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

NOVEMBER 1990

External Affairs and International Trade Canada

Canada

TO ALL RECIPIENTS OF EXTRACTS FROM THE SOVIET PRESS ON THE SOVIET NORTH AND THE ANTARCTIC

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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## Long Live My Beloved North

My northland is both great and unique. For 300,000 people representing more than 30 ethnically different native peoples, the North is their ancient environment, without which their life is unthinkable. These peoples have a history that covers many centuries and an ancient culture. They are a part of world civilization. The North has become the native region for millions of people of diverse nationalities who came here at different times from all parts of the country.

I believe in my northland and in its tomorrow. At the same time, I should and must state clearly that today it is in dire need of help and support from majority peoples. The current situation, to put it bluntly, is tragic. An intensive and barbaric industrial development of the North, aimed merely at short-term profit and directed by gluttonous ministries and government agencies, is destroying it.

Industrial "development" touches on the problem of international relations since it intrudes on the holy of holies for northern ethnic minorities - the very foundation of their traditional way of life. Millions of hectares of reindeer grazing land and hunting and trapping grounds are being destroyed. Wherever the reindeer moss is trampled, the reindeer disappear. Once the reindeer have gone, gone also will be the traditional way of life of northerners that has been carefully guarded for centuries. The same can also be said for hunting, which for northerners represents life, food and clothing. Without their traditional way of life they lose their national traditions, their identity and self-worth. They become nothing. This has already been a tragedy for entire peoples, and it is also a fact of current reality.

This year, August in northern Yakutiya was rainy. Hay fields were under water. Although plans called only for small purchases of hay, there is doubt the plans will be fulfilled. Meanwhile, fresh milk - especially as a food for children - is on the list of scarce items here. So I could understand the uneasiness of local authorities. Still, as the saying goes, every cloud has a silver lining. The cool, overcast days of August, coupled with the long-drawn-out rains, worked to the advantage of the reindeer.

During this same period I was meeting with my electors - reindeer herders of the Allaikha Raion. Then I got lucky: I was able to fly about and visit a number of reindeer herds in the company of an educational theatre troupe.

As I had noted from the air, the migratory encampments of the reindeer herders lie along the bank of the Indigirka River, which can truly be considered the source of life for workers in the Allaikha tundra. That's why the reindeer herders' daily diet includes fresh and smoked fish - 'yukola'. At this point I thought, mentally addressing the industrialists, how important it is to preserve the ecological purity of the Indigirka! Even the slightest contamination of the river would harm the fish, and through the fish would harm the health of humans, and the reindeer herders first and foremost. After all, this northern pearl of a river flows through four raions: the Oimyakon, the Abyi, the Allaikha and the Moma. Keep this in mind, those of you who work for the Indigirka Gold Mining Combine "Indigirzoloto" !

My kinsmen, the Evens, are scattered over the entire North. They inhabit Yakutiya, the Magadan, Kamchatka and Sakhalin oblasts, and Khabarovsk Krai. The establishment of national homelands for the Evens, as is the case for many northern peoples, has not been settled everywhere. The Evens, for example, do not have a single national okrug. The first-ever Even national raion - the Eveno-Bytantaiskii - was formed last year in Yakutiya. Our society should be concerned that each northern people, regardless of their numbers, should have their own national territorial entity: an okrug, raion or regular soviet. But the initiative should come from us.

My electors in the Allaikha Raion in Yakutiya have written to me about the urgent need to resurrect the abandoned Even village of Oetung. I can't read the lines of these letters, written straight from the heart, and remain calm:

"In 1970 we Evens, the native residents of the former village of Oetung, Allaikha Raion, Yakut ASSR, were driven out from our native settlement where we had lived for centuries. The reason given: lack of long-term prospects. The lesser half of the residents of Oetung were transported, against their will, to the village of Olenegorsk, while the greater half were taken to the raion centre Chokurdakh... In their new locations some of the Evens failed to get work and housing, and this issue has not been fully resolved even today. The Oetung hunting grounds, reindeer pastures and fisheries, which served the Evens while they were living there, are not orphaned... During the 20 years of this terrible forced existence our fellow natives failed to find themselves a place for sustained existence. There was never a solution to the issue of providing housing and permanent work for the former reindeer herders, fishermen and hunters.

The Evens have started to forget their native language, their culture, their age-old traditions and good customs.

Without blaming anyone for our past suffering or stirring up the past, in April 1990 the Evens overcame mighty obstacles thrown up by the command bureaucracy and, themselves, organized a self-financing independent cooperative, the 'Oetung', at the Allaikhovskii Sovkhoz as a way of putting right the errors cited above. The Even population of the entire raion greeted the organization of the cooperative with great approval and with the hope of resurrecting their native village of Oetung and its historic past..."

I feel it is my duty to give my full and complete support to the Evens of Oetung. With the transition to a market system, Oetung should acquire the legal right to an independent existence and renewal of the people's traditional way of life.

There was a similar situation with the Evens from the village of Uyandi in the Ust-Yana Raion of Yakutiya. The "Yakutzoloto" (Yakut Gold) Corporation has undertaken to restore the ancient village, but this must be done very quickly and properly, out of a genuine desire to help.

Here is another example. In Yakutiya the arctic Anabar Raion is one of the most remote and socially backward. In order to meet with my electors, I had to fly all the way to the shore of the Laptev Sea.

The village Yuryung-Khaya, which translated means While Mountain, sprawls along the bank of the Anabar River. It is here, on the central farmstead of the "Severnyi" Sovkhoz, that representatives of a small ethnic group of northern peoples - the Dolgans - settled. In Yakutiya, in fact, the Dolgans live only in this village. The sovkhoz is probably justly referred to as the marine gateway to both the Anabar and the neighbouring Mirninskii raions. Sea-going ships deliver various types of domestically produced goods. In winter, goods are brought in on a winter road by motor transport to the raion centre - the village of Saskylakh, the diamond city Mirnyi, and elsewhere. This helps to maintain a good working atmosphere in the village and brings a notable level of animation to village life. However, some serious inconveniences have arisen. Close to the village, within its boundaries, is an oil depot and storage tanks. The least negligence could lead to a big disaster. What exists here, to be precise, the hazard of a possible explosion. The Dolgans have requested more than once that they be shielded against this danger, but the matter has never been resolved.

People here seriously debated what should be moved - the village or the oil depot. But the problem is that the surrounding area is swampy tundra and permafrost, and there is no other place to put the village. That's one point. A second point is that, as the native residents explained to me, the village is situated on the site that is the most convenient and conducive for living, and this is their ancient ancestral land. Besides, moving the

village would entail no small amount of expense, and with our poverty this is virtually impossible. So then there is the question of moving the oil depot. But they say this would be very complicated. There's only one thing left to do: take immediate measures to ensure the safety of the village. First of all, a reliable sand embankment needs to be constructed around the oil depot, and a concrete barrier installed to protect the Anabar River against oil spills. The solution to this issue lies primarily with such giants as the "Yakutalmaz" (Yakut Diamond) Scientific Production Corporation and the Council of Ministers of the Yakutskaya-Sakha SSR.

A second matter that I would like to consider for a moment is connected with the name of an enterprising human being. It has been my great pleasure to have worked with him rather often. His name is Nikolai Egorovich Androsov. He used to serve as director of the "Anabarskii" Sovkhoz and was at the same time chairman of the raion council of people's deputies. A capable and thoughtful fellow, with a great deal of experience in working at various levels in our many-tiered system.

He worries particularly about the very difficult problem of making improvements in the raion. Villages are truly neglected. Roads are in total disrepair, and there is no earthmoving equipment. Nikolai Egorovich is thinking about wide-scale construction throughout the North of mobile settlements for reindeer herders and hunters. He sees such a settlement as an integrated whole: housing, mini-school, cultural centre, medical centre, commercial shop, bathhouse. And, without fail, an energy supply based on a portable electrical generating station. The estimated cost of one such settlement is approximately 200,000 to 250,000 rubles. Sovkhozes, with only their own resources from the sale of what they produce, are not in a position to build these. For this they need assistance for the Russian and central governments.

The next major problem is supplying the nomadic population with light and heat. In the tundra it would be both possible and necessary to make wide use of portable wind-powered generators, and in the mountain-taiga zone

portable electrical generating stations installed on mountain streams. Somehow we must also find ways of building miniature electrically powered boilers. Once the reindeer herders have heat, they can stop suffering in sopping wet tents far from the most elementary achievements of civilization. Can it be that our scientists are unable to solve this problem?

Of particular concern to us is financial compensation for the irreversible damage caused to the environment of the North and to grazing lands and hunting grounds by union industrial ministries and agencies. Many rivers, water reservoirs and lakes have been polluted and destroyed by these agencies. I was astonished to learn that 33 geological prospecting expeditions were operating on reindeer grazing lands in Olenek Raion! As a result of this "development" the "Anabarskii" Sovkhoz has lost two-thirds of its pastures.

Today, peoples of the North could lodge claims worth billions of rubles against Union ministries - non-ferrous metallurgy, geology, the river and maritime fleets, civil aviation - for irreparable damage to nature and the environment.

I'll cite just one more example of this type.

The city of Neryungri, the capital of Southern Yakutiya, is well known in the Soviet Union and abroad. It sprang up in a short period of time on the very spot where, twenty years earlier, nomadic Evenks had freely trapped for fur and hunted large game animals. They roamed their entire lives over the taiga of Southern Yakutiya, until the geologists discovered rich resources of coal. Then, in just 15 years, a modern city with an excellent infrastructure arose in the dense taiga, while the native residents - the Evenks - huddle close by. Such is the bitter paradox.

Recently, an Evenk state fur farm, the "Khatyminskii", was created. Of the 40 hunter-trappers only 12 come from the native population. One hardly needs to guess who was allocated the best hunting grounds, and, clearly, the Evenks are not upset for nothing. The Evenk

sovkhoz "Zolotinka" is also located here. Representatives of the Neryungri city branch of the Association of Northern Peoples of Yakutiya, calculated the damage caused to agricultural production on account of the destruction of reindeer grazing land occasioned by the building of the railroad line "Yakutskii junction - Berkakit station" and the nearby service road (7,063,056 rubles); construction of the village of Serebryanyi Bor (5,222,240 rubles) and, the city of Neryungri (8,268,704 rubles). During the construction and development of the Yuzhno-Yakutskii territorial industrial complex 21,168 hectares of reindeer grazing land were confiscated from the "Zolotinks" Soukhoz. In the raion as a whole, the total damage over the last 15 years amounts to more than 26 million rubles. And this gives rise to a legal question: does the USSR Ministry of the Coal Industry intend to compensate the Evenks of Neryungri for the losses to their traditional way of life?

I would like to pose the same question to the Ministry of Metallurgy and "Soyuzalmazzoloto" (All-Union Diamond and Gold Mining Administration), whose powerful subdivison "Yakutalmaz", located in the cities of Mirnyi and Udachnyi, forced the Evenks of Syuldyukar off their native lands and condemned them to an aimless poverty.

...We are on the threshold of a market. What will be the fate of the northern ethnic minorities? Who will give them a helping hand? One would like to believe that the Union ministries and agencies, which transformed the ancient habitat of these peoples into their own private fiefdom and for long periods of time have been pumping out fabulous profits from the harvesting of the extremely rich natural resources, will finally come to their senses, turn round and face the people, and repay them for the damage that's been done. This will require sincerity and a sense of fairness.

But I believe in the North, in its people, who are prepared to extend the hand of friendship to any person, regardless of nationality or creed. Long live my northland!

Sovetskaya Rossiya
10 November 1990
Page 1 (slightly abridged)

CONSTRUCTION

## People Against Ice

A unique laboratory is operating in the Arctic town of Dudinka. Its small team of specialists is carefully studying the decidedly unfriendly "relations" that exist between the hydraulic engineering structures of the local port and the various "delights" of the Far North: extreme cold, wind, ice and permafrost...

Once when A. Kizim, the then head of the Dudinka port (he now holds the position of deputy head of the Supply Administration for Science at the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Combine), was on a business trip in Leningrad, he visited the Institute of Water Transport. This entailed going to a number of laboratories and faculty departments. He spoke with the specialists and then noticed one particular fourth-year student who had already spent two years studying the interaction of various structures and time-related deformational phenomena. Although, at first glance, this work was far removed from the problems of port personnel, the "northern visitor" saw in it the faint trace of a linking thread. Kizim took a liking to this thoughtful and amiable young fellow and suggested that the Leningrader come to Dukinka after defending his diploma.

One couldn't say that Viktor Budin accepted this engagement right away as a gift from the gods. No, he expressed little enthusiasm, but he knew how to weigh all the 'pros and cons'. A native Leningrader and the son of the nationally known hydraulic engineer Professor Aleksandr Yakovlevich Budin, Viktor had begun even as a schoolboy to master the rudiments of his father's craft. Later, without a moment's hesitation, he went to study at the same institute from which his father had graduated. His diploma defence won him an "excellent". At that time his limited experience of life included a secondary musical education, together with a keen love of chess... He was an inveterate visitor of concert halls and theatres, all of which was still lacking in Dudinka, to be sure. Nevertheless, Viktor made his decision in favour of a fresh and intense life. His wife, Lyudmila, a teacher of English, supported him. And so, in 1980, with a three-month-old son on their hands, they became residents of Dudinka.

Immediately upon arrival, the young specialist, together with the port's chief hydraulic engineer B. Savko, set to work on establishing a special laboratory to study hydraulic structures. In 1983 the laboratory began its first studies.

"The first thing we has to do was to justify our right to exist," recalls Mr. Budin, who at thirty-three is now already a chief port engineer and holds the degree of Candidate of Technical Sciences. "We undertook a major scientific experiment, but some people looked on us as spongers. Luck gave us a hand..."

In Dudinka there is only one source of drinking water - Lake Samsonkino. A pumping station had been built there, but in time it had begun to lean like the Tower of Pisa. Within ten years after the station had begun operation the inclination had reached a dangerous level.

The laboratory became interested in this problem and took it on primarily because the pumping station had been erected on a loose slope, on weak clayey soil which over time had undergone deformation. "In short, we decided to help out the city and not pass up the chance to prove ourselves." And so the studies began. Despite winter, snow, cold weather, darkness, and virtually unpopulated tundra, Budin "and associates" started taking samples with the fervour of people panning for gold. The staff for the laboratory had not yet been confirmed, and so they worked on pure enthusiasm, conducting dozens of experiments and tests and making predictions.

And the results were rather interesting. They indicated that the station could be expected to collapse as early as 1987 since its stability margin had been virtually exhausted. The researchers were thanked for their work, but no one put much credence in their prediction. Then, they decided to send the calculations to the Leningrad branch of the State Planning, Design and Research Institute of Maritime Transport "Lenmorniiproekt" for verification.

Just imagine the researchers' joy when they received word that their prediction was one hundred percent reliable. At the same time it became clear that carrying out the plan which the "official" designers from Norilsk had drawn up could lead to the station collapsing immediately following completion of restoration work! At this point, all of the laboratory's recommendations were carried out and up to now there's been no further problem. Geodetic surveys show that the structure is standing firm. When the economists computed the annual savings, they gasped: as much as a million rubles! With this good beginning they set about studying the port's docks.

But there is a reason for the saying: "Evil tongues are worse than a gun." For a long time one could hear it said at the port: "So just what does Kizim need this laboratory for?" Let's try to answer that.

Long before the opening of year-round shipping in the western sector of the Arctic, specialists weighed all the pros and cons of the new venture and calculated the economic feasibility of shipping operations, taking into account the use of the fleet under difficult ice conditions, the building of new icebreakers and transport ships, the operation of trans-loading equipment... One thing they did not look at was how dock facilities would respond to the harsh conditions of the Far North. By the way, ten linear metres of dock here add up to a colossal amount of money - roughly 100,000 rubles. And this is the minimum. At a maximum it comes to between 200,000 and 250,000. The very first year of operation showed that the docks in winter came close to being dangerous. And so much so that even in the summer one couldn't work here. What's more, there could be no question of their lasting another winter. Then a second and third dock reached the same state and had to undergo major repairs.

One evening the port's chief engineer, Mr. Budin, invited me to the hydraulic engineering laboratory, which is now headed by his student A. Kasarkin. Now, the laboratory has well designed research equipment, a good part of which, I might add, was built in Dudinka. Viktor Aleksandrovich led me to metal containers of impressive proportions filled with sand and water.

"During the summer the equipment 'takes a rest', but in the winter we perform our experiments here. In this basin, which has a capacity of twelve cubic metres, we build a dock on a scale of one to ten. Then we attach heat sensors that can record the temperature at all points of the container. In the boundary regions parameters are maintained to within one hundredth of a degree.

When 'construction' is complete, the installation, weighing thirty tonnes, is rolled into a special hall where the contents freeze from natural cold into a solid mass. We model the wind, too. That's very important. Then we begin the actual experiment. We break up the ice, freeze the ships to the 'docks' and free them... The principal

advantage of these installations is that they let us work out dozens of variants for dock use in the course of a single winter. Under natural conditions this would require many, many years."

The laboratory has already achieved its principal aim: it has issued recommendations that ensure that docks are kept in good working order and thus, ensure smooth operation of the port and of the entire Arctic maritime line. But there is still one extremely important facet to the research being done by the Dudinka scientists. This local maritime port is perhaps the only one in the world, the entire extent of which is subject to flooding. It owes this "distinction" to the Enisei River. As a result, after the breakup of ice all storage areas, train and crane tracks, and electric power supply must be completely restored.

The primary danger to the docks, however, is not the flood waters but the breakup of the ice, and more precisely the first two ice movements. These occur, as a rule, when the water level is still rather low and the ice floes are resting virtually on the shore. An unruly mass of blue-white blocks sweeps everything in its path, carries away concrete slabs, and twists steel rails into knots. Each year, the Norilsk Combine, which owns the port, spends approximately 1.5 million rubles cleaning up the damage caused by the breakup of ice.

The first attempts to reduce this expense were undertaken as early as 1974 when a special protective dike was completed. This cut the time required for restoration work in half. But nature continued to take its toll.

In the early 1980's E. Lyubogoshchinskii, captain's mate of the harbour icebreaker "Avraamii Zavenyagin", proposed the following idea: to cut special slits in the river's coat of ice in the spring in order to force the ice to take a different route. He put this proposal to Kizim and Budin.

Actually, slits had been tried earlier, but they were done in a quite arbitrary manner and the result was virtually nil. But this time they were making a first, albeit timid, attempt to give a scientific foundation to the battle with the natural elements.

During this time the lights burned late in the office of the port director. The engineer, the hydraulics specialist and the seaman weighed all of the possible alternatives for cutting the slits, until what seemed to be the best possible method was found. Next, the port leased the icebreaker "Kapitan Sorokin" and entrusted the job of carrying out the first experiment to Lyubogoshchinskii. Naturally, at that time there were many who doubted that such experiments could work. But despite the skeptics, the slits did their job. In 1983 the ice followed the path laid out for it by humans.

The lessons learned from this ice breakup were thoroughly studied and analyzed. A year later the experiment was repeated, this time with a new plan. This attempt failed. Since that time people at the port have been dreaming of creating their own special installation that would allow them to model ice movements, and not just one but a hundred or two hundred per year. The researchers decided to take the well-known Finnish ice basin as their basis.

In the mid 1980's freight traffic at the Dudinka port surpassed seven million tonnes for the first time, a third of this total arriving at the port in the winter. It's true, of course, that the flow of freight on the Murmansk - Dudinka line has now levelled off somewhat on account of the completion of development of the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Combine. But port personnel today are already facing new challenges. They are engaged in a serious reconstruction effort and are installing powerful new cranes on the docks. All sorts of modern new ships, including nuclear-powered ones, are sailing into the Arctic, and this means further development of shipping in

the western sector of the Northern Sea Route. As a result, the hydraulic engineering laboratory of the Dudinka Maritime Port now occupies a special place in port personnel's plans. Now they count on the laboratory and the opinions of the specialists.

Vodnyi transport
15 November 1990
Pages 2,3 (full text)

## ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING

### Presentation of "Pepi"

The Association of Electronic Information Transfer Users, "PEPI", gave a public presentation last week in Moscow. Our newspaper has already reported on the creation of this association. Those who wish can go back to the August 7 edition, but for the others we will briefly recall what this is.

The membership of the association includes the leading transportation ministries - the maritime fleet, railroads, motor transport, and Russian River Fleet "Rosrechflot" concern - the Main Administration of Customs Control, and a number of other enterprises and organizations. PEPI's main objective is the broad promotion in the USSR of paperless technology for tansmitting transport and trade documentation in accordance with the international standard for EDI electronic dissemination of information known as FACT (fully automatic compiling technique).

We are aware that in early 1993,18 industrially developed countries of Western Europe are planning to form a single market with free movement of goods and services, capital and workers across borders. And if we now fail to adopt electronic document exchange, this will threaten us with a real loss of competitiveness, especially in transporting freights of foreign shippers. In order to convert to paperless technology, PEPI must solve three basic problems. The first is to establish a reliable, low-cost link between the computers of those participating in the transport process, and to do this in accordance with international standards so that it will be possible to interact with similar data transmission networks aboard. The second problem is to create an EDI service for electronic information exchange, teaching all of the computers taking part in the process to understand one another. And, finally, the third problem is to formulate and implement unified document norms that conform to EDI FACT standards.

It should also be pointed out that the EDI and EDI FACT systems in the western European countries enjoy active support and even receive subsidies from national governments. And just how promising and essential is the task that PEPI is undertaking one can clearly judge from the fact that the French firm Transpac, one of the world's largest communications companies, was paying serious attention to the presentation. Essentially, the association's work is aimed at traversing in a mere 2 to 3 years a distance that foreign firms required for 8 to 12 years to travel.

And so, those who do not want to be left behind in technological advances should hurry to take advantage of the services offered by PEPI. By the way, despite the youth of the association and the fact that its organizational period here is just now ending, it has already received its first orders.

Vodnyi transport
27 November 1990
Page 3 (full text)

ENVIRONMENT

## Reports of a Nuclear "Burial Ground" on the Kola Peninsula

From our correspondent at the press centres of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

G. Gerasimov, head of the Information Service of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID), spoke at a regular briefing for Soviet and foreign journalists.

He said that the question of the possible burial of radioactive wastes is still the focus of attention for the mass media in Norway. A number of articles and commentaries have reported claims about nuclear "burial grounds" located somewhere between Murmansk and the Norwegian border. But earlier at the briefing the USSR MID spokesman declared unequivocally: no burial sites for wastes of this type exist in the area in question. Soviet representatives also circulated through Academy of Sciences channels an interview with Aleksandr Mikhailov, chief radiological specialist of the Murmansk Committee on the Protection of Nature and chairman of the Murmansk Oblast Executive Committee's Commission on Radiation Safety. The interview was occasioned by growing public concern in Murmansk Oblast over recurring talk of plans to build disposal sites for nuclear wastes on the Kola Peninsula. In it, it is stressed that the issue of building a single inter-agency regional storage site for radioactive wastes is being examined at government level. A decision in principle on this matter has already been taken, although no specific site for the future facility has as yet been selected. Among the possible sites being considered are Novaya Zemlya and the Kola Peninsula. As for the existence of some sort of "burial grounds" on the Kola Peninsula at this time, there are none. In this region there are only temporary storage sites for nuclear and radioactive wastes. One such site is located at the Kola Nuclear Electric Power Plant directly inside the plant's reactor room.

According to the briefer, the interview clearly shows that there are no permanent burial sites for nuclear wastes on the Kola Peninsula. Nor is there any contradiction regarding our statement on this matter. Our goal was to clear up a specific issue. In his interview, Mr. Mikhailov touched on a whole series of questions. These included the problem of temporary storage of spent nuclear fuel and the need to create an on-shore site for wastes from nuclear power plants, the storage of spent radioisotope sources used in medical devices, and the possible effects of a nuclear waste burial site on the environment and the health of the local population. This shows that Soviet authorities do not find it necessary to conceal the problems and issues of nuclear power generation from public opinion.

Izvestiya
3 November 1990
Page 4 (full text)

## Environmental Degradation on the Kola Peninsula - Some Details

What's your opinion? Is there a single unspoiled spot in our country which we haven't reached and become the master of, where we have not as yet displayed our valiant labour - to the point where both ourselves and mother earth are utterly exhausted...?

It wasn't so long ago that people started talking about the Kola Peninsula - this "strategic" region which had always been shrouded in secrecy. When the vigilant "Greens" came upon the local secrets, they discovered some terrible facts. Under the cover of secrecy, government agencies had transformed the peninsula into an environmental septic tank. According to the most modest calculations,

more than 50 rivers here have been turned into sewer lines. The Monchegorskie lakes are dead. Outside such cities as Nikel, Zapolyarnyi and Kovdar one would be justified in posting sighs that read: "Caution. Hazardous Area!" There's no air to breathe, and radiation levels are high. Environmental disaster is already encroaching on Lake Svyatoe, the pearl of the region. And on the floor of the Barents Sea, as was recently reported by western "voices", lie six sunken submarines with a full complement of nuclear warheads...

This and other matters were discussed at a press conference held at the All-Union Society for Nature Protection. The participants were members of a public environmental expedition to the Kola Peninsula. It was headed by journalist Aleksandr Vislyaev, a chemist and biologist by education.

Q. "How did the local population receive you? Does it support this initiative?

A. "You couldn't say they were exactly thrilled. But that's understandable. After all, there are a lot of short-term employees there, people who come up for the money. Naturally, they aren't concerned about "our" problems. Many workers said as much to our face, saying 'we don't need your environment stuff, we need kindergardens, nurseries and other amenities'."

Q. "You've confirmed that the background radiation level is very high on the Kola Peninsula. What are the principal sources of contamination, in your view?"

A. "First of all, there's the nuclear test site on Novaya Zemlya, of course. Then there's the Kola Nuclear Power Station. Although it is considered one of the cleanest, we still have it 'under suspicion'.

Once upon a time someone came up with the idea of using the 'peaceful atom' to blast Apatity ores and make the miners' job easier. Radiation from this is inevitable, and at rather high levels, too.

The last and possibly most serious source is the Northern Fleet. What are they doing with their radioactive wastes, the spent fuel from the submarines? The public would like to get an official answer to all these questions. Unfortunately, the military are keeping silent, and if they do say something it's along the lines of 'everything's just fine'. In point of fact, this is hardly the case. Near the village of Tetrino we discovered part of a missile not claimed by anybody, which was lying directly on the shore, not far from a dead seal. I think you'll agree that this gives rise to some rather sad reflections regarding 'the blessings of the military'."

Q. "Could the people test the background radiation if something happened? Do they have dosimeters?"

A. "No. At least not the people we had occasion to meet."

Q. "What's the health situation like for residents of the peninsula?"

A. "According to the statistics we consulted at a number of medical establishments, the situation would appear to be rather good. But is it really? When you consider there's only a handful of local residents there... These same 'temporaries', who come there for the money, only live under these harsh conditions for ten years or less, and then they leave for more temperate regions. But it has already been shown that, after this, they don't survive for very long. The authorities keep quiet about this. Just as they keep quiet about the fact that the poisoning of the air with heavy metals, which is occurring in practically all regions, is very dangerous for the human organism, especially for women and children. It damages the human genetic code. A kind of mutagenic process occurs."

Q. "Is there any hope that the environmental situation on the Kola Peninsula will change for the better in the near future?"

A. "Yes, it's quite possible. An inter-agency coordinating committee has been set up and is working hard to improve the situation."

In conclusion, I would like to say one other thing. The press conference was attended by a military representative. True, he didn't even identify himself. He had decided to remain incognito. But he solemly assured everyone that his intentions were the best. He was very interested to find out if this expedition had, besides the photographs, any other concrete facts, statistical data, numbers, maps... Why would he want all of this? Can it be that our military comrades don't know what's going on in their own backyard?"

Author Z. Morzhenkova

Vodnyi transport
6 November 1990
Page 2 (full text)

Novaya Zemlya: Explosion at the Epicentre of the Problem

I am standing on the side of a granite mountain, at the entrance to a shaft where the "last and only" nuclear explosion of this year took place a little more than a week ago. Anxiety and confusion weigh on me.

No, the reason for this isn't a fear for my own life and well-being - the roentgenometer shows 9 microroentgens per hour - a level of radiation that is only half that in Moscow. It is other feelings, other thoughts that overwhelm me.

What is there is the bitter realization that, in the current international situation when a third of the planet's population lives in countries that are members of the "nuclear club" and no reliable obstacle has as yet been erected to development of new generations of this terrible weapon of destruction (or "weapon of deterrence", as it is called), a unilateral nuclear moratorium is, apparently, scarcely possible.

What is also there is a sincere respect, an acknowledgement of the high degree of professionalism and mastery, rare in our day, on the part of test scientists, miners and the military who have succeeded in achieving the extraordinary safety and scientific effectiveness of the experiment: the nuclear charge, which lay two kilometres deep within the mountain for more than a year, "withstood" the test of polar winter, performed exactly as planned, yielded results which scientists will be analyzing for a long time, and did not cause the slightest harm to the polar environment. The radiation and environmental situation for hundreds, even thousands of kilometres around the test range was unaffected.

All the same, why was the underground nuclear blast, which according to press reports was carried out pursuant to a decision of the Soviet government and the Council of Defence reporting to the President of the USSR, conducted in a somewhat surreptitious manner? No official notice was given about it in advance either to our neighbours in Northern Europe, to the leaders of local organs of power in the oblasts adjoining the test range, or even to people's deputies of the USSR, whose mandate from the northerners is to represent their interests in the country's Supreme Soviet.

Neither did anybody alert those responsible for monitoring the safety of the nuclear tests - the USSR State Committee on the Environment. The Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet also voiced a strong protest regarding the blast, viewing it as a violation of the Russian Federation's Declaration on State Sovereignty. So why was it done the way it was?

The USSR Deputy Minister of Nuclear Power and Industry, Professor V. Mikhailov, says:

"The list of organizations and officials who should know about proposed timetables for tests, about a scheduled experiment, and who should participate in it has been strictly limited by special order of the Council of Defence. This was done not only with the aim of protecting State and military secrets but also to create normal working conditions for the experimenters and to provide for essential safety measures. If the country's Supreme Soviet deems it necessary to expand the circle of such persons, we are prepared to do this."

In addition to the reason emphasized by the deputy minister, there is, in my view, another, but it is one that we aren't supposed to speak about too loudly: scientists and the military have been afraid that news of the planned explosion would raise a storm of public protest, already aroused by fear of radiation, the Chernobyl syndrome, and the long battle over the Semipalatinsk testing range.

In fact, the Novaya Zemlya explosion was postponed three times for reasons that had nothing to do with technical or climatic considerations. Once the best "window" - from all points of view, including especially weather conditions - was missed at the end of October, one couldn't expect a new one right away. And this means that the intensive, expensive and time-consuming work would come to naught, that the program for improving the reliability and safety of nuclear weapons would be disrupted, and, finally, that the country could fall behind in strengthening its defensive potential.

"For our work there is nothing more dangerous than the current uncertainty," I was told by Candidate of Technical Sciences, Captain V. Dumik. "We risk losing not only professional skills that have taken years to acquire but we could see the breakup of a unique and highly competent team of thousands of scientists, engineers and military personnel - a team that cannot be built in an hour's time. And, most importantly, those who developed nuclear parity, this weapon of deterrence, would not be able to train reliable people to replace them.

"Look", military experts at Novaya Zemlya told me, "the American Senate only ratified in September of this year the 1974 treaty between our countries on the limiting of underground nuclear weapons tests, but in so doing it also advanced a series of conditions. Among these was the following: nuclear tests will be continued, and the national laboratories will be fully provided with all necessary financing for the conduct of nuclear programs. When our committees of the Supreme Soviet ratified this treaty they did not even invite specialists from Minatomenergoprom (Ministry of the Nuclear Power Industry) to their meetings nor heard their opinions and arguments. American expenditures on nuclear weapons are growing from year to year by 8 to 10 percent, while ours are decreasing by 15 percent. As a result, we aren't even able to create normal housing and living conditions for those working at the Novaya Zemlya test site."

I've seen the houses, clad in tin, of our scientists and military personnel in the village of Severnyi, on the shore of Matochkin Shar Straits, where the windows have been boarded up to prevent the wind and snow from forcing out the glass and frames. I have visited the rooms of the dormitory where those in charge live while tests are being conducted - and these tests can drag on for a month or two - and even here icicles hang from the ceiling.

Of course, one shouldn't be too surprised about this - it's the Arctic. What is surprising is why, even here, the living conditions of our people and their well-being are still enveloped, as before, in an icy indifference.

"Last year," Candidate of Technical Sciences K. Danilenko, a member of the State Commission on the Conducting of Nuclear Tests, related to me, "a motor vessel visited the dock of the village where we lived. This year, there wasn't enough money for it."

We also met with miners of the city of Zheltye Vody, Dnepropetrovsk Oblast, who drive new shafts in granite walls for future experiments and who said that while on assignment on Novaya Zemlya they stay in warm stone hotels under much better conditions than the experimenters. But even they complained about the icy transport that carries them to work, the poorly thought-out wage system, the scanty fare on television...

I listened to them and thought: it is to this place, the village of Severnyi, that in return for a visit to the Nevada testing range, they are intending to invite American scientists within the next year or two. What are we going to show them, besides our unique diagnostic equipment and the highest degree of professionalism of our experimenters? A village forgotten by everyone, sitting on a shore piled high with rusting scarp metal?!

And here is something else I thought about while standing near the shaft where, a week ago, a nuclear blast had taken place. On this blast converge many problems about which we somehow used not to even think. We not only need to think about them, we need to solve them, too.

Of course, one can and must dispute, discuss and ultimately establish timetables and decide who will alert whom and when concerning the conduct of the next nuclear explosion. One can and must think things over and make decisions as to whether we need nuclear weapons or not. If yes, what kind and how many? If no, what approach do we take to disarmament, to a full and final cessation of testing, and how to bring all members of the "nuclear club", and especially the USA, into this process? But one thing today is absolutely clear. It is time for the Supreme Soviet to define and legislate a State. It's time to adopt a Union program of nuclear research for a year, for five years, for a longer period of time, and one that includes underground testing. And it's time, of course, to take the demands of the day into account in improving the conditions and procedures under which scientists, the military, and local authorities interact in the preparation, conduct and monitoring of decisions in the sphere of defence and security.

It would appear that such a program, such a "code of conduct", should be adopted by a special commission of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Committee on Matters of Defence and State Security, ratified by the President, and communicated to all organizations and officials involved in this process, including the representatives of local authority.

The new popular power wants and demands to be respected and reckoned with. That is its absolute legal right which must be observed without fail. But it is also one of the obligations of this power to do everything so that the people who are protecting it, who have created and perfected the country's nuclear shield, are assured of the justness of their work and are relieved of all needs. Only then, perhaps, will it be possible to extinguish the passions surrounding explosions at nuclear testing ranges.

(Author) V. Litovkin, special Izvestiya correspondent, Novaya Zemlya Archipelago

Izvestiya
13 November 1990
Page 2 (full text)

MISCELLANEOUS

## The Dive of the "Neptun"

### Tourists invited on board submarine

It wasn't so long ago that visiting the Severodvinsk Shipbuilding Plant would have been unthinkable. And now, in the very heart of the nuclear shipbuilding industry, what is perhaps the most unusual presentation that one could possibly imagine for this powerful industrial enterprise, is underway. Recently, the conversion spawned a most astonishing phenomenon - the country's first tourist submarine. Reports about its presentation to the public caused nothing less than a sensation. On the other hand, one should not really be too surprised: the scientific and industrial potential of the people of Severodvinsk is truly colossal, as their actions testify.

The Americans were somewhat quicker to grasp the advantage to be had from this sort of "re-orientation", and so they created their submarine, the "Atlantic", which could accommodate 20 passengers. They were followed by the astute Japanese. Their calculations turned out to be right: tourists from various countries immediately fell in love with this unusual submarine.

For the people of Severodvinsk merely imitating did not make much sense. And so the Soviet submarine is significantly different from its foreign counterpart. The presentation which was attended by representatives of foreign firms and our own 'Intourist' agency, revealed serious interest on the part of specialists as well as prospects for developing the project, which the shipbuilders of Severodvinsk have called "Ichthyandr".

This is an excellent corroboration of the effective use that can be made of the immensely rich, creative and industrial potential of the conversion now underway. It is no accident that Academician I.D. Spasskii played an active role in developing the project. The "Neptun" is the project's first brainchild.

The submarine is truly impressive to look at. The "Neptun" is approximately 30 metres in lengh. Unlike submarines of like purpose being produced in capitalist countries, the Severodvinsk submarine offers passengers total reliability - reliability with plenty to spare. One fact will illustrate this. In the event of something unexpected happening, the Soviet submarine will surface in 30 seconds. And while the "Atlantic" can accommodate 20 tourists on board at one time, the "Neptun" can handle twice as many. The "Neptun's" first dive lasted three hours, but regular tourist excursions, once they begin, will last one and half hours. During this span of time the tourist submarine can descend to a depth of several dozen metres. On the first occasion, 16 metres were all that were needed to convince one of ship's promising future.

What are the plans for utilizing this unusual submarine? There are a number of possibilities. One of these - the most realistic - is leasing. Businessmen in a number of countries, especially in Saudi Arabia, are prepared to pay about 1.5 million dollars a month to lease the ship. In Finland and Japan an hour's voyage underwater runs to between 50 and 150 dollars. But for the time being, it is too early to speak about how and where the "Neptun" will be used since trials are not yet complete.

Chief builder Yurii Nikolaevich Grechkov of the shipyard was kind enough to invite me inside the submarine. What once would have seemed unthinkable has now happened: I am getting to meet the crew of the "Neptun". To be sure, the crew is very small - only three people. The captain is pilot A.V. Shaposhnikov. The technical crew will be on the shore.

"It's all very simple," explains Anatolii Vladimirovich, surveying his domain. "In this lounge tourists will enjoy the delights of the underwater kingdom."

The lounge is very comfortable and cozy. There are forty-two easy chairs and 22 portholes with a diameter of 65 centimetres. On the day I visited the "Neptun" there was no deep dive. The water in the Dvina has been unpleasant to see for a long time. But since it is proposed to operate the submarine in southern waters, there

will of course be something to see there. Plans call for the "Neptun" to be fitted with manipulators which passengers will use to retrieve various souvenirs under the water, such as pieces of coral or beautiful shells - every tourist's cherished dream. Overall, the "Neptun's" prospect are very good, but what will be the demand for this unusual submarine, and will the project be extended? I addressed these questions to D.G. Pashaev, the general director of the shipyard.

"We are hoping," he said, "that this first tourist submarine, as well as the entire 'Ichthyandr' project, will have a happy future. There is a strong demand for this kind of tourism worldwide. Even though at the outset, only foreigners will be able to make the underwater voyage, the profits obtained from these unique excursions will help us build new tourist submarines. And this means that the time is not far off when Soviet citizens will also be able to visit Neptune's kindom..."

Truly, the transition to a market economy is a matter to be taken very seriously. At the Severodvinsk shipyard people feel that the launching of this tourist submarine is a pivotal moment for the enterprise. So as one customarily says on such occasions: "Smooth sailing, 'Neptun'!"

Sovetskaya Rossiya
7 November 1990
Page 6 (full text)

## POWER GENERATING STATIONS

### Yet another "Conquest of Nature" Project

There was no shortage of reasons for the special gathering of ecologists of Krasnoyarsk Krai. The smog over our cities is not clearing up, forests are being thinned out at a rapid pace, small rivers are disappearing from the face of the earth...

"And still, of all the problems we face, the situation in the Angara region, near the site of construction of the Boguchanskaya hydroelectric power station, stands out in particular," notes S. Gaitin, docent of the Krasnoyarsk Agricultural Institute and Chairman of the public environmental council, in his opening remarks to a session of the council. "The stream of protest letters against the latest 'construction project of the century' to krai and central newspapers and to the parliaments of Russia and the Soviet Union continues to grow. It's as if we have a dead-end situation developing..."

"It's already developed," remarked V. Magdalina, first deputy chairman of the krai committee on nature protection, in responding to Mr. Gaitin's words. And she spoke about the endless bureaucratic intrigues aimed at preventing an independent State environmental and economic review of the Angara Basin from being held.

In spite of the personal mandate of USSR President M.S. Gorbachev to clarify the situation, the picture has become even more clouded. And the following declaration, from the USSR Supreme Soviet's resolution on urgent measures to heal the country's environment also turned out to be a dud: "Beginning in 1990, to open the financing of work on all projects and programs only after a positive finding by a State environmental review panels..." The fact of the matter is that the builders of the Boguchanskaya power station received tens of millions of rubles without any interference, while the S.Ya. Zhuk Institute for Planning, Surveying and Scientific Research ("Gidroproekt") hasn't gotten past the state of thinking about an environmental assessment for the project. A program of study is slated to be completed by 1992, and only then, as a letter from the RSFSR State Committee for the Environment (Goskompriroda) makes clear, "will a decision be made regarding the advisability of conducting an environmental review of the Boguchanskaya power station project."

A. Troitskii, deputy chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee Gosplan, in his response to an inquiry from RSFSR People's Deputy G. Akhmedzyanov, offered assurances, saying that in August 1990 the USSR Ministry of Energy was supposed to present documents concerning a plan

to clear all the timber from the bed of the power station's reservoir on the Angara River. But in August, standing at the base of the unfinished dam in Kodinsk, Minister Yu. Semenov declared that his ministry was categorically opposed to this timber clearing operation. And so, at the will of this all-powerful government body, we're again faced with the flooding of tens of thousands of hectares of Siberian taiga, the destruction of millions of cubic metres of timber...

As I listened to Vera Vasilevna I thought about my own recent trip on the Angara. As the "Zarya" passed through the locks at the still unfinished dam on its way up to Kezhma, I caught glimpses of boundless stands of pines scarred with cut-over areas along both sides of the river.

"We're destroying this resource, too," pensively remarked a chance fellow passenger, a major from the institution that is cutting the forest around the future reservoir. We began to talk. "At the moment we're only taking the 'cream off the top' - the marketable timber. But how much of it rots away in log piles? How much is being pushed through the locks during the shipping season? And now they're already talking about taking all the timber out... The area is mountainous, there aren't any roads. How much in the way of materials, fuel and lubricants and labour will be expended to pile up the trees and brushwood, and to burn them and bury the ashes 2 metres deep? It'll take millions upon millions! And for what? For our own ruin and the devastation of nature? The only sensible alternative is to build facilities for thorough processing of smallwood for furniture and rosin production. This is a gold mine, but for now the orders are: cut more wood! Will there ever be a true steward here?"

The answer to this question came from S. Arinchin, chairman of the krai soviet's permanent Commission on Nature protection, in his remarks before the environmental council. The position of the commission he heads is this: "for the near future no development of hydroelectric power in the krai is acceptable." Such a decisive conclusion is definitely not the fruit of abstract deliberations. Rather, behind these decisions are repeated meetings with Irkutians and Angara region residents, and a close familiarity with the activities of wood-chemistry and chemistry giants discharging roughly 2 billion cubic metres of untreated waste water just in the Irkutsk Oblast alone.

"Gosplan is obsessed with far-fetched schemes for a Nizhneangarskii Territorial Production Complex," Sergei Aleksandrovich noted. "The complex sounds great. But when you look at what happened to the Irkutians, what are we going to get from it? A regular bureaucractic monster. In the Angara region, for example, there's ruination everywhere. And now we have the Boguchanskaya power station, construction of which cannot be justified from any point of view. Lack of energy? But why not develop on a low-energy basis? Why do we need these energy-hungry wood chemistry giants, of which the Irkutians have way too many? There's enough raw material here for furniture factories for decades. What about power stations further downstream? In that case, however, the shallows will be poisoned by your neighbours' untreated wastes even faster...

In short, whatever you do is a dead end. Indeed, one of these "dead ends" is talked about in a study conducted by the Institute of Economics and Organization of Industrial Production, which is subordinate to the USSR Academy of Sciences' Siberian Branch, concerning problems of water resources by the creation of the Lower Angara Territorial Production Complex. The conclusion was that water protection measures for the planned super giants would require 3.7 billion rubles. But even these expenditures would make little difference since, and I quote: "surface water sources of the Lower Angara region are characterized by a slow rate of natural self-cleaning." In other words, don't count on the purity of Angara water.

"So what are we to do? Dismantle a dam into which so much has been invested?..."

"Why dismantle it?" Arinchin retorts. "What we need to do is to stop construction of the power station so that we can weigh all the pros and cons calmly."

Bureaucratic dictates have bled our economy dry, have kept it on a ruinous path of extensive development. The capacity of one hydroelectric power station is only one third utilized, and we're going for another. Isn't it time we re-examined the use of these stations? How much energy is being lost? Many heat-and-electric stations are at

their last gasp, but instead of renovating them we're spending money on new hydroelectric plants. Consider the following figures. Annual energy savings worldwide are estimated at 300 billion dollars. These savings are made accessible to the developed countries of the West which, over the past 15 years, have slowed construction of the traditional type of new power engineering projects and are achieving lower energy consumption in industry with a simultaneous increase in industrial output. One-fortieth of the savings achieved by little Japan could rid us of all of our lowland hydroelectric plants. But that's just one end of the issue. At the other is the growing poverty of third-world countries, many of which are at the high energy consumption stage of industrialization. Unfortunately, it is precisely in this direction that the USSR is increasingly moving.

Vodnyi transport
29 November 1990
Pages 2,3 (abridged)

TRANSPORT-RAIL

## Powerful Locomotive Arrives at Pechora

Following completion of trials, what is currently the country's most powerful locomotive, the 2TE121, has arrived in Pechora.

The testing lasted more than six years. Gudok has reported to its readers in considerable detail about all the turns in events that have befallen northerners and about the difficulties run into by the manufacturers. In general, it would be wrong to criticize either the plant workers or the locomotive workers for a lack of attention. There was heightened interest in the new engine even on

government levels. Two union ministries - the Ministry of Railroads (MPS) and the Ministry for Building Heavy Machinery (Mintyazhmash) - convened more than one joint conference, formed expert commissions, issued joint directives...

And this is understandable. After all, shifting northern lines to a new generation of locomotives was supposed, according to their developers' intentions, to confer an enormous economic advantage. By increasing the weight of rolling stock, transport directors could reduce the number of trains and eliminate quite a number of train crews. Estimates were done on the amount of fuel that would be saved, on the increased throughput of rail lines...

But now that tests have essentially been completed, the engines turn out to be unnecessary. But let's examine a letter written by people who spent all these years testing the locomotive.

"The Pechora depot of the Northern Railroad," the letter says, "is a unique testing ground for new locomotives. It was here that the TE10 model locomotives, which are now operating successfully both in the Soviet Union and abroad, were run in and that the first 2TE116's were tested. But today the depot, on which technological progress in the industry largely depends, is operating with obsolete equipment...

Tests of the 2TE121 8000-horsepower locomotives began in Pechora in 1983. Prior to November 1988 scarcely anyone other than the enthusiasts involved themselves in this. The Vorkuta Sector and the Northern Railroad administration could not be bothered about it. It was only at the end of 1988 that a separate shop was created at the depot or, more accurately, a work brigade was assigned to maintain the new locomotives. But even it had only half the team of specialists required. Some of these were then seeing this engine for the first time.

Nevertheless, it didn't take long for everyone to be convinced that setting up the special unit had had a positive effect on 2TE121 operations. The quality of repair work improved significantly, the locomotives' monthly runs had increased. Simultaneously, the technical skills level of maintenance brigades also went up.

During these years specialists of the plant supplying the locomotives also contributed a great deal. The design of the locomotive was modernized, and the manufacture of a number of parts and components was improved. As an example of this one can point to the latest engines arriving at the depot. In thirteen months of operation they each travelled 206,000 kilometres. In addition, construction was completed at the depot on the so-called fifth section - a shop specially designed for repair work and the servicing of equipment. Nearly a million rubles were spent on its construction, and additional hundreds of thousands on acquiring equipment and various other materials as well as repair and diagnostic test benches. The new locomotives have already demonstrated that they are easier to repair and operate.

At the same time, we are in a state of total indecision: are we going to change over to the new technology in the future or will everything stay as in the past? The workers' collective wants to work on these locomotives, but management does not. So why do we have this unnecessary muddle? What happens is that we master and test the engines, and then (as before) they are given to other depots! And why is it that the sector and the administration of the railroad are making such a determined effort to rid themselves of the new locomotives?"

The letter is signed by drivers and maintenance workers. They have no reason to fabricate glowing accounts of the merits of the new equipment, all the less so since it was precisely because of them that the machine builders' repeated efforts to prematurely announce creation of the new engines and to begin their series production were each time foiled. The Pechora locomotive workers pointed out that the equipment needed further refinements, that the "121's" were still not ready for operation in northern conditions.

On a number of occasions an expert commission was assembled in Pechora to go over these disputes. The members of the commission included deputy ministers of concerned ministries and representatives of USSR Gosplan (State Planning Commission). Not infrequently, the smooth

flow of these sessions was "exploded" by a report from V. Anikin, depot specialist for new equipment. He was so ferocious in criticizing the shortcomings of the locomotive that I once reacted to his words by asking: "So then, this locomotive isn't needed in the North?" Vitalii Mikhailovich confused us even more by starting to heap praise on this "iron horse": "I'm not at all against it. What I am against is how everything is done today. We have to work the bugs out of the engine." He continues to hold this opinion.

And yet, I find this signature at the bottom of the letter. This means that times are really hard for the locomotive. What happended?

"Today, it isn't at all clear if the locomotive will be operating at our depot or for the Vorkuta Sector," relates depot economist T. Karepina. "It's quite possible that the railroad will give up on this engine altogether."

There is, of course, an alternative to the new generation locomotive in current series-produced engines, which are inferior to the new one in all respects. But the old ones have what is by today's standards a major advantage - price. They are five times cheaper than the 2TE121 locomotives. But just think for a minute about what kind of argument you're advancing when you choose between an inexpensive washboard and an expensive washing machine. The high price is still no cause for refusing to buy. The expense of acquiring the new locomotive can only be justified if it is fully utilized. Unfortunately, there's a lot in the way of this in the arctic sector of the Northern Railway. Especially the wretched state of the track facilities and the backward condition of the stations, which would have to accommodate trains of a length that makes operation of the powerful locomotive economically feasible.

Some specialists had raised this point at meetings and on the pages of newspapers from the very beginning of testing: It's not enough to build maintenance shops and reconstruct depot bases. What is also needed is to

"straighten out" (the situation with) roundhouses to accommodate heavy trains, otherwise there would be no sense in introducing the new locomotive. But in those days people didn't have the habit of looking ahead. There were directives. And there was the "Intensification-90" program, which called for a hundred new locomotives to be in operation by this year in the Vorkuta Sector. Now people are preparing the next directive, which will determine whether the locomotives will run at all on the Northern Railroad.

Could it have been done differently? If could have if the railroad people, from the very beginning of testing, while developing the new technology had made just a little progress, both in phasing in the new locomotives and in new forms of management. But there hasn't been the slightest advance in this direction. Just as it was six years ago, the depot is still a structural entity that doesn't have the right to decide anything for itself. And what's more, there are no funds for implementing such a decision. And so the simplest way is: if you like the locomotive, buy it.

How much talk have we already had about how the administrative-command system hinders technological progress, and yet here is one more clear example: railway transport in our country during the transition to a market economy remains a rigidly centralized sector in which labour collectives have no possibility of making money for technical improvements. And the railroad industry has no funds that it can simply "give them" for this. There's no "fat" these days.

But things will probably be the same in the future, when like it or not, the new locomotive will have to be used in the North simply because the depots here have fewer and fewer engine drivers. Given this situation, if a locomotive which can to some degree respond to this problem is cast aside, this will not make the burden any lighter.

Gudok
20 November 1990
Page 2 (full text)

TRANSPORT-WATER

## Kandalaksha Seaport Needs Business

Troubles in the life of a country inevitably lead to troubles in the life of each of its citizens. Today, the truth of this strikes you wherever you look. Something similar is happening with the Kandalaksha Commercial Maritime Port. No matter what you think of it, you can see that "personal" problems of the labour collective are linked directly to the existence of "sore spots" in our economy, and especially to a lack of balance between its individual parts.

The port suffers from a chronic shortage of work. Figures do little to explain people's mood, but they are an essential point of reference for the conversation. Even though the summer navigation season is particularly bad and things are far below normal, still the port continues to operate and justifies its existence; but during the off-season from October to May only 10 to 15% of its capacity is utilized.

By September, when the navigation season is drawing to a close, the port officials' worries increase sharply. They have to solve the problem of jobs for people - finding a place to send the specialists so that they don't lose their qualifications over the long winter, and, as a result, their income and the other elements of their social status. And so, in the winter, relatives in Kandalaksha receive a flood of letters whose authors can rightly say about themselves, in the words of song, "my address is the Soviet Union," wherever you might meet them: in Riga, Klaipeda, Osetrovo, Dudinka.

Not waiting for a full crisis, port officials are already looking for ways of keeping people employed in the city itself: perhaps opening a clothing factory or something else. But I find this kind of solution somewhat sad. Aren't people here, in the grip of hopelessness,

merely substituting illusory solutions for the search for a real way out? Can it possibly be that the port, which is equipped with the most modern facilities and has well-trained personnel, is of no use to anyone?

Specialists of the Murmansk Steamship Line and the Port of Kandalaksha have not only posed this question at the highest levels but have also suggested some possible answers of their own. One of these is to attract foreign freight into import-export operations, since, as always there is not enough Soviet freight. Well, just the other day, literally, the long efforts of the steamship line finally began to bear fruit. Another section of the "Iron Curtain" has fallen down: foreigners have been given permission to visit Kandalaksha.

But what can we expect of external links if we still haven't mastered our own domestic situation? For weeks on end an excellent modern complex for transloading iron ore concentrate sits idle. The local Kovdorskii and Olenegorskii combines produce enough of this raw material, but while the complex has a capacity of 2.3 million tonnes, only 1,534,000 tonnes were handled in the record year 1984. And this year the result is expected to be altogether lamentable: 850,000 tonnes.

Meanwhile, concrete from the combines is being transported by rail to Cherepovets - a journey of 4 to 5 days - and then the cars return to the Kola Peninsula empty. The burden on the Oktyabrskaya Railroad, which is breaking down under an excess of freight, could be lightened, directing as many cars as possible onto the short "Kandalaksha" stretch where it's only 2 to 3 hours journey to the port. What's more, the ore-carrying ships would not be returning from Cherepovets empty but would transport coal for Apatity.

In principle, of course, this is what is being done, but a lack of ships is causing problems. V. Ryntsyn, deputy head of the Kandalaksha port, explains: "We need for them to stop transferring oil and ore carriers and the ships of the "Volgo-Baltic" type to other lines." I

listened to his words and thought to myself: it's really true that, in a situation of bureaucratic isolation in which people only think about their own problems, we stop looking at the big picture.

Take, for example, the documentation prepared for a meeting of the top officials of Minmorflot, which in June was studying the issue of developing the port system for the northwestern part of the country. It paints an impressive picture (only on paper, for the time being) for new port construction in the basins of the Barents and White seas. A major port on the northern coast of the Kola Peninsula in the vicinity of Pechenga, a bulk oil handling base in the Archangel region... We have to develop, of course, but is this the way to go? All of this will cost billions: the Pechenga scenario nearly 3 billion, and the Archangel variant 1.5 billion. In addition, the latter will require building a railroad and a whole lot more in a desolate region in order to support an industrial and social infrasture. Meanwhile, virtually right next door is the high-capacity but idle port of Kandalaksha. And, by the way, are they aware at Minmorflot that the Kandalaksha port also has an oil depot serving the entire Kola Peninsula? And while the channel depth on the approaches to Kandalaksha is insufficient, the same is true for the Archangel region as well. So maybe it would be simpler, instead of new ports, to build shallow-draught ships, which have proven themselves here excellently.

(Staff correspondent)
Kandalaksha

Vodnyi transport
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## Over the Abyss... With No Safety Net

## (Enisei River Shipping Incurs a Loss)

In all my years as a journalist I can't recall more than five or six instances where an official at any level actually sought a meeting with a correspondent. More often than not it was the other way around. And so it was altogether unexpected when the phone call came in from I. Bulavy, deputy head of the Enisei River Steamship Line.

"Even veterans of the steamship line can't recall such a difficult navigation season," Ivan Antonovich began. "Last summer we seemed to have been hit by every possible disaster. And it was partner enterprises that presented us with the biggest surprises, and that with admirable consistency.

"Let me cite the most recent example. At the scheduled time we brought the fleet out of Dudinka and Igarka. But on the approach to Lesosibirsk it turned out that there wasn't enough water in the shoals at one place to get the ships through.

"The Angara caused us particular concern all summer. This tributary of the Enisei gave the steamship line headaches as never before: lack of water, lack of rafts for towing, and the rafts sitting too low. All of this hampered timber floating operations and put the crews behind in their schedule.

"And then to top it off, as the saying goes, a lock became unserviceable in the second third of October near the Boguchanskaya hydroelectric power station, currently under construction. This was at a time when there were still roughly 18 ships behind the dam. For the week that the fleet sat idle we suffered additional financial losses.

"As a result, we were doing a shaky tight-rope-walking act for the whole navigation period. We were constantly working 'on the edge'. But the worst of it was that we were doing it without any safety net.

"Now, the entire fleet is lying in quiet inlets. More accurately, almost the entire fleet... We had to leave 25 vessles in Igarka for the winter that have no means of self-propulsion. Why? The answer to that question is easy. When the last convoy left, these barges had simply not been unloaded. During the final days of the navigation season our partners - the timber export workers and longshoremen of the Igarka Timber Trans-Shipping Combine - did an especially poor job of it. At times only 10 or 12 people of the 120 showed up for work at the port."

Q. "How will this affect the opening of the new season? Besides these 25 barges there are another 7 still in Dudinka, aren't there?"

A. "First of all, there will be additional expenses for their scheduled maintenance, which will now have to be done there. And to do this we'll have to have the necessary materials brought in by air to Igarka and Dudinka. But even then, it's very hard to talk about any kind of high-quality maintenance.

"Secondly, we could have sent this fleet out into the lower reaches of the river and its tributaries immediately at the beginning of the navigation season. Now, we'll be waiting for it to follow an icebreaker back to Krasnoyarsk. Again, this means more expenses and loss of time."

Q. "And is someone compensating your financial losses?"

A. "Not entirely, I'm afraid. We present our claims to the timber export people in the form of fines and payment of ship leasing costs. But these "revenues" can't begin to match what we could have made from shipping.

"In all, only 25,557,000 tonnes of the planned 27,500,000 tonnes of freight were transported. Angara loggers were short approximately 640,000 tonnes of timber in their deliveries. Approximately 100,000 tonnes of freight for northerners simply never reached Krasnoyarsk from various enterprises. Just as happened in Dudinka, we failed to receive around 40,000 tonnes of metal goods from the Norilsk Mining and Metallurgical Combine. They were delivered to our colleagues, the sailors.

"In view of this, we tried to take as much unused tonnage as possible out of service, and so cut our losses. By doing this we succeeded in saving approximately one million rubles. But we lost approximately 3 million in revenues."

Q. "A final question. It seems that even in the next navigation season the steamship line will not succeed in turning the corner unless they re-examine their relationship with the power industry people. How do you see this relationship in the future in view of the fact that the river workers are today totally dependent on them?"

A. "This system has to change. It's now clear that last summer the power industry people were just solving their own problems in a narrow bureaucratic way. For them the main issue was building up water levels. I understand that they provide heat and electricity for a huge region. But the interests of others must be taken into consideration. Judge for yourself. The lock at the Boguchanskaya hydroelectric plant was out of service for seven days. It was only at the beginning of October that the Krasnoyarsk water reservoir was filled and the nearby canal lift began taking shallow-draught ships though the dam of the Krasnoyarsk hydroelectric plant. Before this, the lift had simply been idle, although there was an enormous need for it. After all, we transport all sorts of goods from the south and the north, such as timber, coal, oil products, building materials, vegetables, fruit...

"I think it would be the right thing to do if, next year, we start spelling out all these issues with them in an agreement. Such a document already exists - it's called the "Principal Regulations for Water Use" - but in may ways it's not observed and is out of date. It urgently needs to be re-examined.

"Until this is done we will be dependent on the power industry people. In my opinion, the time has come to look for compromises that will benefit everyone."

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