The gas producers had to "tame" gas deposits with a high condensate content, chemical engineers had to develop effective methods for processing the raw hydrocarbons, and the civil engineers and riggers were faced with the task of turning ideas into concrete and metal, and in the shortest period of time possible.

However, there can be no strict divisions of labour when it comes to a new project such as this, and for the most part, problems were solved through collective effort.

The complex consists of four units for preparing the raw hydro-carbons directly on the deposit site, the Urengoi plant, which converts the gas condensate into motor fuel, the main all-product line to Surgut, and the Surgut condensate stabilizing plant. New scientific and technical solutions and new industrial systems have been adopted, and planners have used new principles to site facilities. The level of the engineering projects is eloquently attested to by the fact that they are protected by 32 invention certificates. The realization of each project yielded appreciable savings in capital and resources. The amount of

metal used in constructing the main Urengoi-Surgut condensate line was reduced by 140,000 tonnes, which results in a capital saving of 125 million.

The designers achieved a maximum concentration of plants under construction on industrial sites, which permitted a reduction in the number of utilities and a sharp decrease in service staff numbers. The modular unit method was widely used during the construction, as was the large-scale assembly of structures prior to the erection of the plants. As a result, the complex has come on stream a year ahead of schedule. 8.5 million tonnes of stable condensate and other products had already been obtained at the complex's plants in Novyi Urengoi and Surgut by the beginning of this year.

Stroitel'naya Gazeta

14 June 1988

Page 2 (full text)

SOCIAL ISSUES

A Performance for Nightbirds

Exactly at midnight, they began showing the feature film "The Broken Circle" in the "Arktika" theatre in Dudinka. From this day onward, the night-time cinema in the polar city will be showing films every Friday and Saturday. Even though it is night here now - the notion is relative and the sun shines around the clock without sinking behind the horizon.

We consider midnight to be the best time to begin showing the film, says T. Dzhakhadze, the cinema manager in the Taimyr Autonomous District. At about that time the shift ends at the seaport, which is the major business of the city, and crew members of moored vessels are also free to watch a film. We are also planning to have musical entertainment and to hold dances at the night-time cinema.

Sovetskaya Rossiya

12 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

"The Flaws of the Northern Option"

Transition of thousands of enterprises belonging to different branches of the national economy to full self-supporting and self-financing basis motivates labour collectives more decisively to free themselves from all that restricts economic initiative and socialist entrepreneurship, from all that limits the self-determination of industrial

enterprises in resolving problems of socio-economic development. And, judging by the letters to the editor, there are many such limitations. One of them is ;the subject of a 'round table' discussion by correspondence organized by Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta.

R. Belotserkovskij,
Head of the Department of Labour and Wages,
Production Enterprise "Almazdortrans"
"An Incentive Taken Away"

Income from a self-supporting basis. Profit. For enterprises operating on the principle of self-financing, this is not only a goal summarizing their finance and production activity, but also the means of further socio-economic development. For this reason, the forthcoming conversion of the production enterprise "Almazdortrans" of the "Yakutalmaz" joint enterprise to full self-support is already forcing us to seek out all possible reserves of profitable work.

Obviously, such preparation is impossible without developing the means and incentives to increase the productivity of labour. The problem of increasing productivity is particularly critical for enterprises located in the regions of the Far North. There exists a considerable deficit of labour resources here, even at the present time. At the same time, attracting workers from other regions of the country to these enterprises is quite expensive, both for the enterprises and for the state as a whole.

It would seem that it is precisely here that every economic lever available for productivity increases should be used to the fullest extent. However, the matter is otherwise. Why? Because for

that portion of the monthly wages which exceeds 300 roubles, no regional coefficients and increments are applied. In other words, no matter how conscientiously the worker exerts himself, no matter how much he earns, the coefficient is applied only to 300 roubles, while the remainder is not incremented.

Certainly, an objection could be raised: where would the State get the money to pay increments on the entire wage? But this objection is easily defeated. When the work is done under collective contract, when all profit results from collective labour, the payment of increments comes out of the enterprise's own fund reserved for wages. Moreover, if regional coefficients for wage calculation are applied without limitation, labour productivity increases and, consequently, the state's expenses for attracting additional labour force are reduced.

It should be noted that removal of such limitations already started as an experiment at a number of enterprises under the Ministry of Geology in 1987; the results of the experiment, for example, at the auto-depot "PTO Lenaneftegazgeologija" in the town of Lensk, have clearly demonstrated that the removal of limitations allows for unfettered search and use of each worker's productivity potential. For example, the productivity of workers at the same auto-depot has increased 1.9 times. Note that this was achieved without additional expenditures, it was due only to improved work incentives.

This illustration seems to indicate that existing limitations on increment calculation will slow down the implementation of the principle of self-support and of the new system of payment and

incentives for better work. These limitations should be revoked.

B. Tolstikhin,
Assistant Head of the Main Branch
for Economic Planning,
Ministry of Geology of the USSR
"Let Us Investigate"

It is true that in 1987 a number of industrial geological joint enterprises under the Ministry of Geology of the USSR, including "Lenaneftegazgeologija", carried out an economic experiment with the goal of working out new methods of industrial management by means of the second model of self-support, based on normative distribution of profit.

According to the conditions of the experiment, those joint enterprises which have converted to a self-supporting and self-financing basis have replaced the earlier wages fund and material incentives fund with a labour payment fund formed from profits. This fund went to pay for the workers' labour in accordance with labour legislation. This includes payment of regional coefficients and northern increments, rewards, remunerations, material assistance, and other goals determined by the joint enterprises themselves. In addition, it was decided that all types of earnings, including the principal one, are distributed by taking into account the individual contributions of each member of the collective to the common final result of the work.

The experiment did not stipulate any change of the order, established by the legislation, of

paying regional coefficients and northern increments. At the present time, the Ministry is summing up the preliminary results of the experiment.

In our opinion, the question raised by P. Belotserkovskij deserves to be considered. However, we believe that it would be incorrect to attribute such a drastic increase in productivity exclusively to the changed rules of calculating northern coefficients and increments.

The Ministry of Geology of the USSR, along with other Ministries and Departments, took part in discussions organized by the State Committee on Labour concerning a new concept of territorial regulation by the state of wages and salaries in the national economy. The concept being developed by the Committee presupposes an improvement of regulations governing coefficients and increments, as well as an increase of the portion of the wages to which they apply to 400 roubles, with a subsequent increase of the limit to 500 roubles. In the long run, any fixed limit will be completely revoked.

B. Gavrilov,
Assistant Chairman of the State
Committee on Labour of the USSR
"So Far, the Problem is Becoming More Critical"

The main principles of regional regulation of salaries and wages, developed in the late fifties and early sixties, promoted redistribution of labour resources in the directions necessary for the national economy, assisted with a faster exploitation of developing economic regions, most important national industrial constructions, and new production capacities.

At the same time, in the last 10-15 years the country implemented centralized measures to improve material incentives for workers, including a regular increase in the schedule of wages and salaries. Average salaries of certain categories of managers and professionals, and wages of highly skilled workers (approximately 20-30% of the total number of workers) exceed 300 roubles, the maximum amount to which coefficients and northern increments apply.

Having a limit on the wages and salary to which coefficients and increments apply, reduces the incentive effect of regional payments for the purposes of attracting and retaining highly skilled workers, decreases the advantages in remuneration for this group as well as for front-rank industrial workers, leads to a gradual equalization of wages and salaries between workers employed in regions where coefficients and increments are in effect and workers in analogous jobs in central regions. A transfer of enterprises and organizations to the principle of team contracts in the conditions of self-financing and self-sufficiency makes this problem even more critical.

Therefore, the question raised by B. Belotserkovskij merits attention and, in our opinion, requires an appropriate solution.

At the present time, the State Committee on Labour of the USSR, along with other Ministries and Departments with an interest in this matter, and along with a number of Scientific Research Institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, is preparing proposals for improvement of the system of regional regulation of wages and salaries. In particular,

these proposals consider the option of altering the maximum amount of the wages to which coefficients and northern increments apply.

It should be kept in mind that implementing such measures would require considerable expenditures from the state budget. For this reason, all proposals for improvement of the system of regional regulation of wages and salaries will be considered together with the entire programme for the country's social development during the thirteenth Five-Year Plan and until the year 2005.

Commentary on the discussion
by the Section on Management
and the Economic Apparatus of
Ekonomicheskaja Gazeta

As we see, the necessity for improvement in the mechanism of regional regulation of wages and salaries is admitted by all. And already today, an investigation of effective steps in this direction is under way. It is disconcerting, however, that the programme for restructuring the system of regional regulation of wages and salaries is to be completed only by the year 2005, while the transition of all branches of the national economy to self-financing is to be completed already in 1989 and, therefore, all obstacles on the way to full self-sufficiency must be removed by that time. This is even more so because self-sufficient enterprises do not require subsidies from the state budget but instead pay wages -- including northern regional coefficients -- from their own earned resources.

Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta
No. 24, June 88
Page 8 (full text)

TRANSPORT AIR

Polar Taxi

That is how aviators have dubbed the AN-74. Created by the Antonov Design Bureau, it is excellent at flying in high latitude regions of the Arctic. During the past year the crew of an AN-74, led by USSR honoured Test Pilot V. Tkachenko, set eight world records, one after another. The most impressive of these, for specialists, was attaining an altitude of 11,560 metres and carrying a cargo of 15,256 kilograms.

And then it was time for another take-off from an airport near Moscow. The destination this time was the Far East. The airliner was in the air for eleven hours before landing at the airport of Sovetskaya Gavan, on the shore of the Tatarskii Strait. This flight took place at the beginning of May, at a time when spring in the Far East gives only faint signs of its approach.

Although the day proved to be sunny, as those who participated on the flight recall, a piercing wind all but upended the guests leaving the plane and those who had come to meet them. A considerable number of people turned out to greet the test flight crew that accomplished this record long-distance flight.

No airplane of this class had ever before succeeded in making such a long non-stop flight. But now the difficult night time cross-country flight was over, and applause and friendly 'hurrahs' rang out over the airfield after the successful landing. The congratulations, flowers and handshakes went first to

the courageous crew, headed by USSR honoured Test Pilot Y. Ketov. On the flight, A. Strelnikova, master engineer of the design bureau, also performed the duties of sports commissar. On the return home she spoke with the journalists about some of the special facets of this unique flight.

"The data from this flight," Strelnikova explained, "once the oscillograms have been analyzed and the necessary documentation has been completed, will be sent to the International Aviation Sports Federation for registration as a world record."

This unprecedented flight "in one breath" across the entire country has added another item to the list of major specifications for this craft, which was designed for operation under severe Arctic and Antarctic conditions.

One of the correspondents called attention to the unusual and shiny emblem on the side of the plane.

"This is the emblem of the Transarctic Ski Expedition," explained A. Romanyuk, head of the air expedition. "In February our AN-74 was given the job of servicing a Soviet and Canadian group of skiers."

In April alone the AN-74 flew over 100 hours over the Arctic. It carried the ski enthusiasts to the official start site and then assisted them with information about ice conditions. On more than 30 occasions, with pinpoint accuracy, the crew dropped food and various equipment to the polar marathon participants. It was, by the way, an AN-74 which removed Dmitrii Shparo's group from an ice floe in 1986.

The record cross-country flight to the Far East was, as it turns out, the AN-74' dress rehearsal for flights to the Antarctic.

Gudok

18 June 1988

Page 4 (full text)

The Steel Arteries at Airports

A steel artery seventy kilometres long connects the Angarsk oil refinery with the Irkutsk Airport.

The Irkutsk Airport needed this, so to speak, 'nourishment system' for a long time. The new fuel pipeline is one of the most important steps in the reconstruction begun here.

More than a quarter of the fuel for all civic transportation of the country today is delivered via the main pipelines from oil refineries and oil storage bases.

The single fuel pipeline built last year in the Vorkuta Airport is on a more modest scale. Its length is three kilometres. But it extends from the railroad branch-line to the storage of fuel-libricant materials, and plays a significant role in ensuring regular air transportation.

Also, an inter-storage fuel pipeline was put into operation recently in Karaganda, as well as fuel lines to pre-platform filling stations for fuel trucks in the Penza and Syktyvkar Airports.

If you ask any expert at any fuel-libricant facility in air service, which manner of fuel delivery is the best, the answer you will undoubtedly receive is "a pipe." It reduces waste, saves fuel, is less labour and resources-intensive. It is unfortunate that 'pipes' do not exist everywhere, and not every site is at present suitable for them, but this way of transporting fuel for aircraft is definitely the way of the future.

Vozdushnyi Transport

7 June 1988

Page 1 (abridged)

TRANSPORT RAIL

Great Expectations at Usinsk

A sign hangs from the two-storey train station under construction in Usinsk: "Our city - a leader in the struggle for oil." To be more precise, Usinsk is the leader in the Timan-Pechorsk oil and gas bearing province, the third most important region after the Tyumen' territory and the Prikaspiisk lowland with its famous Tengiz. Otherwise the sign is accurate - the Usinsk station, which is located exactly on the Arctic border, 250 kilometers from the Arctic coast, is the furthestmost point attained by the railway on the Vorkutin section of the Severnaya Zemlya (Northern Land). This part of the railway services the oilmen of the Komi ASSR developing new sites in the Bol'shezemel'skaya Tundra.

Out of the window in the station-master's, N. Uleshov's office, one can see the low-hanging, cloudy sky, a shunting engine and a construction worker wearing a hooded raincoat.

"Yes, the weather here has the disposition of a spoiled woman", jokes Nikolai Ivanovich. "A light rain today, frost tomorrow. Even in springtime."

The oilmen's city of Usinsk, which has sprung up in the tundra at the junction of the Usa and Kolva Rivers, is growing and developing. The station is growing right along with it. This is a remarkable fact, since this is not a common occurrence when a new building goes up. According to N. Uleshov and his assistant L. Yakovleva, the workers are making the building even more solid than

they need to. Although the station is regarded as a category 2 structure, it has evolved into one which meets category 1 requirements. This means that the section can easily handle any volume of freight traffic.

The supervisors particularly stress the importance of accurate information regarding incoming freight. This information is received from Pechora three times a day and makes it possible to shunt the equipment and prepare in advance to receive freight from the plant, which may arrive by one of several routes and be unloaded at numerous points.

"We have no grievances against our clients", says N. Uleshov, "The major recipients have special railway transport units."

For example, just one such small unit processes up to five thousand freight cars each month. The units "Severpromstroya" and "Usinskstroya" are well-equipped. There is, therefore, none of the notorious demurrage of rolling stock on spur tracks.

Usinsk will become the major crude oil station in the Komi ASSR. It already has a first-rate switchyard with eight tracks, a small gravity yard and two shunting engines. In addition to this, the construction of a filling platform connected by a high-capacity pipeline to Kharyage has almost been completed. Everyone is anxiously waiting for work to begin on the oil deposits.

"One may get the impression that we have no problems here, that we are prospering and without a care in the world. This is not the case at all", says N. Uleshov. "People are streaming to the new

project because of the oil sites being developed. Our means are extremely limited. We have discussed this fact on several occasions with the managers of the Vorkutin department and the Northern Land road but to date there have been no improvements."

It is actually very difficult to get to Usinsk by train. Judge for yourselves. Two coaches arrive here daily from Moscow - a sleeping car and a regular coach. Both are full to capacity.

It is difficult to imagine what it is like in the summer. True, they've added on an extra car from Adler, but this is only a drop in the bucket. So, once again, industry comes first and the needs of the people come second. The situation is even harder to comprehend now that the department has become self-supporting. The profit issue is a fundamental one and there are masses of people just waiting to give the railway their money. I would like to believe that this problem will not become one of our permanent ones. The entire existence of polar Usinsk rests on expectations - expectations of bringing in much oil, expectations of big things to come."

Gudok

14 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

Trains Expected To Travel Across Yamal

The builders of the Arctic Labytnangi-Bovanenkovo main rail line have reached an important milestone. The tracklayer has reached the settlement of Yamto, the first station of the new railway.

Behind A. Balazovich's team of track fitters from the "Yamaltransstroi" firm stretches a 90-kilometre railway line, which they completed way ahead of schedule. Transportation engineers are now adopting full profit-and-loss accounting/self management.

This has in fact helped to increase the collective's operating efficiency by 17% since the beginning of the year, to reduce the amount of equipment required and to bring in higher profits than were expected.

Other subdivisions of "Yamaltransstroi" are also working well. The entire firm plans to have completed three years of the Five-Year Plan by the opening day of the XIX All-Union Part conference.

Sotsialisticheskaya

Industriya

11 June 1988

Page 1 (abridged)

TRANSPORT WATER

Anxious Days in the Arctic

Murmansk, 22 June (TASS). The efforts made by three icebreakers, the "Admiral Makarov", the "Ermak" and the nuclear-powered "Arktika", were not enough to clear the heavy ice of the well-known Aionskii ice pack.

The crews on board these ships, after eight days of enormous effort, overcame the ice pressure to ensure a safe passage for the two cargo ships bound for Pevek, which were under their guidance. It was only today the ice situation on the route eased very slightly, and the convoy - the first during the present navigation season - was able to finally move closer to its destination.

Of course other nuclear-powered ships may come to the seamen's aid at any minute. But this will certainly affect the outcome of the whole navigation season. This is why various scenarios are now being considered to resolve the situation so that all of the cargo scheduled to be delivered this year will in fact be delivered as planned.

Izvestiya

23 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

A Competitor Arrives on the Scene

The letter which arrived from Tyumen' was angry and quite well-argued. It was just begging to

be entitled "The Footboard of the Co-operative". It was written by V. Zuev, the head of the shipping division for container and package transport for the Ob-Irtysh steamship line and S. Bondarev, the co-chariman of the co-operative firm "Kruitz" and head dispatcher for the transport service "Sever". It is a gratifying thought that their anger and civic daring are in keeping with the spirit of our time, the spirit of glasnost and democracy.

What are the reasons for their anger? In order to present their case more accurately it would be better to turn to the letter itself.

Prior to 1987, the letter begins, the tourist river routes in the Ob-Irtysh Basin were being worked only by ships which had long ago become obsolete in every respect, and which had difficulty in coping with their workload since they had been built in the early 60's to serve passenger transport lines and were, for the most part, only equipped with 4 or 6-passenger cabins. One cannot speak of first-rate service on ships where passengers have to share bathrooms and which do not even have your basic cinema and solarium.

In 1986, continue B. Zuev and S. Bondarev, the motor ship "Mikhail Svetlov", valued at approximately 15 million roubles, was built in an Austrian shipyard. The Ministry of Inland Water Transport intended the vessel to be used for cruises along the rivers of Western Siberia and it was assigned to the Tyumen' Shipbuilding and Repair Plant (The Ob-Irtysh Steamship Company).

The Ob-Irtysh Steamship Company, having received the ship, worked out a schedule, beginning in 1987, for the vessel to work the most interesting

tourist routes in Western Siberia along the Tura, Tobol, Irtysh, Ob and Toma Rivers, from Tyumen' to Novosibirsk... The Tyumen' Municipal Travel and Excursion Bureau was appointed to be a partner in this venture, which was so badly needed by the country's workers. The Bureau committed itself to producing tourist passes in all regions of the country... But then suddenly, troubles and ill fortune befell the beautiful vessel. The Travel and Excursion Bureau (TEB), because of its negligence, internal confusion and incompetence, was able to organize only three of the six trips planned to Novosibirsk, and those only with difficulty. On board the liner with a passenger capacity of 180 were only 112 tourists for a trip which lost rather than made money. Making the remaining two trips were even fewer vacationers. The Tyumen' Travel and Excursion Bureau paid the steamship company only 240 of the 260 thousand roubles which had been agreed upon and broke off further contractual relations with the Ob-Irtysh Steamship Company regarding this ship.

After providing a detailed account of the sad fate of the cruise up until April of this year, the authors proceeded to the heart of the conflict which had forced them to write the letter.

From their letter it is obvious that under conditions of a completely self-supporting system and the beginning of a new, co-operative form of socialist management, at the regional travel and excursion bureau in Tyumen' a competitor came onto the scene - the co-operative "Kruiz". The creators of "Kruiz", including the inland water transport workers, set about to better the destiny of the luxurious motor ship "Mikhail Svetlov", and to raise the quality of tourist service on the water routes of Western Siberia to a higher level. Taking on the

responsibilities of the Travel and Excursion Bureau, the group committed itself to managing the business in a more organized and competent manner, thus ensuring that the cruiser be fully booked on each trip. In addition to this, the group also undertook to conduct excursions on the liner, and in the spring and fall to use it in Tyumen'. In 1987 the initiative group proposed to increase the operating time of the ship to 240 days and to pay the steamship company 350-400 thousand roubles in rent. And what is more, the group made yet another suggestion: based on this year's trial run, they would rent the "General Karbyshev" and two other motor ships of the "Moskva" type from the steamship company to be used for tourist excursions in the Tyumen' Region.

So, on April, 1988, the letter concludes, by a decision of the Executive Committee of the Municipal Soviet of People's Deputies in Tyumen', based on the leasing of the "Mikhail Svetlov", the co-operative firm "Kruiz" was founded. The steamship company agreed to collaborate with the co-operative firm.

The black clouds which had been gathering over the "Mikhail Svetlov" were carried away by the winds of our time. The new management machine swung into operation. In the words of V. Zuev and S. Bondarev, energetic and competent individuals, both professionally and economically speaking, were selected to work in the co-operative firm, and this is why they, without waiting to officially register the "Kruiz" with the Municipal Executive Committee, set to work tapping yet untouched reserves and finding new ways of perfecting tourist transportation and quality service. Hundreds of citizens reserved places and many organizations were ready to book entire excursions. 1500 passengers were to go on

cruises that year along the rivers of Siberia and approximately 2500 were to use the "Kruiz's" services for short evening outings. The benefits of having such a co-operative firm, from a social point of view, are obvious.

Up to this point not one line in the letter has given rise to any doubts. Everything is clear and convincing, everything makes sense and is supported by references to basic party and government documents and to the concepts of perestroika. And then suddenly, out of the blue comes this, and I quote:

"And then suddenly, after the firm "Kruiz" had already been established, the Ob-Irtysh Steamship Company received instructions from the Minister of Inland Water Transport of the RSFSR, comrade L.V. Bagarov, forbidding the company from collaborating with "Kruiz" without giving any convincing reasons for placing this kind of administrative pressure on the company. The work of "Kruiz" came to an abrupt halt. Work of this spread in Tyumen' and in other cities and the company's telephones began to ring of the wall. The firm's employees returned to work for State institutions.

The steamship company, now in charge together with the Minister, is once again trying to obtain grants from the central boards and other patrons, without much hope of success... Who allowed the Ministry to immobilize State funds?...Why does the self-supporting rouble overshadow the individual in our field and why is it valued more highly than the interests of the workers of this entire country?

The letter goes on:

"Does this mean that the two-year affair with the snow-white liner "Mikhail Svetlov", to which they are presently trying to attach a mooring anchor by turning it into a hotel for the entire navigation period, is a new approach by the administration of the Ministry of Inland Water Transport and the steamship company to further develop cruising?"

These are not pleasant questions and the conclusions drawn are no more pleasant:

"Time is passing and navigation is coming into its own in the Ob-Irtysh Basin, but the final fate of the "Mikhail Svetlov" and of "Kruiz" has not been decided. The attempt to overthrow the monopoly on tourism held by the regional soviets and to create some healthy competition in the area of cruising has not yet succeeded..."

I repeat, the questions and the conclusions are not at all pleasant ones, and, as the saying goes - while God sleeps you never know what the devil will do. It is no coincidence that at his recent meeting in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR, with workers from contract co-operatives of the agricultural-industrial complex, M.S. Gorbachev stressed the following: "People want to strike out along new paths but they meet with a lot of interference and nobody has any faith in them. These are still vestiges of an administrative system which can essentially be described as one which believes in giving orders but which does not believe that the ordinary man of today - the worker, the collective farmer, the specialist - is ready to play an active role and to function independently." There are a great number of real-life situations supporting this statement.

Nevertheless, in the given concrete incident there was no dictatorial command given. There was a desire to study the matter, to perform all of the economic calculations on the spot, to become acquainted with the initiative group, to get some sort of professional information on the co-operative members, and to weigh all of the possible ways in which the vessel could be put to profitable use. With that end in view, the head of the Central Administration of passenger transportation of the Ministry of Inland Water Transport, G.A. Vasil'ev, flew to Tyumen' on the instructions of Minister L.V. Bagarov. He was able to provide some clear answers to the questions posed in the letter.

All of those readers who have faith in the average man, in his personal interest in a matter, his independence, initiative and responsibility, in his sense of civic duty and his civic position, will be happy to learn that the co-operative firm "Kruiz" is alive and well and that, most important of all, it awaits its successors in other regions of the country.

The conflict, which to be more precise should be called a misunderstanding, no longer exists, said Gennadii Aleksandrovich Vasil'ev. The co-operative firm "Kruiz" and the Ministry arrived at a complete mutual understanding once the many figures, facts and conclusions mentioned in the letter were defined more accurately and underwent some economic adjustments.

Thus, we will begin at the very beginning. First of all, the "Mikhail Svetlov" is worth not "approximately 15 million roubles" as was stated in the letter but rather over 18 million roubles. It is the Ministry of Inland Water Transport's most expensive vessel. Three other ships of the same

series, the "Aleksandr Blok", the "Valerii Bryusov" and the "Sergei Esenin" (each of which is worth 15-16 million roubles) are now being put to profitable use for the second year in Moscow. These profits, however, are being generated by transporting foreign tourists. The regular tourist trade is powerless in the fight to make a ship of this caliber profitable. This applies all the more to the "Mikhail Svetlov", which was the latest vessel to be produced in Austria and in whose cost were included all of the riggings of this entire series of ships. The fifth ship in the series, the "Demyan Bednyi", operated by the Lena United Steamship Line incurred a loss of 500 thousand roubles transporting Soviet tourists last year. Therefore, benefiting from Moscow's experience, it was decided that foreign tourists would be taken along the Lena and a contract was signed with Americans for three cruises and with the German Federal Republic for one experimental cruise. The remaining cruises are for Soviet citizens. According to calculations it would appear that the "Demyan Bednyi" will also bring in a profit in 1989.

As for the "Mikhail Svetlov", a reasonable solution has been found at the present time. One third of the liner's passenger seats -60- has been reserved for "Kruiz" operations. For this third of the passenger seats the steamship line receives 100 thousand roubles from "Kruiz" for the season. Contracts have been signed with six central boards for the remaining seats this year. Even if only four of these central boards live up to the agreements, together with the co-operative firm "Kruiz" they will bring the steamship line an income of approximately 600 thousand roubles, as opposed to the 262 thousand which it made previously. This is still far from the yearly cost of maintaining the ship (1,160,000

roubles). Even "Kruiz", despite all of its efforts, will not be able to produce the 1,160,000 roubles. It would be unreal to expect such a thing!

For this reason, the possibility of organizing cruises for foreign tourists in Tyumen' is being considered. Something similar to the system used on the Lena - the liner would be used part of the time to transport foreign tourists along the Tyumen'-Tobol'sk-Surgut-Nizhnevartovsk-Novosibirsk route and the rest of the time it would be reserved for Soviet tourists.

Most important of all, the ship's period of operation should be increased from 120-130 days to 200 days. For this reason the vessel has already been put to work starting on 15 May. It will be used for short excursions until 16 June, at which time the tourist cruises will begin. Beginning on 14 September the liner will once again be doing short excursions. Following this, from 3 until 31 October the ship will serve as a hotel. Thus the "mooring anchor" mentioned by V. Zuev and S. Bondarev in their letter will hardly be thrown by the "Mikhail Svetlov" for the entire extent of the navigation.

So what is the reason for all the fuss? How did the version about the "dictatorial commands" come about?

The "Kruiz" initially proposed to rent the ship and to pay the steamship line 260 thousand roubles, as the Tourism and Excursion Bureau had been doing earlier, explains G. Vasil'ev. Subtract this amount from 1,160,000 and how much are you left with? The steamship line would be losing 9,000,000 roubles. The co-operative would have had to have been supported by a State subsidy. We had to find

other ways to increase the ship's profitability and to make it economically useful, and we did. Now, after performing thorough calculations, the lease-holders themselves admitted that at the present time they have to re-examine the idea of using the 60 passenger seats. The navigation will show both the advantages and the disadvantages to this. In general, however, this form of co-operation holds much promise. The individuals working for "Kruiz" are well-versed in matters of tourism, they show a lot of initiative and know how to service passengers right down to the minutest detail. But for all that, even with renting the entire ship and increasing its operation to 200-220 days per season, the co-operative would still be unable to bring the steamship line more than 400 thousand roubles. In the near future, however, when the ship will be switching to the new system of operating in part with foreign tourists and in part with Soviet, "Kruiz", under its own aegis, will turn the ship into a profitable venture.

This will come about in the near future, not earlier than 1990 when the Tuymen' Regional Executive Committee resolves the issue concerning the organization of foreign tourist routes along the rivers of Western Siberia. Even at present, however, one thing is already clear - a serious competitor for the Regional Soviet of Tourism and Excursions has arrived on the scene. Its arrival serves to confirm new economic relations based on leasing, where operation on a profitable basis can best be realized, and to develop a sense of proprietorship, as well as providing the shortest route to resolving the problem of passenger-related services in the area of inland water transport. A co-operative law was recently passed in order to guarantee the above.

When it came into being, the co-operative firm "Kruiz" infringed upon the tourist monopoly which the regional soviets had held up until then and whose service, as was so graphically described in the letter received by the editorial staff, is often reflected in our passenger's spirits, and, in my personal opinion, in the loss of millions of roubles from the State coffers, since, due to the sluggishness of these soviets, each year many tourist ships in our country leave on trips without displaying the "sold out" sign which would be so beneficial to them.

Bon voyage to the newcomer! May you soon be joined by many more like yourself!

But perhaps there are those of you who hold different opinions and who have different suggestions to offer? Let us hear from you, dear readers, economists, specialists in the area of inland water transport passenger services, future lease-holders and business people.

Vodnyi Transport

31 May 1988

Page 1 (Slightly abridged)

Ships Leave The Production Line

Brand new barges - pushers and refrigerator ships - are rocking in the waters of the Tura River near the building berths at the 60th Anniversary of the USSR Shipbuilding Plant in Tyumen'. The ships were custom-built at the plant for the northerners, at the earliest date possible, and refrigerators were installed in the vessels. The barges can moor at any

pier, deliver vegetables or pick up a load of meat or fish. The first convoy of these "floating refrigerators" is on its way to the consumers.

Izvestiya

8 June 1988

Page 1 (abridged)

Arctic Shipping Season Gets Underway

Following a brief lull due to spring drift ice on the great rivers of Siberia, navigation has once again resumed in the Arctic. The summer working season along the northern sea routes was begun by the motor ship "Noril'sk" which left Murmansk and headed for Dudinka.

According to aerial reconnaissance, ice conditions in the Kara Sea are quite favorable at the present time. The seamen aboard the "Noril'sk", which is fairly well-equipped to break through ice, expect to break through into the mouth of Yenisei Bay. Further along the river, where the drift ice at its worst, they will have to be escorted by the icebreaker "Kapitan Sorokin".

Navigation in the east today is beset with many difficulties. The nuclear-powered "Arktika" which is heading here from Murmansk in order to ensure that ships delivering cargo from the east to the Arctic coast may go about their work without interruption, has now been unsuccessfully trying to break up the Aionskii ice pack in the approaches to the port of Pevek.

How will the "Arktika" cope with guiding supply ships when this herculean vessel is having such difficulty just making its own way through the ice? It would appear that, just like a few years ago, two nuclear-powered ships are needed here. This scenario has been foreseen by the individuals responsible for ice breaking in the Arctic and the nuclear-powered "Sibir" is returning today to its base for preventive maintenance and to replenish its supplies. In mid-June it will once again head along the northern sea route where a third nuclear-powered ship, the "Rossiya" is now ensuring deliveries by supply ships.

The Murmansk steamship line is also preparing to send its icebreakers, which are indispensable for guiding ships through shallow waters, to the northern seas. With all of these joint forces, arctic seamen expect to ensure the delivery of supplies to the inhabitants of the Far North and Siberia.

Sotsialisticheskaya

Industriya

7 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

Caught In A Rigid Framework

Valerii Pavlovich, what advantages have you seen in the transition to self-financing and self-payment? How have they affected the work results of the labour collective of the steamship line?

First of all, I might point out that we've acquired a definite capability for realistic planning of future development with regards to sources of financing. The factor that has impaired the making of annual plans has finally disappeared. Now that norms determine the well-being of the collective in relation to final results, many financing questions have been made simpler. This and other stimulatory factors have led to a taste for initiative and a quest for novel approaches to increasing income.

Overall profits for the steamship line in 1987 grew by 8,460,000 rubles. The greatest impact from implementation of full cost-accountability occurred in those enterprises that showed little profit in the past, such as the ports of Mezen, Naryan-Mar and Onega, which have been freed from paying for basic funds. In one year the dockworkers increased profits by a factor of 2.1, and capital productivity by 5 percent.

Does this mean that the most difficult period is behind you?

To say that would be frivolous. The fact is that we started from an extremely disadvantageous position -- our dock and shore-based facilities and services were outmoded, and the social infrastructure was in a rather neglected state. Our severely deteriorated transport fleet requires a serious overhaul since there have been practically no new ships for the past ten years. This is combined with the fact that there has been no accumulation of amortization monies which might serve as sources of simple reproduction. Under these conditions, expenditures for capital repairs exceeded the amount of new funds coming in. It is essential that this situation be changed.

During the twelfth 5-Year Plan we expect to replace approximately 90 vessels of the transport fleet, and we will require almost a billion rubles. Without help we cannot possibly succeed.

How does it look for development of accountability at the enterprise level?

We feel that cost-accountability must be extended down to each primary labour unit, be it a ship's crew or dockworker's brigade. Otherwise, the relationship between the individual's contribution and the final result from the work of the entire collective will remain an abstract concept, mere starry-eyed idealism.

An interesting proposal has been put forward by seamen of the motor ship "Mekhanik Zheltovskii", which carries cargo on the Arkhangelsk - Dudinka route. They are proposing establishing norms for the ship identical to those which the ministry sets for the steamship line. The idea of 'top to bottom' cost-accountability is finding support and is really encouraging the crew to reduce expenses wherever possible and maximize income.

So one could say that the fleet is having a look at the cost-accountability model. And what improvements are being made in economic relations with superior organizations?

There have been changes in the planning system. The State order has replaced the mass of target indicators coming down from the ministry. For coastal navigation, the State order covers 70 percent of the freight scheduled for delivery this year to regions of the Far North. And for overseas navigation it covers 100 percent, determined by

calculation from a base ['raschetno ot bazy' - meaning unclear (TR.)]. In addition, there are other State orders for freely convertible currency derived from the same overseas transport, and for tonnes of export-import freight, calculated with respect to the tonnage of the fleet and the financial reporting basis.

Any experienced person will understand that State orders of this type do not fit in with our way of working -- they offer no leeway for handling resources and fail to create vertical and horizontal lines of mutual responsibility among all parties. Thus, the real 'search' actually begins after the State order has come down. That is, the search for senders, exporters and importers, who are quite reluctant to enter into direct agreements. Specialization among steamship lines with respect to cargoes and destinations, as approved by the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet (MMF), regulates this process to a certain degree, but results in conflicts between steamship lines, the 'owners' of general contracts, and outsiders. This leads to a disruption of direct mutual responsibility between the steamship line and the owner of the cargo.

At the same time, the rigid framework of an agreement can sometimes reduce effectiveness in the use of the fleet. For example, in an effort to fulfill a direct agreement with the "Eksportles" All-Union Association, the steamship line is sometimes forced to send out ships with incomplete cargoes of lumber.

It's our view that State orders in overseas navigation should be built from the bottom up. Associations of exporters and importers, acting as governmental bodies, issue a State order to a

steamship line to deliver certain cargoes, and the steamship line is required to make the deliveries. The steamship line concludes direct agreements, and on the basis of these, formulates plans with an indication of the sectors involved. It then issues a summary State order in currency and tonnage to the ministry. For the remaining available tonnage, the MMF assigns a goal to the steamship line expressed in currency, with specific norms for contributions to the currency fund of the steamship line.

The system of evaluation indicators affecting bonuses is, in our view, inadequate. In circumstances where there are stable norms governing the division of the final results into a government share and a share for the collective, the collective has the right to dispose of its earnings itself. But the system of artificially created target indicators leads to attempts to adopt overdone plans at the beginning of the year so as not to be left without any bonuses. Why is it that the issue of awarding bonuses to first directors is decided by a superior organization instead of by, say, the labour collective council?

What you've been saying concerns relations with the ministry, but how are relations with local organs under the new conditions?

Alas, here 'perestroika' is proceeding slowly. It's the usual situation: Soviet and Party organs issue a decision to allocate equipment and people for, say, gathering the harvest or working on the land. Because we appreciate the need for this type of work, the steamship line takes steps to participate. But then the finance inspector comes along, from the very same local organs, and analyzes

our finances. He finds unplanned expenditures and levies them into the budget. The final result is that we suffer a double loss.

We are for resource co-operation, but this needs to be carried out in a business-like fashion, without arm-twisting. Sponsorships, as well as expenditures for public services and amenities, need to be financed from existing contributions to the union budget. In other words, under genuine cost-accountability, relations should be built exclusively on an economic basis.

Vodnyi Transport

11 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

A First In The History of Navigation

For the first time in the history of operations on the Arctic route Murmansk - Dudinka, the icebreaker "Kapitan Sorokin" has succeeded in escorting the motorship "Norilsk" along the Enisei River directly in the face of powerful ice drifting and flooding. After reaching clear water, the ship continued upstream alone to its port of destination. The crew of an MI-2 helicopter (Captain V. Kolesnik and Engineer-Hydrologist A. Dyukov) provided the icebreaker crew with valuable assistance in determining the speed of the on-coming floodwaters, the direction of ice movements, and tactics for maneuvering.

Vodnyi Transport

21 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

Bound For The Nadym River

River transport workers of the Ob'-Irtys' Steamship Line have delivered the first load of cargo to the Nadym River in the Arctic. Crews of the tugboats OT-2111, OT-2030 and OTA-922 brought pipes, construction materials and equipment to the northern residents. Other ships loaded with cargo from Salekhard, Tobolsk, Omsk and Surgut are currently en route to the Nadym. In June alone, Nadym dockworkers are due to unload more than 100,000 tonnes of domestic freight. Workers in the river transport, railroad and road transport sectors of the Nadym Transport Centre are co-ordinating their efforts by means of a single work schedule.

Vodnyi Transport

18 June 1988

Page 1 (full text)

Caravans Leave For The East

A caravan of three ships, the first this year, has left on a difficult voyage through the ice to pick up timber at Igarka. At Mys Zhelaniya, on the northern tip of Novaya Zemlya, they were met by the nuclear-powered icebreaker "Sibir", which is now escorting them.

Mid-June is the traditional start of summer navigation on all parts of the Northern Sea Route. So it is not surprising that, immediately after the caravan left, another one is preparing to head east, carrying cargo for the inhabitants of Tiksi. This caravan will be escorted through the ice by the nuclear-powered "Rossiya". In the shallow waters off

the coast of Eastern Siberia a whole group of diesel icebreakers of the Murmansk Steamship Line, which have just entered service in the Arctic, will join in the work.

As your TASS correspondent was informed at the Icebreaker Administration of the Murmansk Steamship Line, the situation on the Northern Sea Route is very difficult at the moment, especially in the eastern sector. The nuclear-powered "Arktika" and two diesel icebreakers of the Far Eastern Steamship Line have been virtually "treading water" for ten days attempting to escort two transports carrying cargo for Pevek through the Aion Ice Mass. The icebreakers have been able only to protect the transports. But cutting a path through the hard-packed ice has not been possible, even with the combined efforts of the three icebreakers. The only hope now is for a change in the wind, which might relieve the situation a little so that the ships can escape their icy prison.

Knowing how difficult conditions are this year for summer navigation, the dock and railway workers of the Trans-Polar region are doing everything possible when servicing the ships in port to help the seamen save time.

Vodnyi Transport
25 June 1988
Page 1 (full text)

New Kid In the Steamship Fleet

The latest tanker joining the oil-tanker fleet of the Primore Maritime Steamship Line is named

for a mining city. With its mere 2000 tonne capacity, the "Partizansk" is the first in a series of 'youngsters' of an improved ice class with an unlimited range of navigation. In the course of the current 5-Year Plan, ships of this type will replace the new antiquated tankers which have been ferrying oil from the large ocean transports to shore along the eastern Sector of the Arctic. The steamship line will receive nine such tankers from now to the end of the current 5-Year Plan.

Sovetskaya Rossiya

21 June 1988

Page 2 (full text)

Amidst the Ice of Indifference

In the annals of Arctic navigation, nuclear ice-breakers opened a new page. A special line on this page belongs to the cargo-ship "Kapitan Myshevskiy", which, assisted by the nuclear ice-breaker "Sibir", completed a passage through the high latitudes 10 years ago. Operations like this not only confirmed the possibility of year-round navigation, which is extremely important for the development of the Far North regions, but also brought to light certain shortcomings of the current generation of nuclear ice-breakers which, unfortunately, are unable to guarantee safe passage of ship convoys in extreme conditions.

At least ten years ago it became clear that there was a need for more powerful ice-breakers, capable of a higher degree of penetration. Of course, the construction of such ice-breakers will cost more. But this should be accepted, keeping in

mind higher profits for the national economy, rather than short-term bureaucratic economizing. So far, it seems, the latter receives the most attention. We faced a similar situation earlier, when discussing the problems of constructing "Arktika"-type ice-breakers. Manipulating figures, some experts arrogantly and categorically rejected the very expediency of constructing this type of vessel. Later events refuted these opponents, but valuable time was lost. Because of this, the process of developing northern territories went on slower than it could have.

With the launching of second-generation nuclear ice-breakers "Arktika" and "Sibir", the navigation period in Dudinka was lengthened, smooth functioning of the Noril'sk mining and metallurgical complex was assured. Winter passages to Yamal through coastal ice have considerably speeded up the industrial development of this most important oil and gas field region. Expenditures for the construction of a number of nuclear ships were justified many times over.

'Economic benefits' is a convincing argument today. Nevertheless, as soon as the question was raised regarding the development of third-generation nuclear ice-breakers, without which safe year-round arctic navigation cannot be organized, active resistance began again. The reasons are the same: the high cost of vessels. The argument, we think, is unsound, and it is time to cut short the unduly prolonged debate.

If reducing the cost of nuclear-powered vessels is really of importance, the source of reduction should be looked for in another direction. First, methods must be found to drastically shorten

the period on the ways and post-construction in the shipyard, on the basis of the module principle of construction, outfitting the ship's body with the maximum volume of equipment while still on land. Such technology is not new in ship-building. And secondly, there is another principal problem that should be addressed with care and responsibility. What is this problem essentially?

The modern nuclear ice-breakers with which we have worked combine state-of-the-art engineering equipment with outdated machinery; the newest automation simply cannot be used in the same 'harness' with the old and inferior units. For example, a first-class nuclear reactor is manned by as few as nine specialists, while the remaining systems of the power plant are supervised by around a hundred people. Let us estimate the cost of such wastefulness. The maintenance of one crew member over the lifetime of an ice-breaker, i.e., about 25 years, costs 300,000 roubles. To reduce the size of the crew considerably is quite possible, if the ship is equipped with new reliable machinery. But the machinery is not all.

Conservatism, unwillingness to understand the real problems of nuclear ice-breaking fleet development, and even direct opposition to innovations manifest themselves in different ways. We will cite only one fact. The process of implementing the so-called washing mechanism for the ship's body was stretched out over ten years. It was used only for the ice-breaker "Rossiya" while it could have been already used for "Arktika" and "Sibir'". The most unsightly side of this story is that those who most vehemently opposed this progressive idea yesterday, today pretend to be the authors of this innovation.

The problem of inertia is too obvious to merit discussion. Inertia is displayed by shipbuilders, metallurgists and mechanical engineers when it comes to decisions of principal importance for the construction of the next generation of nuclear ice-breakers.

Aboard nuclear titan ships, we fought through heavy ice-fields, first in the world reached the North Pole. We are used to difficulties. But to break the ice of indifference and bureaucratic evasions has turned out to be much more difficult, even though common sense and the interests of the economy dictate there is an imperative need to do so.

Pravda

28 May 1988

Page 1 (slightly abridged)

Information: Along the Ice Route

The first convoy with superblocks has left Salekhard bound for Yamburg along the canal built through the ice in the Ob'Inlet. The eight large-scale shops for the Yamburg gas refinery plant are being transported by tow-ships MB-1201, OTA-992, OT-2021. The final stage of the passage of this unusual freight is extremely difficult: the hummock ice-fields and northern winds are obstacles along the route. The tow-ship crews are helped through the difficult stretches by the ice-breakers "Kapitan Jevdokimov", "Kapitan Moshkin" and "Kapitan Chudinov". While the first ships are making their way to the moorings at Yamburg, the second convoy

with superblocks is approaching Salekhard, also on its way to Yamburg.

Vodnyi Transport
14 June 1988
Page 1 (full text)

The problem of... with superblocks... its way to Yamburg... shipbuilders, metallurgists and mechanical engineers... when it comes to... importance... for the construction of... generation of... nuclear ice-breakers...

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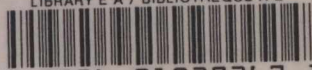
Pravda
28 May 1968
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