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

DECEMBER 1990

External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

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As a result of financial restraint measures and resource cutbacks within the Department, INI will no longer publish the summary "Extracts from the Soviet Press on the Soviet North and the Antarctic. Should the situation improve allowing publication of the summary to be resumed in the future, you will be advised.

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Icebreaker Conducts Seismic Research
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MISCELLANEOUS

The icebreaker "Kapitan Sorokin" of the Murmansk Steamship Line has begun refitting in registry Shpitsbergen Archipelago. The ship is scheduled to carry out an 8-day program of seismic research on the ice-covered continental shelf. This is the first time that this work has been performed by Soviet icebreaker, and the work is very promising since a large part of the shelf has been studied very little.

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But while the voyage is important from a scientific point of view for the specialists, for the sailors themselves this unusual line of work represents a new source of revenues, especially of hard currency. As N. Kiyoshchinskii, head of the Icebreaker Fleet and Arctic Operations Service, explained, the steamship line decided to accept responsibility for half the cost of the voyage in order to be a full-fledged participant in the research program. The other four days will be paid for by the organizers of the program, which include the Norwegian joint-stock company "Geko", the German company "Tissen Nordseeverke", the scientific production corporation "Sevaergeologiya", and other Soviet organizations.

The bow section of the icebreaker was replaced during work in the German shipyards, and now the new lines of the ship's hull permit it to cut a cleaner path through the ice. It should be pointed out that the Norwegian firm installed modern seismic equipment on the icebreaker which is so high-tech that, to put it bluntly, is not permitted on ships sailing under the Soviet flag. But the Norwegians' interest in the "Kapitan Sorokin" was so great that they obtained permission, despite the ban. Nonetheless, a special foreign representative also accompanied this unique equipment on the voyage in the ice, and when the voyage is complete the equipment will be taken to the port of Birkenes. But in the future, if it is needed, the equipment can be installed on the icebreaker at any time.

It should also be said that, if this measure is successful, the joint stock company "Geko" will have the opportunity, along with its partners, to conduct similar research in so-called third countries as well where the demand for such operations is great.

ARCTIC RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Icebreaker Conducts Seismic Research on Continental Shelf

The icebreaker "Kapitan Sorokin" of the Murmansk Steamship Line has begun a not altogether common journey. Immediately following refitting in the German port of Emden and the return to its port of registry in Murmansk, the ship was sent off to the islands of the Shpitsbergen Archipelago. The ship is scheduled to carry out an 8-day program of seismic research on the ice-covered continental shelf. This is the first time that this work has been performed by Soviet icebreaker, and the work is very promising since a large part of the shelf has been studied very little.

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Polar Ice Stations Receive Cargo

Once again, the airport of Srednii Island (Sedov Archipelago, Severnaya Zemlya) has been selected as the base for the Il-76TD airplane of GosNII GA (State Scientific Research Institute of Civil Aviation). The airplane is scheduled to land cargo for geologists and Arctic specialists of the two Soviet drifting stations SP-30 and SP-31.

The first flight was to the drifting stations, one of which - the SP-31 - is currently located 200 kilometres off the shores of Alaska. The SP-30 is due to receive general cargo, including barrels of solar oil - twenty-four platforms in all, each holding four barrels. In addition, parachutes were used to drop fresh vegetables, parcels from home and mail to the polar specialists of both drifting stations, including six months worth of newspapers and magazines.

It should be emphasized that the cargo drop was carried out by means of parachutes in Arctic night condition onto sites marked out by fires lit by station team members, and all of the drops were successful.

On its second flight, the Il-76TD landed cargo on Bolshevik Island requested by geologists. Four parachutists were also landed here, and their job for the next month and a half is to build a landing strip to accommodate heavy cargo planes, which will be bringing in heavy bulldozers for the geologists on the island.

Preparation and dropping of the cargo was successfully handled, as always, by associates of the "Polyus" Centre for Aeroparachute Expeditionary Operations, of the USSR Goskomgidromet (State Committee on Hydrometeorology), under the leadership of Petr Zadirov. The night jumps were done by associates of the same centre: S. Raikhin, S. Khamidulin, S. Antonov and A. Kachan. According to the latest radiograms received, P. Zadirov reported that the work on Bolshevik Island was proceeding according to schedule and that the airstrip would be ready to receive aircraft by the middle of December.

It should also be said that if this measure is successful, the joint stock company "Geko" will have the opportunity, along with its partners, to conduct similar research in so-called third countries as well where the demand for such operations is great.

ENVIRONMENT

Novaya Zemlya Nuclear Test Leaves
Radioactive Cloud

December 4, 1988. After a scheduled nuclear test on Novaya Zemlya two nuclear icebreakers sailed into a radioactive cloud. A radiation alert was sounded on the "Arktika", which was on its way from the Straits of Karskie Vorota to the Yamal Peninsula...

"A debate has developed in the press about the next nuclear test on Novaya Zemlya. On the one hand, people are trying to console us: 'The explosion poses no health risks,' they say. On the other hand, there is a strong wave of protests. The various soviets keep receiving telegrams addressed to the government. The "Greens" and the public in the Scandinavian countries are outraged. The future looks frightening. Whom can we believe? What kind of consequences can we expect from these explosions?"

L. Belyaeva, mother of
two children,
Murmansk

Our newspaper has previously reported on the reaction to the October 24 explosion of a nuclear device on Novaya Zemlya (numbers 128, 132). But the question raised in the readers' letter goes beyond the scope of the October incident, and the answer to it clearly must be sought within the context of the country's overall policy on nuclear testing. Our correspondent B. Blinov met with Andrei Alekseevich Zolotkov, USSR People's Deputy and senior engineer of the radiation safety service with the Murmansk Steamship Line. In the course of his official and private duties Mr. Zolotkov has long studied all of the issues surrounding nuclear testing and atomic energy. He participated in the much-talked-about voyage to Novaya Zemlya by the international environmental organization Greenpeace shortly before the last test. We think his comments will do much to clarify the situation both before and after the "silent" explosion.

"In my opinion, the question today concerning the consequences of the nuclear explosions at the Novaya Zemlya testing ground impinges on the problem of informing society about underground nuclear testing. As long as we do not have reliable information it is difficult to come up with any kind of predictions. Unfortunately, the shortage of this information is obvious, despite the grand claims for openness and glasnost. I'll give you an example from my own experience as a deputy to demonstrate how far apart word and deed are with our government.

"During the second congress of People's Deputies of the USSR, after the meeting with the Council of Ministers, we hoped that things would change for the better. The minutes of the meeting contained the following words: 'That it would be advisable to have the participation of scientists, deputies and representatives of the public in measuring radiation conditions during nuclear testing.' And in fact, in May of this year, I was given the opportunity, together with a group headed by I. Belousov, the deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, to visit the southern site of the Novaya Zemlya nuclear test range. After this trip I noticed how much easier it was to talk to people on the basis of personal impressions without having to rely on published sources, which are, principally foreign sources. Moreover, the openness with which military people spoke increased my trust in them. Unfortunately, this trust has started to dwindle since I learned about the upcoming explosion on the program 'Vremya'.

"Of course, security measures are taken when these explosions occur. The military people working at the testing grounds are not out to destroy themselves. I'm sure there haven't been any serious incidents during underground tests, but this doesn't mean there haven't been any consequences. Here's an example. The blast that occurred on December 4, 1988, was called a 'clean explosion' (since the preceding one in 1987 had been accompanied by radioactive fallout that set off protests in the countries of Northern Europe). This time everything supposedly went well, although two nuclear icebreakers in the vicinity of Novaya Zemlya sailed into a radioactive cloud, and this has been documented. On board the "Arktika", which was underway from the Straits of Karskie Vorota to the Yamal Peninsula, a radiation alert was in effect for several hours. Fortunately, no further measures were necessary since radioactive gases have a short half-life.

"This incident makes one think. Nuclear explosions are conducted according to the weather forecast: there must be a steady southerly wind so that potential emissions are carried into the atmosphere and, above all, do not reach the mainland. But the incident involving the nuclear icebreaker indicates that the wind was blowing in the ship's direction.

"Now, let's go back to events of many years ago before the 1963 agreement that prohibited all nuclear tests except underground ones. We know that up until 1963 extremely powerful atmospheric nuclear tests of

30 to 58 megatons were conducted on Novaya Zemlya, and they could not have been without consequences. The military doesn't hide the fact that there are contaminated zones on Novaya Zemlya, but there's no precise map showing this contamination, or if there is, then it's being kept top secret. I feel strongly that the public should know this information.

"In short, I don't believe that all of this activity is perfectly safe. The question should probably be put this way: do the benefits outweigh the harm? The benefits are essentially for military purposes: the military makes progress in perfecting its weapons. But the harm still exists, however much it is concealed. First of all, there are the seismic waves (this primarily concerns the Semipalatinsk test range). Secondly, no one has proven that the radioactivity that remains in the underground blast chambers will not one day leak through cracks into the environment. If we had access to complete data (on environmental aspects, of course, not military aspects) then the benefits and the harm could at least be compared in general terms.

"Up to now everyone has pointed to the necessity of maintaining military parity, but no one is willing to say openly - even at a closed session of parliament - where we lag behind. Is it the reliability of nuclear weapons that is being tested or are they being improved? There are so many problems that need to be discussed at sessions of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Committee on Defense and National Security! The Americans make public how much a nuclear blast costs and how much money has been allocated for these purposes for the following year. We know nothing. All we know is a mystical figure of 70 some odd billion roubles which is growing more suspect every day.

"If we had the necessary information, then there would probably be less reason for protest. In the meantime, everyone constructs his own theories. Olzhas Suleimenov in an article in Izvestiya analyzes the reduction in the number of our underground nuclear tests and the reaction of the Americans. This reduction prompted them to reduce the number of their own blasts. Perhaps it would be worth holding off on our October explosion until the upcoming talks in January 1991.

"It is my deep conviction that all questions concerning new tests, the development of atomic energy and the safe storage of radioactive wastes should be discussed openly. Otherwise, we will quickly encounter resistance wherever these activities are being organized. The Murmansk Steamship Lines will refuse to transport freight to the testing ground on Novaya Zemlya. And this half-glasnost we have today, in addition to the other harm it is causing, is creating a mistrust in tomorrow that one can hear in the reader's letter."

Vodnyi Transport

11 December 1990

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Murmansk: Safety of Radioactive Waste Storage

It seems that, in the aftermath of the wave of protest against construction of a temporary storage depot for spent nuclear fuel, the public in Murmansk has come to a consensus, as it is now fashionable to say. By decision of the Oblast Council of People's Deputies they created an independent interagency commission to conduct expert examinations of installations for radiation safety. For six months specialists and deputies and representatives of the public studied in detail various projects, technical solutions and prospects for burying wastes at the "Atomflot" RTE. And a special expert environmental review was conducted to determine the advisability of continuing construction of the temporary storage site. One of the chief opponents was invited to participate in this work - V. Perovskii, a leading expert from one of the principal scientific research institutes of the Ministry of Atomic Energy and Industry, and a member of the USSR Nuclear Society. It was Perovskii's article in the oblast newspaper Polyarnaya Pravda that set off the storm of protests. Then, three days before an affirmative decision was to be issued on the advisability of continuing the construction, events took an unforeseeable turn. A session of the Leninskii Raion Soviet of Murmansk adopted a categorical demand: stop the construction!

They either forgot or did not wish to invite specialists to this session. Only two members of the commission, V. Garin and Yu. Maevskii, fisherman by profession (a ship's captain and boatswain) attended the session without notifying their fellow commission members and levelled the full fury of their protests at the raion deputies. And passions got out of control... The above-named commission members could hardly find time to participate in the businesslike discussion of the review committee's findings that went on for an entire week. They appeared from time to time for an hour or two and, to the embarrassment of those present, asked questions such as how the nuclear fuel is passed through the pipes - demonstrating a complete lack of understanding of the issue - and then disappeared. One need only add that, as serious an issued as radiation safety is, even it can be turned into a reckless game...

Clearly, there can be some doubt about the legitimacy of the decision to ban construction. First of all, the land on which the "Atomflot" RET is located is not under the jurisdiction of the raion soviet but belongs to the Northern Fleet. Secondly, the deputies of the oblast soviet brought up the following point: they had proceeded calmly, they had given independent experts an opportunity to participate in a serious way in the debate. (It should be pointed out, however, that their deliberations did not include representatives of either Minmorflot (Ministry of the Maritime Fleet), the steamship line or even of the RTE base itself.) Finally, in the process of study, only a single alternative could not be found: transfer the base to the "Nerpa" ship

repair plant or somewhere even further. Given the current circumstances, none of the leaders of the protest has been able to put forward other acceptable, well-founded alternatives for the fate of the temporary storage site. Even the chief, and most importantly, expert opponent V. Perovskii staged categorically after the analysis had been completed: "...to refuse today too build the storage site at the 'Atomflot' RTE would be suicide. The existing technology for charge replacement on nuclear powered ships of the Murmansk Maritime Steamship Line is sufficiently safe and is not having an environmental impact."

In reading the materials of the expert review and the minutes of the commission's working sessions, one thought stayed with me: "If the raion people's deputies were so worried, wouldn't it have been a good idea for them to have visited 'Atomflot' at least once and seen with their own eyes the subject of the dispute? Then they would have understood at the same time what the consequences of a hasty decision might be." After all, the ban will merely bring new worries and problems for both the city and the economy of the oblast, and of the country.

Here is the chain of events that would be unleashed. If the shore storage site is not approved by 1993, the storage capacity of service ships will have been exhausted. And this means that all of the navigational measures taken to enhance the safety of radioactive waste storage on the water, as prescribed by the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet, will cease to meet the actual degree of risk. Today the "Lepse", its radioactive waste storage capacity exhausted, has been secured beyond Cape Pinagorii to guard against an accidental collision with passing ships. Currently active storage ships, which by 1993 will be full, cannot be hidden away in the same way. What's more, all nuclear powered ships will have to be left at their moorings. It will be simply impossible to recharge their reactors since there will be no place to put the spent fuel. The nuclear fleet will come to a halt, and the icy Northern Sea Route will be virtually dead. How the residents of the country's Arctic fringe will survive without the cargo that travels this route, God only knows. And the risk of accidents among the ships laden with nuclear wastes and riding the unstable waves of the gulf will not be eliminated but will increase, and our northern economy will be fundamentally undermined.

If the deputies were to visit the base they would discover something else as well. The "Atomflot" RTE already has an onshore storage site for radioactive wastes: solid wastes, such as discarded equipment from reactors and nuclear installations, resin residues, ... But to call this a storage site is only half the story. It is a very complex and advanced facility at which the shield housing of a nuclear reactor can be replaced. Here, in a special furnace that is the workers' pride and the very latest word in advanced technology, the wastes that are the most difficult to recycle are converted to ash and sealed in containers.

This storage site has been in existence for five years without provoking any protest. The Goskomgidromet commission, following a thorough verification, reported that everything was in order. So what is the fuss all about? It seems it is possible to store radioactive wastes on shore reliably.

The "discovery" is proof, once again, that the hullabaloo around construction of a new storage site does not correspond to its actual threat to the residents of the city. People's anxiety about the future, in and of itself, is understandable and justified. It is the result of a rise in public awareness, which demands that all of the curtains of secrecy be removed from around the phenomena that cause people concern. And it is a good thing that we are no longer accepting everything uncritically. Without the upsurge in public concern about the present and future, the secrets of the "Atomflot" RTE would have remained locked behind a wall of secrecy. Public vigilance has already had an impact. The independent commission, having given an overall approval to continue construction, justifiably raised the question of conducting additional calculations regarding seismic safety and the effects of shock waves in the event of an explosion. The commission affirmed the need to continue work on creating a regional storage site and then a permanent burial ground for radioactive wastes. It is true that, in the case of something like atomic energy, additional insurance can only be a plus. But we mustn't throw the baby out with the bath water!

People's deputies should go and visit the base which Services the atomic fleet. Up to now, when I've gone there, the only people going along were school children...

Vodnyi Transport
15 December 1990
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Northern Salmon Sport Fishing for Foreigners

The compulsion to sell anything to get a hundred dollars has driven "business people" from the Kola Peninsula abroad. A delegation of their representatives, headed by deputy chairman of the Oblast Council of People's Deputies N. Voloshinov, is proposing to grant a contract giving it the exclusive right to organize sport fishing for northern salmon on the protected Ponoï River by foreign tourists.

This story of buying and selling salmon resources on the largest and cleanest river of the Kola Peninsula is not new. At the beginning of this summer a business group - the Oblast Agro-industrial union Oblagropromsoyuz, the Kola Regional Association for Commercial Cooperation with Foreign Countries, the Leningrad Civil Aviation Administration, and the "Murmanrybvod" (Murmansk Fisheries Administration) requested the rural soviets of the river villages Krasnoshchel'ye and Kanevka to allocate a section on the river for the purpose of organizing sport fishing.

The village assemblies' decision was unequivocal: no sections would be granted. The waters of the Ponoï are a state fishing preserve.

But in asking the villagers' permission, the business people were merely being devious. The Agropromsoyuz and its collaborators had already concluded an agreement with a Finnish tourist firm to develop sport fishing for foreigners on the Ponoï. Among those who signed the agreement, as it turned out, was K. Budanov, head of the "Murmanrybvod" Administration, the chief protector of salmon rivers and the poacher's chief "enemy". But it was different with his subordinates - the fishery inspectors. When they discovered the first tourist camp and its eight occupants (of which only one was a foreign tourist, the others being residents of Leningrad), they filed a report charging them with cutting thirty trees, storing illegal fishing equipment and hunting firearms on the preserve, and being in possession of freshly caught and cleaned salmon.

A scandal broke out. The oblast executive committee that had earlier taken the decision about the preserve got involved in the matter. And what happened? They decided to make an exception and allow the Agropromsoyuz to keep the tourist camp on the Ponoï until the end of the contract with the Finnish firm.

From early June to mid-September foreign tourists "vacationed" on the shores of the northern river. Afterwards, nobody calculated the damage they had done to the preserve. Instead, the profits were divided up among each of the partners in this illegal venture, to each according to his contribution. The Leningrad Civil Aviation Administration received \$18,000 through its Murmansk Air detachment. Ten thousand dollars went to the local "Pemyat Lenina" Sovkhoz, the representative of the Ablagropromsoyuz. For its "non-interference" 400 dollars befell the coffers of the Lovozerskii Raion Executive Committee. The firm paid \$2,000 to the "Murmanrybvod" Administration, and \$200 to the Kola Regional Association.

And now, there's a new contract. This time with the American-Finnish company "G. Loomis Outdoor Adventures Inc." Under the terms of the contract the company would have exclusive rights to sell

licence and direct groups of foreign tourists for sport fishing on the Ponoï River in the Lovozerskii Raion Executive Committee. The firm paid \$2,000 to the "Murmanrybvod" Administration, and \$200 to the Kola Regional Association.

And now, there's a new contact. This time with the American-Finnish company "G. Loomis Outdoor Adventures Inc." Under the terms of the contract the company would have exclusive rights to sell licences and direct groups of foreign tourists for sport fishing on the Ponoï River in the Lovozerskii Raion for a period of five years - from 1991 to 1995. And who are our merchants? The eleven-member delegation, whose trip is being paid for by the American company, includes S. Plyukhin, general director of the Kolar Regional Association; V. Indusov, a representative of the Leningad Civil Aviation Administration; K. Budanov, head of the "Murmanrybvod" Administration; and V. Aranovskii, chairman of the Lovozerskii Raion Soviet, among others. The only ones missing are representatives of Agropromsoyuz, who have been elbowed out of the dollar pie this time round. The principal vendor of the river is the Kola Regional Association, which has absolutely no legal right to conduct such business.

The most surprising aspect of this story is that the affair is being concealed under the name of the Oblast Council of People's Deputies. And this is despite the warning which A. Sorokin, deputy director of the Polar Institute of Marine Fisheries and Oceanography issued to the oblast executive committee.

It should only be added that the residents of the oblast, in granting a concession to foreign tourists, are not receiving anything in return for themselves - neither products nor goods. Where the dollar are going that are being earned in this affair is a commercial "secret" of the organizations into whose bank accounts the stream of foreign currency is flowing.

Pravda

16 December 1990

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OIL AND GAS

More Fuel Shortage in Tyumen

By now everyone has heard about the fuel shortage at Aeroflot. And people are astounded: how is it possible that one of the richest

countries in terms of oil reserves has suddenly been stricken with such a famine in fuel and lubricants, and especially kerosene, the principal form of aviation fuel. Candidate of Economic Sciences V. Pushkarev, with whom our correspondent spoke, shares his thoughts about the crisis in the area of our economic life.

Q. "Some information suggests that oil production in the Tyumen region will decline by a factor of two by the year 2000, and that no other oil patches comparable to those in the Tyumen region have been found. It would appear that the golden age of Tyumen oil is a thing of the past. What can the Tyumen northland expect for the near future?"

A. "Not much that's good, to judge from all indications. Just maintaining the production of hydrocarbons at current levels - not to mention increasing the volume - demands a sharp increase in capital investment, but as everyone knows there isn't anything to invest. There is a real spectre of unemployment hanging over the oil cities and towns of the North."

Q. "So the situation even today in the Tyumen north is rife with social tension. And one probably shouldn't dismiss the threats of strikes either..."

A. "It goes without saying that the social situation is far from rosy. The once mighty flow of oil is dwindling before our eyes. Just last year the level hit a ten-year low, and this year the amount of oil recovered has dropped by another five percent (approximately 30 million tonnes of oil)."

Q. "But these problems didn't just start yesterday..."

A. "For a long time we've been boasting about our planned economy apparatus, but in fact we couldn't see ten years ahead. We stubbornly lived one day at a time and didn't give the future a single thought. And here's the result. Fifteen years ago the oil specialists and the geologists were warning the economists about the impending crisis in the sector.

"The other major oversight was the fact that we were totally ignoring the interests of those by whose labour the oil wealth was being harvested. Over the past twenty years or more our country has taken in more than 300 billion roubles in hard currency from the export of oil, petroleum products and natural gas - over 150 billion roubles of this coming from the West Siberian Oil and Gas Complex. And what is most shocking is the following fact: over the same period of time the country spent approximately the same amount on the import of foodstuffs - billions simply eaten up, so to speak. And approximately another 50 billion went to purchase pipes and equipment designed to pump oil and gas to other countries.

"What's more, to make the picture still clearer, I'd like to cite some glaring figures. Nearly 130 billion in capital investment was spent to expand oil and gas production. And a little more than 10 billion roubles were directed at construction of housing and institutions, the so-called 'social and cultural amenities'. Notice the difference? From 1976 to 1989, there were 642 square metres of housing built per 100 capita increase in population on average in the republic, only 147 square metres were built in the northern part of the Western Siberia. Quite a difference!

"It's been estimated that one out of five residents of the Tyumen North lives in a dormitory, a hut or temporary housing. People ask what incentive can be offered to attract people to come live in the North? How do we keep them there? It's very simple: this has always been done by paying high salaries. But what's happening today? Of what use is high pay if there's nothing to buy with it? Only 34 kopeks of every rouble earned goes for goods and services in the North. This is why 80, and sometimes 90, out of every 100 people who move to the Tyumen region move out again. The region is a kind of gigantic turnstile. You can easily imagine what kind of results, what kind of consequences this sort of turnover represents."

"Is there a way out of this situation?"

"The way I look at it today, I think the biggest blows can be cushioned. And to do so, I feel it's absolutely essential that enterprises of the oil and gas industry not be excluded, but included in the market sphere. Fuel prices will go up, you say? But the government can regulate the prices by use of economic levers.

"Only in this way is it possible to introduce a competitive mechanism, which will also regulate the price of fuel and help keep price increases down. In this way the crisis could be overcome, and maybe the problem with aviation fuel could be solved as well. But this requires time, of course."

Vozdushnyi Transport

22 December 1990

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SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES

The Saami: Native Traditions Revived

"Saamio," a word that almost sings. The Saami, or as they used to be called, 'Lopari' or Lapps, have long inhabited the Kola Peninsula, northern Finland, Sweden and Norway. There was a time when they were

driven out of their native regions along with other northern ethnic minorities such as the Vepsy and the Izhortsy. For a long time, speaking in one's native tongue even in the family was condemned. At census time most northern ethnic peoples preferred to call themselves Russian. There were fewer problems that way.

Today, much is returning to normal. Many nationalities are breathing easier and are turning back to their roots and origins. Lena Suvorova from the Kola boarding School not far from Murmansk happily wears her national costume - the "shamshur". It already comes naturally to her and to the young people of her age.

In 1986 when Moscow, Kiev and other centres had not decided on organizing celebrations honouring Slavonic culture and writing, Murmansk took the initiative. To commemorate this event a statue of Cyril and Methodius, the founders of Slavonic writing, now stands in the city.

Inspired by Murmansk's example, other celebrations followed. In the remote settlement of Lovozero there were festivals of the Komi and Saami languages. A Saami language primer has already been published to aid future teachers of Saami villages who are currently being trained at the Murmansk Pedagogical Institute.

Vodnyi Transport
22 December 1990
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TRANSPORT-AIR

Lack of Fuel Disrupts Flights at Northern Airports

The northern airports of the Tyumen Oblast have been in a state of near paralysis for five days. On the morning of December 3, for example, 36 flights were cancelled at noyabrsk and 12 at the airport of Novyi Urengoi. There were substantial delays in flights at Surgut and Nizhnevartovsk. The main reason is the shortage of aviation kerosene. The "Permnefteorgsintez" Corporation is ready to make up for all of the fuel not delivered and even to do extra shipments, but the distribution of fuel is being delayed by an acute shortage of railroad tank cars.

Gudok
5 December 1990
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Arctic Needs Light Aviation

"People are tired of the unending pointless debate. Clearly, we've had enough talking and writing about this subject if the aviation bureaucrats in the capital can't be bothered with it. It is time we acknowledge that, here at the end of the twentieth century, our country is incapable of developing appropriate airplanes and helicopters for the North." This is the kind of comment I've been hearing more and more often lately from pilots in Igarka, Dudinka, Khatanga, Dikson...

It's true. There have been a lot of articles published on this in the press, parliamentary inquiries, letters from aviation workers to various ministries and government agencies. But, most important, the responses coming back from government have started to really irritate northern residents. And there are good reasons for this. The problems have remained unsolved for years.

Let's think back to a time almost fifty years ago when O.K. Antonov built the remarkable airplane An-2. It became indispensable in the Arctic, and people are still flying in it today. Later, the Li-2 and the Il-14 went into service. They also made a major contribution to development in the high latitudes. It's no accident that all of these planes, once they had completed their length of service, came to occupy an honoured place in the annals of aviation. But the time of such technology has passed. The technology no longer meets the demands of the day. It has been taken out of production - consigned to the archives, so to speak. The problem is that nothing has been brought forward to replace it.

Now we fly to the Arctic on the giant Il-76, An-12 and An-26. Somewhere far away you can hear the drone of the Il-114 turbines. It will be years before the Ministry of the Aviation Industry will be able to meet all of the demands of the Ministry of Civil Aviation for the An-74. In short, the North is bereft of light aviation. And the situation with helicopters is no better. To cite just a single example, Aeroflot doesn't have an aircraft can cross large bodies of water safely and in any weather. From the town of Dikson to Srednii Island is a distance of 750 kilometres, a mere stone's throw by Arctic standards. Little more than four hours' flying time for the Mi-8 helicopter, at least in theory. But what about in reality?

"We'll be in the air seven or eight hours," says V. Kharin, commander of the Dikson Air Enterprise. "In the Arctic you can't always fly by the shortest route, but this time it isn't the whims of the weather that are forcing us to change our course. Ministry of Civil

Aviation directives prohibit flights of eight or more people over the sea: if it were necessary to make an emergency landing, the plane would go to the bottom in an instant. And we had this happen in the Dikson squadron. In January 1986 only the skillful actions of pilot V. Leber saved the lives of his passengers and crew. The place over the Kara Sea where the accident occurred is now marked on all the maps."

We can't forget to say something about the cargo-carrying capacity of the Mi-8. Often this helicopter transports little more than itself. It brings only five or six people to Srednii Island. Why? Simple. In flying along the shoreline of the Taimyr Peninsula, which means lengthening the route, pilots are forced to install additional fuel tanks inside the plane, thereby taking up more of the space in the cargo compartment and significantly increasing the weight of the plane. And this is going on at a time when people are forced to sit in airports for weeks waiting for a chance to get to their place of work. Cargo, that is being awaited impatiently by polar workers on remote islands isolated in the waters of the Arctic Ocean, lies idle for months. And there is yet another side to this coin. Aviation workers have to build additional onshore fuel depots, pay for ships to bring in fuel, maintain staff at the depots... As a result, the cost of flights increases and scarce kerosene is consumed - and how could there be too much of this fuel in the North?

At this point, of course, someone might object claiming that the Arctic will soon be getting the Ka-32 helicopters. This is true, but for the moment these aircraft are only found in Murmansk, and there are far too few of them. And besides, their operating cost is many times greater than that of the Mi-8. It will cost customers thousands, especially after the transition to market conditions. Or are people calculating that "half a loaf is better than no loaf at all"?

Why does the North need aviation? At first glance this may seem like a strange question, but it's a question that demands an answer. First of all, it is needed to transport cargo and passengers. Secondly, to support Arctic stations. Thirdly, to carry out airborne ice reconnaissance, and this information is critical to the safety of ships plying the Northern Sea Route. Fourthly, to perform all types of rescue operations.

"In the Arctic helicopters are needed with a heavy load-carrying capacity, with increased range, with more powerful engines," explains V. Kharin, taking a bunch of papers out of a desk in his office. "The most important is that they be able to 'swim'. But in response to our request Moscow keeps sending us the same answer: 'the design bureaus have been asked to develop this kind of technology.' But why develop it when the Ministry of Defence already has the Mi-14 helicopter? Pictures of it have been published several times in the magazine Morskoi flot (Maritime Fleet) in stories about rescue workers. It looks like the Mi-8, but unlike it the '14' can land on the water.

Now people are talking a lot about conversion, about factories that are producing the latest military hardware starting to produce children's cribs, bread slicers, meat grinders and sausage stuffing mixers. This is laudable, but the Arctic, as well as the customers, is crippled without modern technology, especially light aviation. Does it make sense to utilize the enormous intellectual potential of this sector so wastefully?

"In recent years ice reconnaissance has become an expensive luxury for us", says B. Ugryumov, instructor-captain of the Dikson marine operations staff for the western Arctic. We used to be able to fly over the sea for 12 hours in the Il-14 airplane, but today it's only five or six hours in a helicopter. And it's costing us two or three times as much. This is unquestionably beneficial to Aerflot, but what about those of us involved in shipping?

In the final analysis, developing the Arctic is our common task. We have long needed to work out an overall governmental program of such operations, and renewing the air fleet should be one of the highest priorities in this program.

Vodnyi Transport

4 December 1990

Page 2

Drifting Ice Station Still Awaiting
Replacements for Retired Il-14s

If you are very lucky and one day, by the will of fate, you find yourself with a team of polar specialists, consider yourself fortunate to be a guest of Yurii Pavlovich Tikhonov, head of the "Severnii Polyus 31" drifting scientific research station. Let this Arctic veteran tell you about daily life beyond the Arctic Circle, in this region of the long dreary night, of the howl of snowstorms and the treachery of the ice. In this region where the only link with civilization is a radio station and aviation. Aviation is the first friend and protector in the event of misfortune, whether it is a medical flight, reconnaissance mission, or planes bringing in cargo and specialists. Or, at New Year's, a real fir tree that makes the humble worker's hut a cozy home.

Of course, the work in Arctic skies is a very difficult job. But the pilots of the Krasnoyarsk, Yakutsk and magadan civil aviation administrations can never take things for granted. What they most need is reliable equipment, but instead they "retired" the famous IL-14 only to get essentially nothing in return. It seems that new planes of a "northern design" do exist, but they don't really measure to that "work-horse", the IL-14. Perhaps this is why aviation workers are saying: instead of reinventing the wheel, wouldn't it be simpler to dig the plans for the IL-14 out of the archives, bring its design up to date and start producing it again? But, as usual, this good idea merely remains an idea.

The pilots are now in the air; it is the day when everyone here is impatiently awaiting the next flight carrying mail and newspapers so they can try to make out, on their own, all of the ups and downs of that bustling life thousands of kilometres away from the rather small block of ice on which these courageous people work.

Vozdushnyii Transport

22 December 1990

Page 1

TRANSPORT-WATER

First Private Ship Owner on the White Sea

Arkhangelsk - this port city founded over four hundred years ago at the mouth of the Severnaya Dvina River, has lived from the sea for a long time. A local museum has a photograph of this river town dating back to the beginning of the century showing a line-up of sailboats. After the October Revolution all of them fell on hard times. Their ships were confiscated, they were fined, and the new authorities closed the border to them. In the days of mass repression the captains were classified as "kulaks" and this private fleet with soon abolished...

It seems as if owning one's own ship is beginning to make a comeback. In Arkhangelsk, at least, there is now a private ship owner named A. Makarenko, captain of the yacht "Grumant." For many years he sailed on board the ships of the Northern Maritime Steamship Line, and would spend his holidays restoring old abandoned ships. When he retired he decided to realize his old dream: to build a large ship capable of sailing anywhere its owner desired.

In one of the bays of the White Sea, Makarenko came across a ship rusting away on a sand bank. He found the organization that owned the ship. He then bought the ship for the price of scrap-metal and towed it to Arkhangelsk. Two years of hard work transformed the former German trawler. As it turned out, the ship had an excellent steel hull which was in good condition, the 100-horse-power motor could be rebuilt and the interior could be restored.

Anton Makarenko is proud to show his ship. A tour of the vessel must begin with the wheel-house. As is usually the case on sailboats, polished copper, nickel, and panelling are everywhere. Beside the wooden wheel there is radar, several radios, a direction finder, an echo sounder - in short, everything required by international convention to assure safe sea navigation. Inside the 40 metre hull are several cabins, the crew's quarters, the galley, a smoking room, the mess room, a storeroom, a cargo hold, and the engine room with a diesel engine. According to the ship's documents, the "Grumant" has an unlimited range of navigation, and even has an ice classification. Being a three-masted ship with a sail surface totalling 250 square metres, it can travel at a speed of up to 8 knots. Restoring the boat cost Makarenko 17,000 roubles, not including his own personal labour. In early May of 1989 Arkhangelsk's first private ship owner went into operation. Within half a year expenses had been recouperated, with money left over.

"There are a lot of organizations which are in absolute need of a small ship that can come to shore at any point," Makarenko explains referring to his commercial activity. "The primary customers are geologists, meteorologists, ecologists and many others. It's more economical for them to hire a smaller, cheaper ship. I charge 700 roubles a day while a large ship runs into the thousands. For groups of specialists of 5 to 7 people that's a real bargain. On the first voyage I sailed around the entire shore of the White Sea. We even entered the Arctic. The expeditions were one-and-a-half to two months in length. In between I took Soviet and foreign tourists for trips into the Severnaya Dvina and around the White Sea, and sailed to Solovki."

At present, Makarenko's main preoccupation is the restoration of a second vessel. He has already retrieved it from the ship graveyard and has it moored in Arkhangelsk.

"It's a good ship, plenty of room. It's twice as big as the 'Grumant'," says captain. "I've already ordered the sails and made a deal with a ship-repair plant. For 70,000 roubles, the yacht will be like new."

For the next navigation season Makarenko counts on having two ships, which will increase his commercial possibilities. He has received some interesting proposals, including one from a company interested in organizing a trip around the world. Foreign tourist travel companies are inquiring about short cruises.

The private ship-owning business is becoming both a profitable and a popular undertaking on the White Sea, it seems. In any event, you can no longer find any abandoned and rusted ships on the entire White Sea coast. They have all been collected either by cooperatives or by other private individuals. In addition, such ships are now being restored not only in Arkhangelsk but in other places as well. Makarenko maintains ties with enthusiasts in Odessa, Kiev and Leningrad. Next summer he will have competition, but this does not frighten him since the transportation market in the country is huge and the demand for services extremely high.

Makarenko is ready to help his sailor-colleagues from other ports in the country in any way he can - with advice, technical drawings, and experience. A future plan of his is to create an association of private ship owners so that they can use their fleet more efficiently, planning and coordinating freight and passenger transport more effectively and profitably.

Anton Makarenko's vessel also has a ship's boy on board - his son, who is finishing secondary school. Afterwards, the boy would like to enter the Arkhangelsk Nautical School. After he receives his navigator's diploma his father might have to give him the "Grumant." Let him command the ship himself.

Vodnyi Transport

15 December 1990

Pages 1-2

Extra Icebreaker Assists Vladivostok Fleet

Recently, the icebreaker "Kiev" tied up at the docks of the Vladivostok Commercial Sea Port. It had come to reinforce the icebreaker fleet of the steamship line since due to heavy ice, the Far-Eastern workers, are not always able to ensure safe passage for Arctic convoys without some help.

This icebreaker is "getting on in years" itself. It is virtually the same age as the icebreaker "Moscow", which already in 1965 was awarded the Order of Lenin for its work on Arctic routes in those years. But, as the saying goes, an old horse doesn't spoil the furrow. The ship registry has listed it for at least another three years of service in the ice.

The first voyage of the "Kiev" under the Far-Eastern flag and under the command of the experience Arctic captain Aleksandr Mikhailovich Runev, went smoothly. It operated in the eastern sector of the Arctic until November and came to Vladivostok "for a breather". Having taken on some new crew members, the icebreaker left in mid-December for Magadan for a tour of duty in the ice, to support shipping in this sector until early spring.

Vodnyi Transport

15 December 1990

Page 2

Murmansk Steamship Line Eliminates Debts

A rarity: the navigation season in the Arctic this year turned out to be successful. Thanks to the weather, the nuclear, icebreaker and transport fleets of the Murmansk Steamship Line not only entirely fulfilled their plan of operations but also wiped out their debts from the past two years.

It should be pointed out immediately that, together with the usual transport operations, the navigation season also saw some unusual voyages. These included a trip to the North Pole by the nuclear powered "Rossiya" with foreign tourists on board. This even has been talked about a lot in the press, as well as in Vodnyi Transport. Less publicized but no less important was an operation in which the nuclear powered icebreaker "Taimyr" accompanied a floating dock. This huge floating installation, which was built abroad, was designed for servicing ships of the Yakutsk Production Corporation for Marine Transport. At the initiative of V. Smolyagin, captain of the icebreaker, the floating dock was escorted alone on the section of the Northern Sea Route from the Straits of Karskie Vorota to Tiksi. And the job was done brilliantly, despite the fact that the dock is not designed for use in the ice, and its speed was limited to five knots. Another factor in the successful journey was the choice of the optimal time for the crossing: at the end of August and beginning of September, when the fourth and last convoy had been sent out into the Eastern Sector of the Arctic.

The navigation season is a test not only of the seamen but also of everyone who works in the Arctic. So, for example, air operations in support of ship convoys have shown that the Tu-134 airplane is ineffective for ice reconnaissance. The information received from it was

often delayed, there were errors in determining the characteristics of the ice, and as a result use of this plane was halted in July. The An-30 also fell short of the competition.

Special mention should be made of the K-32 shipborne helicopter. Because of the high cost of summer operations - 3,400 rubles per hour - it was not considered appropriate for use in ice reconnaissance. At the same time, the helicopter is indispensable in the unloading of ships. And so, the refusal of the Murmansk Air Detachment, to send the "chopper" into the offloading zone led to a situation where the diesel electric motor ship "Vladimir Arsenev", the ship principally responsible for supply unequipped locations in the Western Region of the Arctic, lost five days because it was forced to go into port at Murmansk. And the final result was that 210 tonnes of bulk oil failed to get delivered to the Arctic stations Ushakova, Krasnoflotskie and Russkii.

In totalling the results of the current navigation season and setting targets for the future, the members of the council of the Muramansk Steamship Line paid special attention to questions related to the transition to a market economy. And this is unavoidable under the circumstances. Goskomgidromet (State Committee on Hydrometeorology), for example, has announced that in the future all essential information will have to be paid for. This requirement elicited a curious reaction from the steamship line. Proposals were made to refuse to accept unnecessary forecasts, and also to work towards shutting down remote weather stations or converting them to automatic operation since the expense of servicing them could not be justified. In summing up these discussions, the head of the MMP (Murmansk Maritime Steamship Line), V. Beletskii, laid particular stress on the fact that, given the transition in the economy to a market basis, the steamship line would have to do away with the existing shipping tariffs and develop its own prices for these services, and do so in a way that it not merely covered its expenses but also made a profit.

Vodnyi Transport

22 December 1990

Page 1

Arctic Navigation Season Ends

The current Arctic navigation season has come to a successful close. For the first time in the entire history of the Northern Sea Route, ships were convoyed from west to east until the middle of November. As a result, maritime workers not only fully met their targets for cargo transport but also made up for last year's shortfall in escort

work. The fleet has now left the eastern sector of the Arctic, but the crew of the nuclear powered "Rossiya" continues to keep watch in the Kara Sea on the Murmansk - Dudinka route.

Vodnyii Transport

8 December 1990

Page 2

MISCELLANEOUS

Careless Handling of Timber Incurs
Hard Currency Losses

The upcoming transition to market conditions, the consequent rejuvenation of commercial activity, and the desire to acquire the hard currency so necessary for the economy - all of this is characteristic of the enterprises and organizations of the Vologda Oblast, as well.

Varied and extensive business ties are being forged both at the level of sister cities in Finland, Sweden, Holland and other countries, as well as among business people. What sorts of goods and raw materials do foreign partners find attractive in our northern oblast? What is the oblast offering for export? Primarily, metal and the traditional timber. And in line with a previously arranged agreement, Lithuania, for example, as well as the countries mentioned above, are trying to get our high-quality wood. Today, trading is an essential fact of life, but what is the situation with reserves and with logging in the oblast?

In most areas mature forests were cut down long ago. In the 1950's to 1970's, for example, 14 to 15 million cubic metres of wood were logged in the oblast, versus only 11 to 11.5 million cubic metres now. And in terms of the natural increase in biomass, no more than 7 million should be harvested. In addition, the extremely poor environmental situation in Cherepovets is having a sharply negative effect on the condition of the forests. For this reason, there should also be firm requirements today for careful economizing in the forestry sector motivated by a concern for the future of our forests and natural environment and aimed at preserving and increasing the natural resource base.

But just a look at the deliveries of wood to Vologda, the oblast capital, will illustrate how these requirements are being observed. Many timber and lumber establishments are having great difficulty fulfilling their production plans. Today, one has to travel 50 to 80 kilometres

from the logging villages to cut timber, and so every cubic metre of wood is costly. Finally, the cut timber (hundreds of thousands of cubic metres) is moved by motor-ships and barges, over the course of an entire navigation season, on the Sukhona and Vologda rivers to the piers of the many urban industrial and construction organizations.

Here in Vologda, on the river of the same name, the timber - our principal northern resource - is unloaded in an extremely haphazard way: onto a low bank below the water line, sometimes directly into the water, in a heap and without any kind of containment. As a result of this kind of handling, each year when there is the slightest rise in water level, such as after rains or at high water in the spring or during fall flooding, the wood is of course carried away - into the ocean. There it can be fished out by anybody - no hard currency required.

This little river is no more than 50 to 100 metres wide. There have been no typhoons or storms along its course, but every resident or visitor to the city can tell you the Vologda River, from the wharfs to the mouth of the river, is choked with submerged logs, construction timber and firewood. The entire river bank is littered. The only people who regularly pick up this wood are the dacha dwellers - and they can have whatever quantity they wish. The timber is gathered to build homes and bathhouses. Excellent construction timber (which means hard currency) goes into the foundations of hothouses...

The situation with the handling of timber is similar in the pulp - and - paper city, Sokol.

I recall that several years ago I dealt with the editorial staff of the oblast newspaper "Krasnyi Sever" in connection with large losses of timber. A raid was organized, and the results of it were published. There were repercussions, concrete results. I remember questioning the director of a wood processing plant who later reported that, after the information was published, 217 cubic metres of timber were gathered up and tallied near the plant's dock. And this was a very small plant.

And then a predictable flood predictably carried away thousands of cubic metres of timber. Meanwhile, the records of all the organizations were silent on the subject. In any case, the owners of the wood that was washed away, submerged or that littered the banks of the river could not be found.

The water carrying away the timber represents a clear danger to shipping and human lives. And it seems that no one can be bothered about this. Serious economic damage results to the State, and a blow to the morale of the workers. The forests being cut down are clearly going to waste, the oblast and city environmental protection committee pretend that this is of no concern to them. The state prosecutor's office is likewise indifferent to the issue of preserving and utilizing wood. Carelessness has become the norm, the rule on the river.

And this is how it is with us. We envy the riches of others, we praise the orderliness and economic know-how of other countries, we seek credits and try to obtain hard currency. But I fear it will all just be washed away again while we're trying to reach the other shore - the long sought-after market economy.

Sovetskaya Rossiya

26 December 1990

page 4

MISCELLANEOUS

Semipalatinsk Nuclear Testing to be Halted in 1993

The Defense Council under the president of the USSR has adopted a decision to halt nuclear blasts on the Semipalatinsk Testing Range as of January 1993. For the period 1991 - 1992, 18 underground nuclear explosions of 20 to 30 kilotonnes are planned.

Gudok

5 December 1990

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